Greetings From Mark Wasserman  
Chair, Department of History

This is my third and final year as Chair. I am proud and honored to have served the Department. I would like to convey my heartfelt thanks to the staff—Tiffany Berg, Candace Walcott-Shepherd, Dawn Ruskai, Matt Leonaggeo, Melanie Palm, Lynn Shanko, and Matt Steiner—for their excellent work. I would also like to thank Vice Chairs Belinda Davis, Jennifer Jones, Johanna Schoen, and Alastair Bellany and Associate Chairs Jennifer Jones and Camilla Townsend, for their great efforts. It has been wonderful to work with all of them.

Four of our colleagues retire this year: Michael Adas, William Gillette, Phyllis Mack, and Bonnie Smith. We have had wonderful conferences in honor of Bonnie Smith (“Other Lives, Other Voices” in fall 2013), Phyllis Mack (“Faith, Feminism, and Desire” in February 2015), and Michael Adas (“The Individual in Global History” in April 2015). We will miss all of them, for they have been at the very core of our scholarship, teaching, and service and our intellectual lives. We welcomed two new faculty, Walter Rucker and Bayo Holsey, and new staff member Melanie Palm, the Administrative Assistant for Undergraduate Education.

Our faculty's accomplishments continue to be remarkable. Two recently promoted colleagues have published books: Seth Koven, The Match Girl and the Heiress and Sukhee Lee, Negotiated Power: The State, Elites, and Local Governance in Twelfth-to-Fourteenth Century China. Seth Koven has won the North American Victorian Studies Association (NAVSA) "Best Book of the Year" for 2014. Seth also won a Rutgers University Scholar-Teacher Award for 2015. Dorothy Sue Cobble co-authored Feminism Unfinished: A Short, Surprising History of American Women’s Movements; Cornell University Press published a twenty-fifth anniversary edition of Michael Adas’s classic Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology and Ideologies of Western Dominance. The following are other noteworthy achievements: Ann Fabian chaired the Pulitzer Prize jury for American History and was named a Distinguished Lecturer by the Organization of American Historians. Deborah White received an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from the State University of New York at Binghamton. Kathleen Lopez's Chinese Cubans: A Transnational History won the Caribbean History Association’s 2014 Gordon K. and Sybil Lewis Prize for the best book in Caribbean History. Dorothy Sue Cobble and Rachel Devlin won coveted American Council of Learned Societies Fellowships. Seth Koven and Judith Surkis have won a Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar award for 2016-17 for their RCHA project “Ethical Subjects: Laws, Moralities, Histories” (2015-17).
**New Faculty Members**

Bayo Holsey is a scholar of public culture and history in West Africa. She is the author of *Routes of Remembrance: Refashioning the Slave Trade in Ghana*. Last fall, she co-taught a History Workshop with Judith Surkis entitled “On the Move: People, Things, and Ideas in the Modern World.” In the future, she plans to teach a course on popular representations of slavery, terror, and genocide as well as a course on public history in Africa and the African diaspora. She will also teach a course on West African history and cultural formations.

Walter Rucker (Ph.D. California-Riverside) is an associate professor of African diaspora and Atlantic history who brings to the department an interest in the intersections between culture, resistance, and identity in early-modern Western Hemisphere slave societies. His books include *The River Flows On: Black Resistance, Culture, and Identity Formation in Early America* (2006) and *Gold Coast Diasporas: Identity, Culture, and Power* (2015). During Fall 2014, Professor Rucker taught "Atlantic Cultures, 1500-1800" and a senior research seminar entitled "The Atlantic Slave Trade in History and Memory." He has developed a new survey course entitled "The Black Atlantic World" which he will offer in the near future, along with other courses on African American history and Africans in the Americas.

**Welcome Melanie to the History Department!**

Melanie Palm joined us last fall as our new Undergraduate Administrator. Melanie is a Finance major and Accounting minor. She completed her Master’s degree in Higher Education Administration at the University of Pennsylvania. She is passionate about higher education and committed to helping students achieve academic success. She is excited to work with the History undergraduate students to help them realize and reach their goals.
The Public History Certificate  
By: Johanna Schoen  
Vice Chair of Undergraduate Education

In the spring of 2015, the history department launched a certificate program in public history. Public historians work in a wide variety of fields: as archivists, curators, researchers, at the Smithsonian, in local historical associations and societies, at national and state parks, and in private companies, among many others. Each semester, the History Department offers several undergraduate courses to train students to think critically about the public presentation of history and culture. This semester, for example, students could take a public history class with Prof. Andy Urban which developed a smartphone app for walking tours on Rutgers History. In anticipation of the upcoming 250th anniversary of Rutgers University, Urban’s class partnered with a graphic designer and the office of communications and marketing for Rutgers 250 to map out the historic walks and research sites along the way. Students researched a variety of topics and tours. As Saskia Kusnecov describes in her article in this newsletter, for instance, her group researched civil rights era activism and the evolution of campus cultural centers.

Another public history class, taught by Prof. Toby Jones, examined the history of New Jersey environments. Using digital tools, students mapped the state’s toxic sites and researched the history of pollution and toxic exposure in the state. And an oral history class, taught jointly by Shaun Illingworth and Molly Graham, introduced students to the uses of interviews in history. Students learned about the role of interviews with historical subjects, conducted background information on interview subjects, and participated in the interview process.

In the fall of 2015, we are offering two classes for the public history certificate – a public history and an oral history class – that will continue to focus on the 250th anniversary of Rutgers and the creation of public history materials about the history of Rutgers. The public history course taught by Nick Molnar, for example, will use oral history, photographs, and other sources to explore how people affiliated with the university have made an impact on the region.

In order to fulfill the requirements for the public history certificate, students also have to take an elective from a list of classes in other departments: Architecture and Cultural Change in American Studies, for instance, or Cultural Resource Management in Anthropology, the History of Landscape Architecture in Landscape Architecture, or Documentary Filmmaking for Writers in the English Department. These classes further introduce students to the “tools of the trade” for public historians, offer a glimpse of the breadth of the field, and teach students skills they can then use in their public history classes. Students in Documentary Filmmaking for Writers, for instance, might use their skills gained in that class to produce a public history document for their Public History class on the history of Rutgers.

In order to complete the public history certificate, students are also asked to do a history internship. The history department has had an internship program for over 20 years. This past year, we’ve given a fresh look to the internship program, put all the internship sites onto a map with dots linking to the site descriptions and revisited which sites to include. With more than 100 different internship sites, students can choose from a wide variety of experiences. They can work on architectural development projects at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area or intern in Special Collections at Rutgers amidst rare books, manuscript collections, and the University Archives. They can work at a working history farm and give tours in historical costumes or learn to give historical tours on the USS Ling, a World War II submarine.
Rutgers University, 1766-2016: Celebrating 250 Years of a College and University

By: Paul Clemens
Professor of History

For almost two centuries, Rutgers was a sleepy little liberal arts college, occasionally referred to as "Amherst on the Raritan." In the immediate post-World War II period, it was still just that, linked to the New Jersey College for Women across town, and newly attached to colleges in Newark and Camden. If people outside New Jersey knew Rutgers, it was because the cartoon character Mr. Magoo gloried in his college days at Rutgers, or because the nationally syndicated Hootenanny show filmed a sing-along at the Rutgers College Avenue gym, or perhaps because its sixteenth president, Mason Gross, had hosted two television series, Think Fast and Two for the Money. Sometimes, these same people mistakenly thought Rutgers was in the Ivy League, or that NJCW (later Douglass), was one of the seven sisters. Inside the state, people had heard about the Ag School's "Rutgers tomato," about the tireless efforts of historian Richard P. McCormick to make New Jerseyans aware of their state's history, and about its program in ceramic engineering. Only microbiologist Selman Waksman's discovery of streptomycin, the first successful drug in the treatment of tuberculosis, gave Rutgers broader visibility.

By 2016, two hundred and fifty years after its founding, Rutgers has become a major, public research university, and a member of the "Big Ten" athletically and academically. It is that long transformation--from a private, religious college, to an increasingly state-funded yet private set of colleges, to a true state university, and finally to a research university with a medical school--that the university will celebrate in 2016. And the history department will play an important part in that celebration.

Students in Andrew Urban's public history class got a head start this spring by working on a project described elsewhere in this newsletter. Former President Richard P. McCormick, now a department member in history and the Graduate School of Education, has written an autobiographical account of his career in higher education, Raised at Rutgers: A President's Story. In fall 2016, he will be teaching a research seminar on the university's history. Paul Clemens has completed a study, Rutgers since 1945: A History of the State University of New Jersey. The book, published by Rutgers University Press, provides a three chapter overview of the university's history, topical chapters that emphasize the student experience at all three main campuses, and a chapter, written by art historian Carla Yanni, dealing with the design of student dorms/resident halls. The University is publishing a special commemorative book, Rutgers: A 250th Anniversary Portrait, which will include parts written by faculty members who have taught many of our majors.

With a committee of African American alumni who were his classmates at Rutgers in the mid-1960s, Douglas Greenberg is planning a conference on African-American students at Rutgers in the 1960s. Thanks to support from History, Africana Studies, American Studies, and the Center for Race and Ethnicity, as well as from RU 250, they envisage a gathering that will bring Rutgers College alumni and Douglass College alumni back to campus for two days of conversation and recollection of a transformational moment in the university's history. This will be a public event in which the current students and faculty will have the opportunity to hear witnesses to the history of the university describe their experiences. There is also a plan for a reunion of the Puerto Rican students who in 1971 protested for new admissions and retention polices at the university, and whose activism helped launch the Puerto Rican Studies Department (today the Department of Latino and Hispanic Caribbean Studies, with several members who hold joint appointments in History).

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(250 Years continued)

Another undertaking is a new online course on the school’s history that Rudy Bell and Paul Clemens are creating for Spring 2016. The course is designed for both current undergraduates and interested alumni/alumnae (who will have a chance to participate fully in the class, share their own Rutgers stories with current students, and receive recognition for their participation without having to take the exams or do the papers!). It will survey such aspects of Rutgers history as the loss and acquisition of the medical schools, the growth of urban universities at Camden and Newark, the path to becoming a "big-time" athletic institution, student life on campus over the centuries, Rutgers role in the education of military veterans, the arts at Rutgers, battles for academic freedom, and student protest. A number of department members will be filmed talking about various aspects of Rutgers history. Hopefully many of the readers of this newsletter will respond to the opportunity to participate in this course.

Practicum Brings Public History Alive for Students

By: Saskia Kusnecov
History Major, '15

The Spring 2015 Public History: Theory, Method and Practice course introduced students to the ins and outs of life as a public historian. The class looks at case studies and public history methodologies to consider how the field has evolved as both professional practice and in relationship to entertainment, social activism, and education. Taking on the role of public historians, we have discussions about how to balance competing interests among stakeholders interested in the telling of a specific historical story, how to foster critical perspectives toward mythologized historical events, and how to work with multimedia platforms to usher public history into the digital age.

As a student planning on entering the public history field upon graduation, the most rewarding component of the class has been the opportunity to work on the historical content for a virtual walking tour of the university, which will debut as a smartphone app launched as part of the Rutgers 250 celebrations. We are working in groups that are thematically arranged, to conduct archival research on a topic in Rutgers history of our choice. For my group’s topic, “Student Activism and Multiculturalism at Rutgers,” we are looking at Civil Rights era activism and the evolution of the campus cultural centers. In our research process, we have looked through archival collections of student organizations and activist initiatives, such as the Black Student Protest Movement. Using audio of oral histories with student leaders, photos from the Livingston College yearbooks, and archival news articles, we are using these sources to interpret different sites located across all four campuses.

Throughout the process of developing this app tour, we have been able to directly employ the material we study. We are working with interest groups, conducting archival research, taking on critical perspectives of historic events, and planning for a multimedia platform. The public history course and its practicum aspect has not only introduced us to the field, but gave us the opportunity to engage the work of a public historian firsthand.
In the Spring 2015 semester, Rutgers Oral History Archives' Directors Shaun Illingworth and Molly Graham began offering a new course, "Introduction to Oral History." This class offers undergraduates an opportunity to learn about this interactive research method of documenting the memories of men and women who helped shape our history. Oral history provides unique insights into people's personal experiences — from the powerful and famous--politicians, generals and statesmen--to the average person--laborers, activists and soldiers.

In this course, Molly and Shaun have taught their students about the origins of the field of oral history and examined its methodology, scrutinizing the benefits and caveats related to its use. The class has delved into the ethical and legal issues surrounding oral history and analyzed how oral history resources are delivered to the public through traditional archives, web-based digital archives, print sources, museums, documentaries and public spaces.

One of the most stimulating aspects of the course is the fieldwork, where students get to engage in an interview with an eyewitness to history and play a key role in every step of the process. "Participating in an interview was one of my favorite parts of the course," said Meghan Valdes, SAS ’15, "Getting to sit with a veteran and ask them questions about their life -- getting to hear their story -- was a really memorable, wonderful experience."

Students also learned how to develop and produce a podcast using oral history resources in the ROHA collection and secondary historical resources. The students' podcast projects have included shows on women who worked on the Manhattan Project, Huey helicopter pilots in Vietnam, the NJC/Douglass experience in the 1930s, African-American educators and the roots of police brutality.

The undergraduates have also benefited from a series of engaging guest speakers, including MGSA Professor of Dance History Dr. Jeffery Friedman, founder of the LEGACY oral history project, Sarah Hagarty, Head Curator of the NJ Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Education Center and Emmy-Award winning and Academy Award-nominated documentary filmmaker Ken Mandel.

Initiated in 1994, ROHA seeks to conduct interviews with Rutgers alumni, faculty and staff and New Jersey residents about their life experiences and to share its data with a global audience. ROHA has thus far conducted more than 1,500 oral history interviews. Each interview follows the life-course method, documenting a subject from their family background to their present-day activities, generating a wealth of material in each session. ROHA's participants share the "behind-the-scenes" stories surrounding their achievements and contributions in a variety of fields, including business, science & technology, education, social justice, politics, law, business and military service.
Undergraduate Awards and Prizes

The History Department is proud to recognize its undergraduates for their outstanding work.

The **Martin Siegel Prize** is awarded annually to a student whose work in the History Seminar is judged to be best that year. This prize was established in honor of Dr. Martin Siegel, a history major at Rutgers College in the late 1940s. The 2014 winner was Joseph Zazzara for his paper “Evolution: Urban Radicalization and the Workers’ Red Guard in 1917.” This year’s winner is Brian Foley for his paper “The Kaiser, the Demon, and an Exercise in Political Demonology”.

The **James Reed Award** is given to the student with the best presentation at the Rutgers History honors conference. It is given in honor of Professor James W. Reed. In 2014, **Rachel Wetter** and **Michal Skalski** won the award. In 2015, **Joshua Blachorsky** won the award for his outstanding thesis presentation.

In 2014, James Malchow won the **Ceil Parker Lawson Prize** for his thesis, “By Hook or By Crook: A History of the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, 1965-1980.” The 2015 winners were Brian Foley and Sergio Rojas for their theses, “American Perceptions of Kaiser Wilhelm II, 1913-19” and “Public Discourse on Federal Income Taxation, 1861-1900.” This endowed prize was created in 2003 by Rutgers Professors Steven Lawson and Nancy Hewitt in memory of Lawson’s mother, Ceil Parker Lawson.

In 2014, the department awarded the **Harold Poor Prize** to **Olivia Rubino-Flynn** for her thesis “A Few Pages of History: Les Misérables in the Nineteenth-Century French Imagination.” The 2015 winner was **Campbell Sode** for his thesis “Suriname: An Asian Immigrant and the Organic Creation of the Caribbean’s Most Unique Fusion Culture.”

The **Daniel Horn Award** is given to an outstanding student who has written an exemplary paper on a topic of Jewish history. In 2014, **Rachel Wetter** won the award for her thesis “The Fruit of Her Hands: Women and the Negotiation of Gender in the Bund.” The 2015 winner was **Alison Bocchino** for her thesis “Christian Servitude and the Jews in the 12th and 13th Centuries.”

The **Margaret Atwood Judson** prize is awarded to a woman majoring in History who, in the opinion of the Department, writes the best History Honors thesis. In 2014, the award was given to **Olivia Rubino-Flynn**. The 2015 winner was **Allison Bocchino**.

The **Joseph B. Bradley Memorial Award in Roman Law** went to **Joshua Blachorsky** for his thesis “Examining the Relationship Between the Severan Dynasty and the Patriarchate in Late Antiquity.”

The **Society of Colonial Wars Prize** went to **Samantha Snyder** for her thesis “The ‘Calamities of War’: An Examination of The Revolutionary War Diary of Quaker Margaret Morris.”

Finally, the department was also able to provide several **Michele S. Hirshman Scholarships** for valuable support to students planning to study abroad.

All awards are made possible through generous donations from history alumni, faculty, and friends of the History department.
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Support the History Department!

If you would like to make a gift to any of the following programs in the History Department, please complete the form below. You can also make a gift online at http://www.support.rutgers.edu/history. If you have any questions, please contact Paul Kuznekoff, in the School of Arts & Sciences-New Brunswick Development Office, at 848-932-6457. Thank you!

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- The Harold Poor Fund (Number 039348)
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