UMass to Host Lecture Series on Immigration and Migration

The University of Massachusetts Amherst History Department announces the 2014-15 Feinberg Family Distinguished Lecture Series: Migration Matters: Rethinking Immigration in the Modern Americas. Owing to the generosity of our alumnus Kenneth R. Feinberg (B. A., 1967) and associates, the History Department hosts this biennial event, which seeks to explore pressing social issues through interdisciplinary perspectives.

A brief glance at recent headlines shows that migration is a hotly debated topic, often polarizing communities and inflaming passions on all sides of the political spectrum. The global movement of people in the Americas and elsewhere has a long and complex history. The series brings together scholars, activists and policymakers to help understand the motivations, circumstances and conditions that define migrant and immigrant experiences. By moving beyond simple generalizations of “crisis” or a “broken system,” the series analyzes questions surrounding intervention, reform, belonging and the contested meanings of this “nation of immigrants.” In doing so, these events unveil the history behind the headlines, adding critical contexts and perspectives which have the power to transform media and societal debates on this issue.

The series features talks by internationally recognized scholars of immigration history including Mae Ngai, Jeffery Lesser, María Cristina García and Donna Gabaccia as well as a conversation with and performance by Grammy-award winning singer-songwriter and activist Angélique Kidjo. It is complemented by a series of events for K-12 educators, creating a ripple effect in which these scholars’ insights permeate into local classrooms.

According to Professor and Chair of History Joye Bowman, “The department’s goal in hosting the series is to provide important perspectives on one of the most significant
political and moral issues of our time.” Assistant Professor Julio Capó, Jr. added, “Since these phenomena transcend physical borders, we aimed for a transnational approach including viewpoints from a range of disciplines and expertise.”

Media interviews with participants available upon request.

Schedule of Events

Keynote Address: “Undocumented Migration to the U.S.: Origins, Consequences, Remedies,” Mae Ngai (Columbia University), Thursday, September 25, 4:30pm, UMass Goodell Hall, Bernie Dallas Room

Lecture: “A Nation of Immigrants: Brazil and the Meanings of Permanent Foreignness,” Jeffrey Lesser (Emory University), Tuesday, October 7, 4:30pm, UMass Goodell Hall, Bernie Dallas Room

Film Screening and Discussion: “Mother of George,” Tuesday, October 14, 5pm, Commonwealth Honors College Event Room 160 (by Roots Café) Presented in collaboration with the UMass Fine Arts Center.

Panel: “Mexican Im/migration and the Making of Modern America,” Neil Foley (Southern Methodist University) and Andrew K. Sandoval-Strausz (University of New Mexico), Monday, October 20, 4:30pm, UMass Goodell Hall, Bernie Dallas Room

Keynote Address: “Nations of Immigrants: The U.S. in Global Perspective,” Donna Gabaccia (University of Toronto), Thursday, October 23, 4:30pm, UMass Student Union Ballroom

Conversation: “Activism through Music,” A conversation with Angélique Kidjo moderated by Bode Omojola (Mount Holyoke College), Wednesday, October 29, 6pm, UMass Bowker Auditorium. Presented in collaboration with the UMass Fine Arts Center with support from

Angelique Kidjo in Concert, Thursday, October 30, 7:30 p.m., FAC Concert Hall. For more information and tickets call 1800-999-UMAS or www.fineartscenter.com Presented in collaboration with the UMass Fine Arts Center. Funded in part by the Expeditions Program New England Foundation for the Arts, made possible with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional support from the six New England state arts agencies.

Lecture: “The New Asylum Seekers,” Professor María Cristina García (Cornell University), Friday, November 14, 1pm, UMass Campus Center, Room 804

Teacher Workshop: “Picturing Immigration: Teaching U.S. Immigration History with Visual Sources,” Jennifer Fronc (UMass Amherst), Thursday, January 22, 4:30pm, 97 Hawley St, Northampton, MA. Presented with the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources Program of the Collaborative for Educational Services as part of the
Teacher Workshop: “Rethinking Immigration History in the Classroom,” Julio Capó Jr. (UMass Amherst) and Jessica Johnson (UMass Amherst), Thursday, February 26, 4:30pm, 97 Hawley St, Northampton, MA. *Presented with the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources Program of the Collaborative for Educational Services as part of the 2014-2015 UMass-CES History Institute. More info:* http://www.collaborative.org/events-and-courses/migration-matters

Conference: “The Politics of Migration: Gender, Sexuality and Citizenship,” with Katherine Newman (Provost, UMass Amherst), Chandan Reddy (Washington University) and Eithne Luibhéid (University of Arizona), February 27-28, Check website for location information, *Presented in collaboration with the UMass Amherst Department of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies Department*

Lecture: “Transnational Fight for the Rights for Undocumented Migrants, 1965-1986,” Ana Raquel Minian (Stanford University), April 6, 4:30pm, UMass Goodell Hall, Bernie Dallas Room