In 2011, the History Department began a new tradition, the History Convocation. This memorable ceremony complements the university-wide graduation in High Point Solutions Stadium, and provides a chance for graduating seniors to gather and be individually recognized for their accomplishments by their family and friends. We look forward to continuing this happy event for many years to come.

Greetings from Mark Wasserman
Chair, Department of History

These are exciting times in the Department of History. Over the past two years we have recruited seven wonderful scholar-teachers: Tuna Artun, Rachel Devlin, Leah DeVun, Chie Ikeya, Jamie Pietruska, Johanna Schoen, and Judith Surkis. We have retained our high ranking (#20 overall and #1 in Women’s and Gender) in the US News & World Report’s annual evaluation, despite the retirement of distinguished colleagues Ann Gordon, Nancy Hewitt, Allen Howard, and Suzanne Lebsock. Individually, our colleagues have gained considerable note. Jochen Hellbeck, for example, has become a celebrity in Germany and Russia because of his recently published, widely acclaimed, pioneering study of the Battle of Stalingrad. Toby Jones is in demand as an expert on the Middle East, writing articles in publications such as The Nation and appearing on NPR.

Our teaching program has never been stronger. We have begun to experiment in the new world of hybrid and online classes. Rudolph Bell’s “History and the News” has proven a spectacular success, serving as a model for others in the University. Our students continue to achieve admirably, and we induct record numbers into Phi Alpha Theta, the national history honors society. Beyond Rutgers our History majors gain admission to top graduate programs and law schools, while others gain employment in a variety of exciting fields ranging from broadcast journalism to public history and business.

During my first year as chair, I have been struck by the engaging intellectual community in the History department. As you will see in our Newsletter, there are so many initiatives and accomplishments in the world of History at Rutgers. We hope that you will consider contributing a gift through the Rutgers Foundation (details on back cover) to enhance our undergraduate program and provide opportunities for our students. Thank you to all!
Welcome New Women’s and Gender Historians!

Five new faculty members in women’s and gender history recently joined the department:

Leah DeVun (medieval and Renaissance) came from Texas A & M University and is the author of Prophecy, Alchemy, and the End of Time: John of Rupecissa in the Late Middle Ages. Rachel Devlin (20th century American culture and gender) joined us from Tulane University. She is the author of Relative Intimacy: Fathers, Adolescent Daughters, and Postwar American Culture.

Johanna Schoen (20th century U.S., women, and public health), comes to Rutgers from the University of Iowa and is the author of Choice and Coercion: Birth Control, Sterilization, and Abortion in Public Health and Welfare in the Twentieth Century. Chie Ikeya (modern Southeast Asia, gender, and colonialism), previously at the National University of Singapore, is the author of Refiguring Women, Colonialism, and Modernity in Burma. Judith Surks (France, Algeria, and gender) comes to Rutgers from Harvard and Columbia University, and is the author of Sexing the Citizen: Masculinity and Morality in France, 1870-1920.

New Faculty Members

Tuna Artun (Ph.D. Princeton) is a scholar of Ottoman history, and his recently defended dissertation is entitled, “Hearts of Gold and Silver: The Production of Alchemical Knowledge in the Early Modern Ottoman World.” He teaches History of the Ottoman Empire, Modern Turkey, World History I, and a new course on magic and the occult sciences.

Andy Urban (Ph.D. University of Minnesota) is an Assistant Professor in the American Studies and History departments. His book The Empire of the Home: Race, Domestic Labor, and the Political Economy of Servitude in the United States, 1850-1920 (NYU Press, forthcoming, 2015), examines how the occupation of domestic service and the “servant problem” reflected broader anxieties about the maintenance of domestic order as the United States expanded nationally, ended slavery, and encountered new sources of labor through immigration. Urban has engaged his students through a series of creative public history projects, including a student curated exhibit displayed at Douglass library in Spring 2013 titled “Curating Guantanamo”. Urban’s class joined students at eleven universities around the country who asked: what can GTMO’s history tell us about what’s happening now – there, and here at home? Andy encourages students to dig through historical archives, talk to people who worked, lived, were detained, or advocated on behalf of those who were at Guantanamo.

Jamie Pietruska (Ph.D. M.I.T.) brings to the history department her interests in the cultural history of the nineteenth-century United States and the history of science and technology. In her seminar on the history of food in the US she introduces students to research in the exciting new field of the history of food. Her forthcoming book, Looking Forward: A Cultural History of Prediction in the Gilded Age, examines the economic and epistemological implications of forecasting as well as the interrelationship between forecasting practices and ideas about predictability and uncertainty.

Jonathan Gribetz (Ph.D. Columbia) studies encounters between Jews and their Middle Eastern neighbors in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition to teaching courses such as “Arab-Israeli Conflict” and “Jewish Society and Culture II,” Jonathan has created several innovative new courses such as “Jews in the Islamic World,” and “Jewish Nationalism”. His course, “Jerusalem Contested,” explores the entwined histories of Jews, Muslims and Christians in Jerusalem.

Lou Masur (Ph.D. Princeton), Professor in the American Studies and History departments is a prolific and creative scholar whose recent books include Lincoln’s Hundred Days: The Emancipation Proclamation and the War for the Union (2012) and Runaway Dream: Born to Run and Bruce Springsteen’s American Vision (2009). Professor Masur teaches a large and popular course on the Civil War for the History department.
Retirements

Ann Gordon’s retirement brings to conclusion her leadership of the six-volume Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony papers project. Nancy Hewitt, one of the anchors of our American History and Women’s and Gender program since she arrived at Rutgers in 1999, will retire in June 2013. Her inspired teaching and mentoring of undergraduate History and Women’s and Gender Studies students will be missed. Al Howard’s undergraduate courses in World Civilization, African history, and the Atlantic World were central to our department’s innovative world and comparative history programs, until his retirement in 2011. Suzanne Lebosock has had a long and distinguished career at Rutgers, first from 1977 to 1992, when she helped build the women’s history program and then after 2002 when she returned to Rutgers, arriving just as her prize-winning and innovative history, A Murder in Virginia: Southern Justice on Trial was published. Karl Morrison shared his deep engagement in medieval intellectual history with undergraduate history majors from his arrival at Rutgers in 1988 to his retirement in 2010. Our Business Manager, Mary DeMeeo, will retire in August 2013, after 25 years of service at Rutgers. The department would like to thank Mary for her dedicated service and wish her all the best in her retirement.

In Memoriam

Michael Gasster, Professor Emeritus of Chinese history, passed away on September, 2012. He taught history at Rutgers University from 1970 until his retirement in 2002. Henry R. Winkler also passed last year in December. Winkler joined Rutgers as an assistant professor in 1947 and served in various administrative positions such as dean, vice provost, senior vice president for academic affairs, and executive vice president. He left Rutgers in 1977 to become the executive vice president of his alma mater, the University of Cincinnati, where he later became president.

The Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis (RCHA)

The RCHA is an interdisciplinary research center that has provided a setting for the discussion of contemporary issues and historical perspective since 1988. The center’s theme for 2012-2014 is “Networks of Exchange: Mobilities of Knowledge in a Globalized World,” and is directed history professors James Delbourgo and Toby Jones. This two-year seminar explores the relationship between varieties of knowledge and practice and the formation of networks that transcend single cultures, nations, or regions. For more information about the RCHA and this year’s theme please visit: https://www.sas.rutgers.edu/cms/rcha/.

Undergraduate Directors

This year we will say farewell to Undergraduate Director Jennifer Jones, who will end her term as undergraduate director, and welcome Johanna Schoen into the position.

Welcome Felicia and Tiffany to the History Department!

This past year the history department gained two new staff members: Felicia Norott and Tiffany Ross. Felicia, our new Undergraduate Administrator, is a History major and Gender Studies minor who recently completed her M.A. at Monmouth University, with a thesis, Prostitution, Penicillin, and Prophylactics: A History of Venereal Disease in the United States Military during the Vietnam War, on the history of gender and health in the US military. She plans to continue her education by pursuing a history Ph.D. Tiffany, Business Specialist, graduated from Rutgers University. She comes to us with over ten years of experience in accounting, grants, and human resources. In her previous position at The College of New Jersey, she was Administrator for the Office of Grants and Sponsored Research. Tiffany is very excited to be back at Rutgers and looks forward to working with everyone in the History Department!
Teaching Online

Rudolph M. Bell

The lecture format that dominates instruction today at all public universities is relatively unchanged from Medieval European times. Peter Abaelard could walk into a large classroom on the Raritan in 2013 and he would see and hear pretty much what he saw and heard around 1115, when he became a professor at Notre-Dame in Paris. There were no PowerPoint slides then but a lecturer with Abelard’s razor-sharp logical mind did very well without such props, at least until his love life pixilated his brain. University professors today rank right up there with preachers and lawyers in clinging to delivery styles unchanged over nearly a millennium.

The 16th century spread of printed books potentially threatened the stand-up lecture but universities gradually beat back the idea that students could learn simply by reading. They strengthened their monopolistic control over higher education by implementing admission standards, contact hours, credits, certificates, and diplomas. Exceptions such as the 19th c. Andrew Jackson’s self-education as a lawyer or the 20th c. Bill Gates’ success in business without an MBA only prove the rule for the rest of us mortals. We need the degree and the only place to get it is at a university. The result of this global monopoly over higher education is to make certified learning hugely expensive and restricted to a small fraction of the population, one that possesses either great wealth, a noble pedigree, or the sponsorship of organizations such as churches or armies.

Following World War II in North America and the 1968 student rebellions in much of Western Europe, countries in these areas opened public universities to the masses. The lecture format, with its capacity to put hundreds of students in the presence of a single professor, became an economic necessity in big public universities. Tenured professors remained at the top of the pyramid, lecturing ever onward in 55-minute, or at RU 80-minute, chunks of imparted wisdom. But even after public higher education breakthroughs in the West, billions of people in Latin America, Africa, and most of Asia remained among the excluded.

Some members of the professoriate today see online instruction, especially in the liberal arts, as a major threat to their favored place in the university monopoly. They trumpet the obvious limitations of online learning, without looking at its fabulous potential to democratize education and fundamentally alter how we impart knowledge. MOOCs can reach the billions of people who never experienced the mid-20th century expansion of higher education in North America and Europe.

For the past three years I’ve engaged students through online learning in a new course titled “History and the News.” Each week we focus on a current news event and explore its historical background and revealing parallels. I have long been fascinated by the question of how the historical past relates to current events. We all know some version of the cliché that those who forget history are doomed to repeat it, along with the counter-argument ascribed to Henry Ford that “history is bunk,” not an unreasonable stance for a fellow who guessed that people would prefer cheaper cars to better bicycles. However that may be, I think we all can agree that knowledge of the historical past behind a current situation, for example our quagmires in Iraq and Afghanistan, might enrich our understanding of what is happening there today. Less universally accepted but certainly something I believe, is that current events change the way we understand the past. In my own case, I am very comfortable with the idea that my historical work on late medieval female spirituality is shaped as much or more by contemporary feminist theory as by the discovery of hitherto unknown dusty parchments.

Throughout the semester I call on my colleagues in a range of departments to provide the necessary expertise to deepen historical understanding for hundreds of students. With a portable camera and some quick low-level editing, I put the interviews (aka lectures) online for students to view at their convenience. So also for weekly discussions, which could take place asynchronously online, with all the advantages this method offers for time to reflect before opening your mouth. I don’t say Internet dialogue is best for every situation, and the recent Mante Te’o fiasco offers some poignant lessons. But the fact is that we all need to know how to communicate effectively in cyberspace, something we all will be doing much more frequently in the years ahead.

Over the past three years, the news has never disappointed expectations for surprise. 2011 saw the “Arab Spring,” followed shortly by the Fukushima nuclear disaster. Spring 2012 brought the vigilante killing of Trayvon Martin and 2013 elections in Israel and Italy, the Christopher Dorner manifesto, and legal challenges to DOMA. All events with profound historical resonance, explored through the open mindedness of my colleagues in sharing their thoughts via media that profoundly question established teaching practices.
Into Africa

Barbara Cooper

I am often asked how I became interested in Africa. No one ever seems to want to know how I became interested in history, but for me what’s interesting about Africa is its history. It is true, if somewhat embarrassing, that I fell in love with Africa in part because my father loved Tarzan. As a child I loved the white-veterinarian-as-savior program, “Daktari,” and was willing to watch pretty much any other nature show my mother could find on TV. I had a notion I would become some sort of Jane Goodall, preferably with a sense of humor.

But when I actually did manage to get to the east coast of Africa as a young adult, the animals were fine, but the people were finer. Kenya as an independent nation was exactly the same age as me, and it seemed full of promise despite a complex burden of history. By the time I had left four months later I no longer wanted to be with animals. I wanted to understand the challenges facing Africans, the origins of those challenges, and why they seemed to be so intractable. I had discovered a place where people appeared to be resilient, entrepreneurial, sociable and inventive. There was almost no question I asked (about schooling, about health, about jobs, about politics) that didn’t seem to require a long excursus into history.

Since then I’ve spent time in many different parts of Africa and have a keen sense for the many variations in experience and history across the continent. But some of my initial impressions still hold true. I continue to be amazed at the capacity of quite ordinary people to solve practical problems with a bit of mechanical know-how and common sense. I love the agility with language I find everywhere on the continent among people who often speak five different languages well enough to tell a joke. A widespread ethos of generosity has assisted in my research far more than I deserve. I have become fascinated by how people manage to make use of the resources available to them to build worlds, communities, and selves. Niger, a landlocked country in West Africa, has been the focus of my research.

I love a good library and a musty archive—I always have. But historians of Africa tend to venture far from archives and libraries to constitute archives of their own through oral interviews. Learning languages and talking to people of many different backgrounds is the part of my work I love the most. Traveling to difficult places to get those interviews has its charms, which decline, sadly, as I grow older. But the experience of simply talking to people about their own histories is deeply rewarding.

In my first book, Marriage in Maradi, I explored how men and women navigated the rapidly changing landscape of the 20th century by making use of marriage; something so ordinary it almost didn’t appear to merit study. The topic emerged from conversations with women in Niger about their lives, through which it gradually dawned upon me how central marriage was not only to their choices in life, but also to their ability to shape their worlds.

Since then I have worked on a variety of topics: the hajj, customary law, and gift exchange. I stumbled into my second book topic while working on the first. I had sought assistance from a mission (SIM International) that worked in Niger and I became intrigued by the links between this evangelical community and Christians in the United States. I interviewed missionaries who had retired to Florida and worked my way through the archival materials of the mission in South Carolina. During the Bush years a book on how evangelical Christians engaged with Muslims in West Africa seemed particularly urgent. And so I wrote Evangelical Christians in the Muslim Sahel, a study of the emergence of a small Christian community inspired by this mission in Niger, relating the difficulties the mission faced from both the French colonial administration and the Muslim community, and tracing the tensions between converts and missionaries as the church grew.

When I wrote about marriage I failed to ask women about one of the central issues in their lives: reproduction. That seems very peculiar to me now, although of course at the time I was much younger and didn’t have children of my own. As I have aged and watched Nigerien politics it has seemed to me that anxieties about fertility link the experiences of individuals to the concerns of communities and to the preoccupations of the state. In my current project I seek to sort through the implications of reproductive concerns to understand the extraordinary divide between a woman desperately seeking to conceive and global institutions bent on reducing population growth.

I’ve spent quite a few years trying to get my bearings in the array of sub-fields and disciplines relevant to such a study, from demography and public health, to the actual business of birthing babies. I have been extremely fortunate that the Mellon Foundation sees this kind of multi-disciplinary work as worth funding and has very generously enabled me to seek out “New Directions” in my research by gaining training in unfamiliar fields. The joy of research is that you never stop learning and I seem to have chosen a project that guarantees that I will never quite be finished. The challenge at this point is to find time to read through all the treasures I have accumulated and to get back to the field to begin interviewing. I hope to spend the upcoming year doing just that.
Alumni in the News

Lucia McMahon, Associate Professor of History at William Paterson University, received her B.A. from Douglass College in 1994 and her Ph.D. in History from Rutgers in 2004. As a history major researching her history honors thesis on early American women’s history, Lucia discovered a diary in Alexander Library written by a young woman who lived in early 19th-century New Brunswick. With co-editor, Deborah Schriver, Lucia published the diary as, To Read My Heart: The Journal of Rachel Van Dyke, 1810–1811 (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000). Lucia McMahon’s new book, Mere Equals: The Paradox of Educated Women in the Early American Republic (Cornell University Press, 2012) tells the story of a generation of young women in the early republic, who enjoyed access to new educational opportunities, and struggled to make sense of their individual and social identities in an American nation marked by stark political inequality between the sexes.

The Writing Tutor

During this spring semester the History Department created a new pilot program, the History Writing Tutor in order to assist undergraduate students with all aspects of writing papers for their history courses. Our writing tutor, recent Rutgers Ph.D. Allison Miller, helps students brainstorm ideas for papers and presentations, polish rough ideas into cohesive historical arguments, organize outlines and papers, and refine rough drafts. Allison says that being the writing tutor has increased her appreciation for the effort students take to work on their writing and how seriously they take the study of history. She explains that it is rewarding to work with undergraduates at Rutgers on a wide variety of historical topics.

Spotlight on a Historian

Professor Samantha Kelly’s research has focuses on later-medieval Italy and its connections to other European and Mediterranean regions, especially with regard to the intersection of religion and politics and the uses of the past. Kelly’s new research project extends her interest in the Mediterranean to include the Horn of Africa, especially Ethiopia. In addition to tracing Europeans’ complex reactions to the kingdom, the project will mine the little-known literature of medieval Ethiopia itself (written in Ge’ez, a Semitic language unique to Ethiopia) to examine its internal history, relations with neighboring Muslim powers, and priorities with regard to contact with Europe. Professor Kelly was awarded Mellon New Directions fellowship in 2011 to fund linguistic and interdisciplinary training in Europe and Ethiopia to facilitate this research. She writes, “After moving to London in June, I spent July in Ethiopia, learning Ge’ez in Addis Ababa and traveling to the medieval rock-hewn churches in Lalibela. During the academic year, I took courses in African history, art, and archeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies (part of the University of London), and flew biweekly to Hamburg, Germany, to attend two further courses in Ge’ez language and literature. In my free time I hung out at the delightful British Library.” The History department looks forward to Samantha’s return for the Fall 2013 semester.
Undergraduate Awards and Prizes

The 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 in the History Program that year. This prize was established in honor of Dr. Martin Siegel, a history major at Rutgers College in the late 1940s. In 2011, Andrea Goyma won the award for “Nobody’s Fools: The Satirical Campaign of Pat Paulsen and the Dutch Provos” written for Susan’s Schreper’s seminar. In 2012, John Karayannopoulos’s paper “A 14th-Century Middle-Class Copy of Boethius’ De Consolatione Philosophiae,” written for Samantha Kelly’s seminar, won the award.

The Ruth Pease Sansalone Prize is awarded annually to a history student who has contributed to the larger community through work in a program such as a public history internship or service-oriented activity. William R. Sansalone (B.A. Rutgers, 1953) established the prize in 1958, and it became a history department award in 2008. The prize was awarded in 2011 to Alina Serafini for her internship at the Mudd Library of Princeton University. In 2012 Donna Martino won the Sansalone award for her internship with Morris County Heritage Commission.

Michele S. Hirshman Scholarships provide valuable support so that four to six students can study abroad each year. Many of the department’s awards are linked to the History Honors Program. One of these is the James Reed Award, which 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 (pictured below), one of our most outstanding teachers at Rutgers since he joined the faculty at Rutgers College in 1975. In 2012 Samuel Rodrigues (“The Portuguese Colonial: Why the Military Overthrew its Government”) and Jamie Okosko (“Do the Ends Justify the Means? A Look into Contemporary Racial Profiling in New Jersey”) won awards for their thesis presentations.

In 2012, the department awarded Ryan Wernlund the Harold Poor Prize, made possible by the support of Professor Emeritus Philip Greven, for his thesis, “Aggressive Negotiations: Diplomacy and Mercenary Warfare in Renaissance Bologna.” In 2012 Jordan Hua won the Cecil Parker Lawson prize for his thesis, "'They Looked Askance': American Indians and Chinese in the Nineteenth-Century U.S. West." This endowed prize was created in 2003 by Rutgers Professors Steven Lawson and Nancy Hewitt in memory of Lawson’s mother, Cecil Parker Lawson.

These awards are all made possible through generous donations from history alumni, faculty, and friends of the History department.

Phi Alpha Theta

2011-2012
Samir Al-Rawi
Jennifer Andrew
Juber Ayla
Nagla Bedir
Jacob Benhabib
Rohini Bhaumik
Ashley Carlson
Kyle Carlson
Chelsea Corcoran
Ralph Cretella
Kiley Dougherty
Dylan Elber
Justin Gaudenzi
Kassandra Jordan
John Karayannopoulos
Sophie Krauskki
Anna Major
John Martin
Donna Martino
Kara McCluskey
Neil Metcalf
Matthew McNeal
Mary Kathryn McNeill
Harold Mesa

Gordon Morrisette
Jose Ortiz
Alexander Price
Thomas Reilly
Laura Rice
Jo Riley
Patricia Robinson
Kathleen Ruffer
Courtney Rummel
Allison Ryan
Joshua Schulman
Aviva Shapiro
Cally Sherman
Carisa Sousa
Samantha Stanzione
Edward Todd
Jessica Tsui
Marquis Whitney
Joseph Zazzara
Victoria Zebrower
Scott Zimms

2012-2013
Banan Abdelrahman
Safa Akhtar
Matthew Aquino
Ashley Baker
Linda BednarSKI
Eleanor Brehme
Robert Buscher
Alice Chunn
Lee Colrick
Kate Dobromilsky
Julia D’Orazio
Sukanya Dutta
Caitlin Foley
Katherine Francolino
Matthew Georgi,
Anahita Ghavami
Gina Greck
Jessica Grollman
Kelley Guerrero
Jonathan Hall-Eastman
Shan Harewood
Autumn Harwish
Maureen Higgins
Samantha Hone
Sha Huang
Yesenia Infante
Eric Jones
Sarah Kennelly
Matthew Kenny
Rohma Khan
Daniel Kleinman
Zachary Koch
Daniel Kukains
Vilan Kvyat
Alexandra Lefante
Michael Marpaung
Juliana McDonald
Margaret McHugh
Daniel Norris
Rudolph Petrole
Joseph Reeves
Allison Reiter
Alexandra Rospond
Laura Sarfaty
Oren Savir
Levi Schott
Breanna Sooy
Dana Stefano
Neil Stocco
Lindsay Sweeney
Randolph Talalas
Stephanie Thomas
James Troshane
Jessica Uriel
Anthony Vescio
Izabela Walicka
Yingbo Wang
Rachel Wetter
William White
Emily Williams
Elizabeth Zwirz

James Reed
Professor of History
Ph.D., Harvard University
At Rutgers since 1975
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!

Enclosed is my generous gift of $________ toward:

- [ ] The Harold Poor Fund (Number 039348)
- [ ] The Honors Program Fund (Number 039543)
- [ ] The General History Fund (Number 039206)

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