

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

2017 NEWSLETTER

Greetings from the Department of History!

Somehow history seemed unusually important this year. Conversations with colleagues suggest I'm not the only one to find that teaching history after a certain day in November felt even more relevant and essential than in ordinary times. Alert readers may observe that this is not an especially high bar to clear for someone who studies ideas about the human soul in the fourth century AD but I am delighted in any case to report that the department's faculty and students revealed themselves up to the challenge in a busy and unpredictable year. In the dead of winter our professors could be found delivering public lectures in Midland and Saginaw, while a memorable lineup of distinguished visitors added wisdom and inspiration at crucial points (see "Graduate Program Notes" below). Brittany Fremion deserves special notice and a rare double laurel wreath for winning the CMU Excellence in Teaching Award in the same year that her daughter Olive was born. As the father of an Oliver I found this an auspicious name but my nominal (and real) delight was completed when Olivia Demas was born in May. Congratulations, colleagues!

Special thanks are due to the many fixed-term faculty and graduate students who offered teaching and other assistance during a year of multiple leaves and four well-earned sabbaticals. With their help we increased undergraduate enrollments for the third year in a row, up 17% since 2013–2014. Graduate enrollments held steady, thanks to newly scientific scheduling by Kathy Donohue and a welcome influx of Cultural Resource Management students. Meanwhile two of our recent PhD graduates landed permanent academic positions. In short, our own numbers support what the AHA has recently demonstrated with bracing precision: "History Is Not a Useless Major: Fighting Myths With Data." Supporters of history should take careful note of this useful, brief, and cheering article, bejeweled with pie charts; it's easily found by searching for the title online.

We are delighted to welcome Michelle Cassidy, who will join us in the fall as our new tenure-track specialist in the history of Native Americans. Armed with expertise in Great Lakes history, the Civil War and nineteenth century, and a Michigan PhD, Dr. Cassidy will teach our very popular Native American history survey and has already begun developing new graduate courses in her field.

I'm especially pleased to announce that the department has begun a series of new initiatives designed to engage readers of this newsletter and a wider public more directly and frequently. Foremost among these is our new blog "[Re]collection," launched in January and publishing regularly at recollectionhistory.com. Jennifer Vannette (PhD candidate) has done a brilliant job designing and curating a remarkable series of posts from faculty, students, alumni, and other friends of the department, on topics designed to offer an inside look into what historians (and history majors) actually do all day. We're also tweeting with some regularity at our new account @cmuhistory; together with regular updates on Facebook, it's easy to keep up with the department on social media and the web. But neither this nor much of anything else in the department would be possible without the incomparable Annette Davis, whose heroic efforts in the unexpectedly long period between the resignation of our half-time secretary in February and the hiring of a new secretary in December deserve special mention. Katelyn Maylee joined us just before Christmas and has been instrumental in helping us publicize our courses and events, organize the graduate conference, publish a newsletter, and much else. Special thanks to Katelyn and Dave Macleod, who came back from retirement to help edit the newsletter.

Gregory Smith
Department of History Chair

FACULTY NEWS

Jennifer Liu Demas was on sabbatical during the spring semester at work on her book manuscript. She focused particularly on writing a chapter that analyzes how the Guomindang government directed its party ideology toward youth and indoctrinated middle-school students in civics classes on how to be modern citizens, comparing the regime's years in mainland China, 1937-1949, and in Taiwan, 1949-1960. See also "New Arrivals" in this newsletter.

Lane Demas appeared on BBC World Service Radio's "Sporting Witness" discussing race and college football in "The 'Black 14' Protest Rocks American Football." He also contributed to the *Chicago Tribune's* article "College Coaches Should Follow Players' Lead on Protests, Expression." See also "New Arrivals" in this newsletter.

Carrie Euler presented a lecture at the Saginaw Art Museum on late-medieval, early-modern English architecture in January 2017.

Michael Federspiel gave a presentation in May entitled "After Hemingway's Great War: Michigan as Therapy" for the Midland County Historical Society. It is drawn from an article in progress.

Brittany Bayless Fremion led a summer workshop on environmental history for STEM majors at CMU's Biological Station on Beaver Island. Dr. Fremion serves as a consultant on the project that has created the (dis) ABLED BEAUTY exhibition, which will travel to CMU in spring 2018, and is beginning an oral history project that explores the history of disability from the student perspective. In March she presented at a roundtable entitled "The Pedagogy of Hope: Teaching Hope in the Environmental Classroom" during the American Society for Environmental History Conference in Chicago. Dr. Fremion also co-authored a chapter on the history and significance of the glass ceiling for the forthcoming volume, *War on Women in the United States? Battlefields, Battles, and Skirmishes*. See also "Excellence in Teaching Award" and "New Arrivals" in this newsletter.

Solomon Getahun presented a paper on "Italy's Ethiopian Mercenaries, the Forgotten Tringali," at the International Conference, "The First World War from Tripoli to Mogadishu (1911-1924)," held at Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), in the fall of 2016. He also spoke on "Ethiopia and the Horn" at a roundtable, "Ethiopia Today," at the International Center, Michigan State University, March 9, 2017.

Mitchell Hall was on sabbatical during the fall semester and is currently completing a two-volume work, *Opposition to War: An Encyclopedia of United States Peace and Antiwar Movements*.

Doina Pasca Harsanyi has been researching and writing on the Napoleonic occupation of Italy. This year she published "Between Glory and Good Sense: Resistance to Conscription and the National Guard Experience in the States of Parma, 1805-06," *Napoleonic Scholarship* 7 (2016): 20-37. Dr. Harsanyi also presented a paper, "French Nationality in Italy during the Napoleonic Occupation," at the Consortium for the Revolutionary Era, held at the College of Charleston in South Carolina, February 2017.

Eric A. Johnson has an article titled "Hitler's Female Executioners?" appearing in the journal *East Central Europe* in June 2017.

Jay Martin spent a spring sabbatical researching direct trade between the Great Lakes and the Atlantic World for a book that will reinterpret the magnitude and international importance of Great Lakes commerce in the nineteenth century. In September he presented "Teaching Disaster Preparedness for Cultural Institutions" at the American Association for State and Local History Conference. He has created the first Cultural Resource Management Graduate Research Assistantship with Dow Gardens in Midland, Michigan. Meanwhile, Dr. Martin guided the Museum of Cultural and Natural History through the process of acquiring and moving to a larger, more environmentally appropriate off-site cultural collection storage facility that expands capacity from 3,000 square feet in Grawn Hall to 8,000 square feet at the new Museum Annex.

Tara McCarthy participated in a two-week summer institute on developing and teaching writing intensive classes and in the fall ran a workshop open to faculty and students campus-wide on managing their grading.

Tim O'Neil presented a paper, "Dorothy Godfrey's Civil War: The World of an Irish American Republican Activist, 1923-1931," at the American Conference for Irish Studies in April 2017. He recently had an article accepted by the journal *New Hibernia Review/ Iris Éireannach Nua*. **(cont. on next page)**

FACULTY NEWS CONT.

(cont. from previous page) This article, "Waging the Economic War: The IRA, Fianna Fáil and the Boycott British Campaign, 1932-33," explores the campaign as a means of examining internal tensions within the IRA as it sought a strategy to counter the new Fianna Fáil Government, which was attempting to distance itself from the IRA and its own revolutionary republican past, while simultaneously retaining the republican base and consolidating political power within the Irish Free State.

John Robertson reports that the revised paperback version (featuring a new epilogue) of his well-received book, *Iraq: A History*, was published by Oneworld [London] in 2016. His book is also to be translated into simplified Chinese characters and will be published by Xiron [Beijing] in 2017. Oxford University Press has invited him to contribute the article on "Modern Iraq" for the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia on Asian History*. Dr. Robertson also served informally as a consultant for "Iraq After ISIS," an article by award-winning journalist James Verini that appeared in the April 2017 issue of *National Geographic*.

Jonathan Truitt presented talks on Game-Based Learning at Saginaw Valley State University, Brigham Young University, and at the Rocky Mountain Council for Latin American Studies. He was also a Faculty Fellow in CMU's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. And he is the founding editor for the University of New Mexico Press's *Histories of the Americas Game Series*, which will have classroom games available in two years' time.

Andrew Wehrman and a colleague presented a paper at the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture entitled: "James Tilton's 'Indian Hut' Hospitals: Native Design and American Medical Innovation during the American Revolution." Dr. Wehrman also delivered a paper titled "Pocky Constitutions: Smallpox Inoculation and the Law in Revolutionary Connecticut" at the annual meeting of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic. He gave a public lecture on Alexander Hamilton, "The Ten-Dollar Founding Father," at the Grace Dow Memorial Library in Midland. And currently he is serving as a scholarly adviser for the Brooklyn Historical Society's new museum exhibit, "Sick: Four Hundred Years of Illness and Health in Brooklyn."

FORMER FACULTY NEWS

Thomas Benjamin (1981-2014) interrupted his work on a book on summary executions during the Mexican revolution of 1910-1920 to write an extended essay, titled "The Life, Myth, and Commemoration of Benito Juarez," for the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History*, which is forthcoming. Supplementing the text, numerous illustrations explore the visual commemoration of Juarez.

Susan P. Conner (1987-2001), a former chair of this department, retired in 2014 after serving since 2008 as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Albion College. Previously she was Vice President for Academic Affairs at Florida Southern College.

Timothy D. Hall (1993-2016) became dean in July, 2016, of Samford University's Howard College of Arts and Sciences in Birmingham, Alabama. While at CMU, Dr. Hall served as History Department chair from 2004 to 2010 and from 2012 as associate dean in the College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Since retiring, **David Rutherford** (1991-2014) has joined his wife, Prof. Susan Narucki (UCSD), in San Diego. He travels with her chamber opera, *Cuatro Corridos*, to performances in the US and Mexico and especially likes advising stage hands (in a language he doesn't speak.) He has continued working on the reception history of Lactantius. In 2015 he published "Lactantius philosophus? Reading, Misreading, and Exploiting Lactantius from Antiquity to the Early Renaissance," in *Essays in Renaissance Thought and Letters in Honor of John Monfasani*, ed. A. Frazier and P. Nold (Leiden: Brill). To appear in a special issue of *Studia Patristica* (2017) is "The Manuscripts of Lactantius and His Early Renaissance Readers." He and Paul Schulten (Prof. Emeritus, Erasmus University) are pursuing three projects: a critical Latin edition and English translation of Antonio da Rho's *Three Dialogues against Lactantius*; the "Lactantius" article for *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum*; and a chapter for a volume on Lactantius to be published by Leo S. Olschki Editore (Florence, Italy).

PHI ALPHA THETA

Central Michigan University's combined History Club and Phi Alpha Theta chapter provides many professional development opportunities to CMU students interested in history. Last fall, CMU graduate student Daniel Palazzolo gave a presentation on an old research technology—how to use microfilm—and recent alumna Gwyn Richard (last year's club president) led a session on a more recent technology—using databases to access primary sources. This spring, the group hosted a study abroad panel, and members have supported and participated in CMU's International Graduate Historical Studies Conference.

The History Club and PAT also engage in service and social activities. In fall, they took part in the Chippewa River cleanup organized by the Student Environmental Alliance and this spring raised over \$300 for Freedom House Detroit through the second annual Humanities Charity Ball. Social activities included bowling, trivia competition (written and led by members), a trip to the Renaissance festival in Holly, and a white elephant gift exchange. A trip to various museums in Lansing was both social and academic.



Members of Phi Alpha Theta at the International Graduate Historical Studies Conference held at CMU



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ALUMNI NEWS

Hillary Hanel (2013, BSEd) was awarded the "Teacher of the Semester" award in June 2016 as a first year History teacher at New School High in Plymouth, MI.

Tim Hardy (1981, BS) is a retired Navy Captain and now serves as the Senior Director of Sunoco's Biofuels Technology in Fulton, NY, which researches alternative fuels, and has also branched out into the beer business, taking advantage of a background in grains and logistics.

Carol (Wright) Hess (1971, BA) retired from her position as a middle school U.S. History teacher in Pasco County, FL in June of 2017. She has also served as a state, national, and international trainer for social studies programs for the Center for Civic Education, and has had many opportunities to train teachers around the country as well as in Budapest, Hungary.

Ruth (Streeter) Fine (1956, BS) finished her career as a school psychologist with the Lawrence, KS school district. In her retirement, she enjoys riding her horses as much as possible and has enjoyed fox hunting for over 30 years.

Patrick M. Kirkwood (2016, PhD) joined the history faculty at Metropolitan Community College-Blue River in Independence, Missouri in August. There he teaches a range of courses in the history of the United States, Britain, and Western Civilization. In January he presented a paper, "The Philippines and the Transvaal: The 'Necessity' for Intervention and the Rhetoric of 'Performed Reluctance,'" at the American Historical Association's annual meeting in Denver, Colorado. See also "New Arrivals" in this newsletter.

Eric Rewa (2015, BS) was accepted by the Diocese of Grand Rapids to study for the priesthood at Mundelein Seminary in Illinois starting in August 2016.

Leah Sullivan (2015, BA) will be attending George Mason University in Fairfax, VA starting in August to pursue an MA in Interdisciplinary Studies with a concentration in Energy and Sustainability.

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Julianne Haefner presented "Challenges of the Tunnel Warfare in Vietnam" at Loyola University's History Conference in November 2016 and won the award for runner-up for Best Paper.

SUPPORTING TOMORROW'S LEADERS

Please consider supporting and encouraging our current CMU students as they prepare for their future. Your financial assistance will help provide scholarships for study at CMU and abroad, essay competition prizes, the opportunity for students to hear guest lecturers, and money for student research and conference attendance. The following are some of the opportunities available:

STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIPS

Dennis Thavenet Study Abroad Scholarship
Dennis Thavenet Study Abroad History Department Scholarship
Howard Evans Study Abroad Scholarship

STUDENT SCHOLARLY RESEARCH AND WRITING AWARDS

Gabriel Chien Memorial Fund Essay Prize

ENDOWMENTS

George M. Blackburn Endowment (lecture on American Civil War and Reconstruction)
William T. Bulger Endowment (lecture series in American Biography)

SCHOLARSHIPS

J.D. Smith Award (graduate)
The Mae Teeter History Prize (undergraduate)
Duane Mark Bouliew History Prize (undergraduate)

MATCHING GIFTS

Many employers match an employee gift. Please check with your personnel office for information on requesting matching funds. When you make your gift, complete a matching gift form from your personnel office and return it with your contribution to CMU.



For further information about ways to give, please contact the History Office in Powers 106, call 989-774-3374, or email history@cmich.edu.

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2017 INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE HISTORICAL STUDIES CONFERENCE

www.ighsc.info

The Department of History hosted the 2017 International Graduate Historical Studies Conference March 31 – April 1 in the Bovee University Center. This year's theme was "Crossing Borders, Challenging Boundaries."

Building on the success of previous meetings, we were proud to be able to attract outstanding young scholars. Our department welcomed a total of 48 presenters. Of those, 8 came from abroad (France, Israel, Germany, Scotland, Portugal, Canada, Ghana) not counting our foreign exchange students already on campus, and 19 from universities around the United States; some traveled from faraway places such as Arizona and California. We are very proud that graduate students from around the country and abroad, from prestigious schools such as Stanford University or the University of Chicago chose to use their funding to come on our campus and present their work to our conference. Papers presented ranged from analyzing UK War Crime Investigation teams after World War II, to skepticism towards witchcraft in the 16th century, to discussing American press reactions towards the Russian Revolution.

Professor John Merriman of Yale University offered the keynote address: "Against the State: Anarchist Violence in Paris during the Belle Époque that Wasn't." The lecture examined the wave of anarchist violence in fin-de-siècle Paris starting from one particularly murderous incident in a Parisian café. In Merriman's telling, that attack marked the origins of modern terrorism. He examined the relationship between anarchists (most of whom were not violent), terrorism, and European states, and carried the story into the first years of the twentieth century, when another group of anarchists terrified France, holding up banks, killing people in their way, and fleeing in fancy stolen automobiles. The lecture was followed by a dynamic question and answer session that continued during the reception.

Guest chairs and commenters expressed much appreciation for the high quality of the papers, for the innovative lines of research presented and the remarkably dynamic discussions—all panels were very well attended. Conference coordinators would like to extend their thanks to graduate students, faculty, and the history department's office staff who assisted so cheerfully at every stage of the preparations: judging papers, chairing sessions, dealing with the logistics, and generally making sure all our guests felt welcome.

CONFERENCE AWARDS

Best Undergraduate Paper

Winner: Brenten Stout
Runner up: Brian Schamber

CMU's Women and Gender Studies Program Award

Winner: Shay Olmstead, University of Massachusetts
Runner up: Adisa Morenikeji, University of Bayreuth, Germany

Best Paper in Transnational History

Winner: Judith Müller, Ben Gurion University, Israel
Runner up: Kevin Hall, Central Michigan University

Best Paper by a Non-CMU Student

Winner: Michael Rozek, Eastern Michigan University
Runner up: Megumi Yoshinaga, Stanford University

Best CMU Graduate Paper

Winner: Chiara Ziletti
Runner up: David Papendorf

President's Award

Winner: Nebiha Guiga, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris



IGHSC keynote speaker Dr. John Merriman

*Join us at next year's conference April 6-7, 2018 as we discuss
"Real and Imagined Borders: People, Place, Time."*

EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

Dr. Brittany Bayless Fremion, assistant professor of environmental, 20th century U.S., and women's history, received a 2016-17 Excellence in Teaching Award from Central Michigan University. The award recognizes teachers who have been outstandingly effective in helping students reach their learning goals. Dr. Fremion's award citation quoted student praise for her knowledge of youth culture and consequent ability to make connections between what she teaches and students' lives. A colleague was impressed that students leave her class "discussing the material rather than their social lives."



Brittany (far right) accepts her award alongside fellow recipients

NEW ARRIVALS

This year, several members of our department welcomed new arrivals to their families.

Brittany and Dustin Fremion welcomed their daughter Olive Jude on December 27, 2016.

Gina and Phil Weare welcomed their son Harvey Jadan on January 5, 2017.

Patrick and Shannon Kirkwood welcomed their son Hugh Everett on January 12, 2017.

Lane and Jennifer Liu Demas welcomed their daughter Olivia Ellen on May 1, 2017.

We extend our congratulations and share in the excitement of the newest additions to our department!

GRADUATE PROGRAM NOTES

Our graduate program has had a great year. Exploring a possible partnership in France, we are in talks with three French universities. We were awarded an Erasmus Plus grant, which will fund all students' expenses for an exchange of up to three from CMU and three from Ruhr Universität Bochum for two years. We are putting together a concentration in Comparative Indigenous History, drawing on the expertise of Dr. Michelle Cassidy (Native American history), Dr. Solomon Getahun (African history), Dr. Jonathan Truitt (Latin American history), and ethno-historian Dr. Tracy Brown from the Anthropology Department. Finally, we are in the early stages of creating a History MA Summer Intensive program.

Several notable scholars came to CMU to speak and spend time with our graduate students. John Merriman's visit is noted elsewhere. The Editor of the Papers of Andrew Jackson, Professor Dan Feller, used the Bulger Lecture to explore comparisons—and highlight differences—between Andrew Jackson and Donald Trump. Bancroft Prize winner Ari Kelman delivered the Blackburn Civil War Lecture and ran a popular brown bag on his experiences writing a graphic history about the Civil War. The Harold Abel Lecture Series sponsored two scholars: Debórah Dwork, Rose Professor of Holocaust History at Clark University, spoke on "Rescue and Rescuers during the Holocaust." Legal scholar Jennifer Trahan discussed challenges in prosecuting atrocity crimes.

The brown bag series for graduate students also offered practical professional orientation. Dale Moler provided a glimpse into the adjunct market and advice on how best to position oneself for the overall job market, while Dr. Maura Cunningham described possible alternative careers for history PhDs.

CMU graduate students continue to achieve. Andrew Dietzel successfully defended his dissertation. Shannon Kirkwood won the *Michigan Historical Review* graduate essay prize in a blind review against essays submitted by students from universities around the country. Two recent PhD recipients, Patrick Kirkwood and Jonathan Klauke, landed permanent teaching jobs. And Kathryn Ellison, who earned her MA from CMU, was appointed Director of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Saginaw Valley State University.

Kathleen G. Donohue
Director of History Graduate Studies



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ALUMNI NEWS

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News can be mailed to:

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