

AMERICA EXPOSED!

December 2003
 Volume 2, Issue 2

Inside this issue:

- Get Your Kicks! Rt. 66 2
- Route 66 Web Game 2
- A Closer Look at 3
- All Aboard! Trolley tours of historic Lynchburg 4

TOP 5

PLACES WE WILL GO:

5. STATE PENITENTIARY, MOUNDSVILLE, WEST VIRGINIA
- 4 THE JEFFERSON HOTEL, RICHMOND, VA
3. CNN'S CROSSFIRE, WASHINGTON, D.C.
2. HUDSON RIVER VALLEY
1. THE BIG APPLE

MORE HIGHLIGHTS PAGE 3.

NEW STUDENTS GEAR UP

THE LARGEST GROUP OF ON-CAMPUS STUDENTS IN YEARS!

We have had the largest on-campus applicant pool in the history of the Program this year. We are confident that we have selected an eclectic and well-rounded group of students who will both represent the College well, and bring a variety of perspectives into the classroom.

This year's group of 11 students (and one intern) is comprised of international students from Macedonia and Japan, and American students hailing from Oregon, Utah, and Minnesota to Texas,

Florida and Maryland. Their academic interests are just as varied—they plan to major in disciplines that range from biology and



mathematics to history and studio art.

Congratulations to the following students who will soon be embarking on one of the most unique experiences any college or uni-

versity can offer:

- KAORI ASAI (JAPAN)
- HILARY ALLEN '06 (VA)
- LAUREN BLACK '06 (OK)
- MEGAN BLOOMER '06 (WVA)
- STEPHANIE CIECHANOWSKI '05 (FL)
- ANNABELLE GIBSON '06 (VA)
- KELSEY IRVIN '06 (VA)
- KRISTINA KRSTeva '06 (MACEDONIA)
- RACHAEL LILES '04 (FL)
- LYNDSY PELHAM '05 (OR)
- MARY ANNA RICHARDSON '05 (VA)
- STEPHANY SMATHERS '06 (NC)

WHY "AMERICA EXPOSED!"? *By Dan Stiffler*

"So what is the American Culture Program going to be about this year?"

For years, the R-MWC community would ask us this question. We would respond vaguely: "Well, each spring we cover great themes in American culture, themes like democracy, capitalism, race, gender...you know, all those things that make America so interesting to study." But something was missing. Our interrogators were expecting excitement, something like "In the Footsteps of

Lewis and Clark," or "Americans in Paris," the subjects of two popular AmCP summer sessions.

We needed a descriptive title for our semester-long program, a title better than "Great Themes in American Culture." So last May a group of faculty convened to discuss ways

we could better describe what happens in the American Culture Program—because, truth is, unless you have been in it, you will have a hard time understanding what it is. A descriptive title, however, would help.

Program faculty tossed out a number of enticing titles: "Crime and Punishment," thinking about this nation's industrial prison complex; "Who Owns the Flag?," trying to define patriotism; (See *America Exposed!* on page 3.)

We strip away America's ideal veneer in order to examine its core reality. Sometimes uncomfortable, often provocative, always revealing—yes, "America Exposed!" seems to say it all.

ROUTE 66 INFORMATION

Deadline: March 15, 2004
Rolling Admission; maximum 12 students.

Cost: \$2-3000, depending on outside funding/sponsorship

Dates: May 18-June 20

Credits: 6

Who can apply: Applicants must complete their first year of College; men and women from universities other than R-MWC are welcome to apply.

Applications are available in Smith 103 or online at www.rmwc.edu/americanculture

GET YOUR KICKS THIS SUMMER!

Rt. 66: American Highway Culture

Route 66: a.k.a. The Mother Road, the Highway of Dreams, the Main Street of America, the symbol of American movement and commerce, home to the dreamer, the drifter, and the entrepreneur.

Route 66 is America's highway and you can discover it this summer with the American Culture Program.

"If you want to take the pulse of the nation, then go to the most enduring artery and head straight for Route 66. If you want to taste, feel, hear, and experience genuine America—raw and uncensored—then get on the Mother Road," says Michael Wallis, author of *Route 66: The Mother Road*.



This highway, christened in 1926, continues to be visited by travelers both foreign and American even though most of the original route has been bypassed by faster interstates. Once a vital artery, now it is a destination where people search for what is real about America and themselves. The kitsch-classic highway, home of the open road, the way to the western frontier, filled to the brim with diners and milkshakes, mom and pop shops, motor camps, Harleys and tailfin Cadillacs is coming

back to life. We want to take you there—a place where America is your textbook and the highway, your classroom.

This program will begin on May 18, and it will conclude on June 20. It includes 7 days of intensive classroom study followed by three weeks on the road experiencing America's Main Street for real. We'll travel from Chicago to Santa Monica, earning you 6 credits, an unforgettable trip in a van full of friends, and that slice of America we have all been searching for.

Cost will range from \$2-3000. Contact Emily Johns, Coordinator of the American Culture Program for more information. Applications are due March 15, 2004.

THIS COULD BE YOU.

Play the Game and Win.

The American Culture Program will launch its first ever internet game. We invite the entire campus community to log-on and play. The game will begin on Thursday, January 22, at 9 a.m. Visit our website <http://faculty.rmwc.edu/americanculture> and click on "play the game" to register.

The interactive trivia game will feature a trip from Chicago to Santa Monica along the famous Route 66 highway. Every Tuesday and Thursday, until March 15, a new trivia question about Route 66 will be released. March 15 is the date when applications to the American Culture Program sum-

mer course, *Route 66: American Highway Culture*, are due.

To play the game you will log-on to the game site and choose your playing piece among Cadillacs, Corvettes, Harley Davidsons, and Model Ts. Each question answered correctly will allow you to advance to the next city on the map. But watch-out! An incorrect answer could land you a spot in an auto repair shop, or not-so-deluxe accommodations in an infamous motor camp from the highway's glory days.

What do you win if you are the first to hit the pier at Santa Monica? A brand new iPod! The next two finishers and the top 3 faculty or staff participants will be awarded a 2004 America Exposed t-shirts.

So brush up on your route 66 knowledge and sign on to play the game!

GAME BEGINS

Thursday, January 22 at 9 a.m.
Faculty.rmwc.edu/americanculture



2004: A CLOSER LOOK

You undoubtedly saw the provocative "America Exposed!" posters all over campus this fall, but you still might be wondering just how The American Culture Program is planning to study the fascinating themes depicted—themes like *Bad Boys*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Guilty Pleasures*, and *Who Owns the Flag?* Well, you are in luck! Here are only a few of the highlights that are in store:

Readings:

- *Geography of Nowhere*, J.H. Kunstler
- *White Trash Cooking*, E. M. Mickler
- *Bitches, Bimbos and Ballbreakers*, Guerrilla Girls
- *Blacklist*, S. Peretsky
- *Death and Justice*, M. Fuhrman
- *Growing Up With Dick and Jane*, C. Kismaric

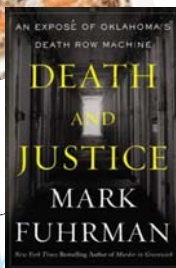
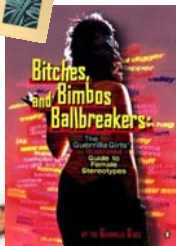
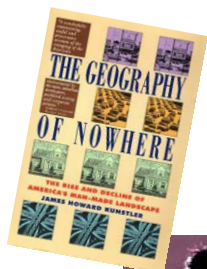
Films/TV/Radio:

- *Casablanca*
- *In Cold Blood*
- *CSI*
- "Guy Noir" radio sketch from Garrison Keillor
- *The Virginian* T.V. series

Voices

- Rachel Flynn, Lynchburg's director of Community Planning and Development
- Steve Avery, a professional bull rider
- The Honorable William Sweeney who will speak on famous American criminal trials.
- CNN's *Crossfire* live.
- An immigrant in NYC
- Jannequin Bennett, executive chef at the Jefferson Hotel, Richmond, Virginia.

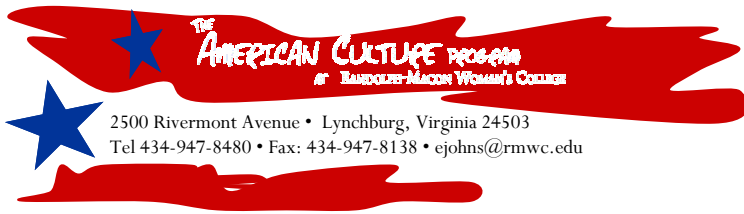
We invite you to follow along with us on our day-to-day adventures. You can read about them online (<http://faculty.rmwc.edu/americanculture>), in the *Features* section of the *Sundial*, or by tuning into WWRM for the radio show (look for more details around campus soon).



America Exposed! (Continued from page 1)

"American Foodways," examining who we are by what we eat; "Bad Boys," rediscovering the American rebel. But could any of these topics alone sustain a 12-credit-hour block of study? Then Professor Jim Hoban (communication) offered "America Exposed!" We all had a good laugh at the tabloid possibilities.

Later, when Program Coordinator Emily Johns and I were sorting through suggestions, we kept returning to Professor Hoban's title. As a veteran of the Program, he knew that we strip away America's ideal veneer in order to examine its core reality. Sometimes uncomfortable, often provocative, always revealing--yes, "America Exposed!" seems to say it all.



2500 Rivermont Avenue • Lynchburg, Virginia 24503
Tel 434-947-8480 • Fax: 434-947-8138 • ejohns@rmwc.edu

The Randolph-Macon Woman's College American Culture Program, the first such program of its kind in the United States, was established in 1991. The Program occurs in the spring semester of every academic year, from January to May. The purpose of the Program is to analyze the United States in ways that go beyond typical approaches to American Studies. The Program is based on the idea that America is more than a geographic location; that for centuries it has also been a state of mind as well as a set of hopes. It focuses not only on American realities but on what Americans, who represent diverse backgrounds and perspectives, think the realities are.

The Program is self-contained, offering 12-15 credit hours of study through course work, tutorial, travel, and practicum.

ALL ABOARD!

American Culture Program leads historic trolley tours of Lynchburg



The R-MWC American Culture Program and a new club on campus called Downtown had people squeezing into the Lynchburg trolley on Family Weekend (October 3, 2003) to tour the city's revitalization plan for the

historic downtown.

Program intern, Darilyn Peake of Westminster, Maryland, is leading the project. Her goal is "to educate people about what is happening in the community, to build an appreciation for the unique historic architecture of our town, and to encourage young people to get down there and support it. This city needs some young life, and we are making it our mission as college students in the community to help breathe some into it," says Peake.

Peake was very surprised about the large turn-out for this first-time event. "The trolley was so full, we couldn't squeeze any-

more in! My own parents barely made it on!"

The tour included significant stops in downtown Lynchburg such as Amazement Square, one of Virginia's best interactive and interdisciplinary children's museums. The museum began as the cornerstone of the revitalization project that is now well underway. Other trolley stops included the 9th Street corridor and Monument Terrace, the Academy of Music, where tourists got to take a peek inside, and Point of Honor.

Peake, a junior communication major, plans to continue revising and developing her tour to include other sites such as the Anne Spencer House, the Legacy Museum, and Old City Cemetery. If you are interested in a tour, please contact the American Culture Program office at (434) 947-8480.

www.rmwc.edu/americanculture