American Studies in Finland

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- 1 Since its establishment in 1996, the Finnish American Studies Association has sought to promote the field of American Studies in Finland by organizing conferences, events and by increasing networking amongst its scattered membership (ca. 35) working at various universities and other higher education institutions. The current President of the Association is Dr Jopi Nyman (University of Joensuu) and its Secretary is Dr Ari Helo (University of Helsinki).
- 2 While currently only the University of Helsinki has a Chair of American Studies and a full multidisciplinary degree programme in North American Studies (BA/MA/PhD) run by the University's Renvall Institute of Area and Cultural Studies at the Faculty of Humanities, the Jane and Aatos Erkko Foundation has very recently donated a five-year Professorship in North American Studies to the University of Tampere to develop the field. Up to this point, it has been possible to study American Studies as an undergraduate minor at Tampere, but this donation makes possible MA-level teaching due to start 2006. Several other universities have offered an undergraduate minor but there exist no separate teaching posts for those programmes.
- 3 More traditionally, components of American Studies (history and literature) have been taught as parts of the curriculum at several English and History departments, and also by visiting Fulbright professors. The University of Helsinki has hosted a special Bicentennial Fulbright Professorship since 1976, a post that has attracted many leading scholars in the field. At the University of Joensuu, teaching in American Studies has been supported by incoming SOCRATES/ERASMUS teachers, who have contributed to the Department's two-week Summer School in American Studies run annually in June since 2003. In postgraduate education, several departments contribute to the National Graduate School for the Study of the Americas directed by Professor Markku Henriksson at the University of Helsinki, a graduate programme that has five fixed-term fellowships funded by the Ministry of Education.
- 4 Major future events in American Studies in Finland include the 11th Maple Leaf and Eagle Conference organized by the North American Studies Programme at the University of Helsinki 16-19 May, 2006, and the Biennial Conference of the Nordic

Association for American Studies to be organized at the University of Tampere 24-26 May 2007. The Association is planning to tighten collaboration with other neighbouring associations in the future.

5 The Association's website can be reached at the following address:

6 <http://www.helsinki.fi/hum/renvall/pam/fasa/>

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