Hello from Van Dyck Hall!

2022–2023 was quite a year for the History department. Pandemic restrictions were lifted and campus finally returned to something like normal. We were able to invite speakers to campus, host a few conferences—including “1522: Exploring Indigenous Perspectives on Mexico’s Post-Conquest Years” and “Power and Politics in New Jersey: 50 Years After Rebellion in Camden”—and have a welcome back party in September and our Senior Celebration in May.

Yet, some elements of the year were quite extraordinary. In April, for the first time in Rutgers history, faculty and graduate student workers went on strike. Many members of the History department abandoned their desks to walk the picket lines and demand a fair contract. For those who were there, the beautiful weather and company of our colleagues contributed to a joyous atmosphere of solidarity. While the strike did not achieve all of the union’s demands, it did result in some concrete gains, particularly for TA/GAs, lecturers and NTT faculty.

Elaine LaFay, Nicole Burrows, and Chie Ikeya enjoy the Spring 2023 Senior Celebration

History Ph.D. students, Alison Hight, Anais Fauert, and Ariel Mond participate in a strike action.
This year we welcomed some new staff members and said goodbye to several longtime colleagues. In October, Marilyn Reyes joined us as Director of Finance and Operations. In February, undergraduate administrator Anuja Rivera left for a new position at the School of Management and Labor Relations; Kenny Linden took over in the undergraduate office in June. At the end of July, business specialist Amanda Gravenhise moved to the Jewish Studies department. And in August, Dawn Ruskai left the graduate office after twenty-nine years to begin her retirement in Florida.

On the faculty side, intellectual historian Jim Livingston retired in January after a long and productive career at Rutgers that began in 1986.

In sad news, in March we mourned the passing of Sam Baily, historian of Latin America, who taught in the department from 1964–2002. And in August we mourned the loss of Donald R Kelley, who taught at Rutgers from 1990 to 2005.

In July Paul Hanebrink stepped down as Vice Chair for Graduate Education after three years. Many thanks to Paul for taking over the job in the midst of the pandemic and helping our graduate students weather some extraordinary challenges. Judith Surkis has ably stepped in to take over as Graduate Vice Chair for the next two years.

In the History department, our faculty, staff and students do excellent work day in and day out. But I’d just like to mention a few particularly notable achievements. David Greenberg received a Guggenheim fellowship and an NEH Public Scholar fellowship for 2023-2024 to work on his biography of John Lewis, *John Lewis: A Life in Politics*. This makes three years in a row a faculty member in our department has received a Guggenheim! Alastair Bellany was awarded a fellowship from the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton for Spring 2024 to research the interactions between Little Ice Age climate change and the social, political, and cultural history of the early modern British Isles. Two faculty members were recognized for their superb teaching: Jamie Pietruska received an Excellence in Online Teaching Award from Rutgers Teaching and Learning with Technology and Steve Reinert was honored with an SAS Lifetime Career Achievement Award for Distinguished Contributions to Undergraduate Education. Lastly, our office staff received the SAS Team Award for Outstanding Contributions to Operational Excellence. It was wonderful to see them recognized in this way.

Away from Van Dyck, controversies continue to swirl around the humanities. In Florida, state officials want to exert control over what can be taught in history classrooms. Pundits and politicians attack gender studies as a way to score points in a culture war. And late last month West Virginia University announced that it would cut all of its foreign language and literature programs in the name of budget cuts, despite the fact that these programs did not actually lose money. To me this only highlights the importance of our work, as professional historians and as educators. And, so, this year we’ll keep doing what we do best—using our research, writing and teaching to create new knowledge for the public good.

-- Melissa Feinberg

Professor of History
and Chair of the History Department
Dear Dawn,
Goodbye, thank you, best wishes!

After 29 years, Dawn Ruskai, the heart and soul of the History Department’s graduate program, retired in August 2023.

Dawn looks forward to new adventures in the next chapter of her life in sunny Florida.

If you would like to stay in touch with Dawn, you may email her at dawnruskai@gmail.com.

Bonnie Smith and Candace Walcott-Shepherd share a moment.

Michael Adas presents Dawn with flowers.

Seth Koven thanks Dawn for everything.

The whole gang says goodbye!

Photo credits: Seth Koven
Hello everyone, nice to meet you! My name is Dr. Kenneth Linden (but please call me Kenny)

I am from Central New Jersey (yes it exists!), and received my BA from Ramapo College with a major in History. I received my MA & PhD in Central Eurasian Studies with a History Minor at Indiana University. At IU, I worked in the Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center, served as a TA, and taught a variety of courses related to Mongolia and Central Asia. It is great to now be back home and working in NJ after a long time away.

I lived about a year and a half in Mongolia where I conducted research for my dissertation in both the archives in the capital of Ulaanbaatar and in the countryside. My research is on Mongolian environmental and animal history, and I have published my dissertation and a few articles on this topic, from the history of wolf hunting to a translation of a socialist-era short story about collective herders.

I am deeply passionate about all periods of history across the world. This stems from a lifelong love of reading history, studying history in school, and even playing video games inspired by history. I am always happy to chat about your interests in different periods, methods, and areas of history.

I look forward to working with you all to further the history program here at Rutgers!

Goodbye, Anuja!

With deep appreciation for Anuja Rivera’s warm, wonderful, and inspired service in the History Department.

Anuja was the anchor of our undergraduate program for over six happy years, from 2017-2023.

Sending best wishes to Anuja for her new position as Student Counselor in the Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department at Rutgers.

Goodbye, Amanda!

With BIG THANKS to Amanda Gravenhise for all her dedicated work as our business specialist.

Welcome, Marilyn Reyes, Director of Finance and Operations
Reckonings with history are at the center of contemporary public debates in the US and the world. On multiple levels - communal, national, and transnational - political action overtly invokes the revision, defense, or recreation, of entrenched historical records, for the sake of alternatively empowering disenfranchised constituencies, or silencing them from exclusionary dominant narratives. Many of these debates have been argued over centuries and around the globe.

With the theme “Repairing the Past,” the RCHA seminar in 2022-24 invites an interdisciplinary group of historians, anthropologists, sociologists, philologists, and philosophers to consider these questions. Over the course of the seminar, we will be exploring comparative histories of repair work and redress across centuries and around the globe.

Many of our case studies begin with instances of erasure or other violence, chart the contours of resistance or resilience, and then calculate reparation or retribution. As we follow such outlines across very diverse contexts we hope to get to know our place-based community, and even dip our toes in repair activities of our own.

Join us on Tuesdays, 11am-1pm, Academic Building 6051 West

Faculty:
Chie Ikeya
Emily Marker
Jeff Friedman
Kendra Boyd
Suzy Kim
Toby Jones

Graduate:
Erica Fugger
Alison Hight
Aries Li
Anna Nath
Jesse Siegel
Katie Sinclair
Yulia Cherniavskaya

Project Directors
Dr. Kristin O’Brassill-Kulfan and Dr. Jochen Hellbeck
Power and Protest in New Jersey

Rutgers- Camden, April 21, 2023

Spring 2023 marked the fifty-year anniversary of two historically significant trials that adjudicated the outcome of two rebellions in Camden New Jersey that took place between 1971 and 1973. One was a rebellion against state violence and policing and the other protested the Vietnam War. Participants in the second rebellion became known as the “Camden 28”.

Rutgers Camden hosted a major conference on April 21, 2023, Power and Protest in New Jersey -- 50 Years After Rebellion in Camden: Recovering Histories, Exploring Memory. The conference brought together scholars, activists, and the principal participants in the two rebellions. The goal of the conference was both to commemorate the events and to conduct a scholarly investigation of the rebellions. Conference participants explored what the uprisings meant at the time, and the ways in which they produced long-term effects on New Jersey and the nation.

What made the conference and attendant events so distinctive was the key role undergraduate students at Rutgers played in planning the event. The conference was created by our own history undergraduate students at Rutgers New Brunswick working two public history courses and in the “History Workshop” (506:299), taught by Jennifer Mittelstadt and Academy award-winning filmmaker Anthony Giacchino.

Rutgers students tracked down key scholars to speak on the topic, located participants in the historical events, arranged and recorded oral histories, and produced their own podcasts that they shared in the final session of the conference.

Photo on right: Students hold up posters that Anne-Marie Afriyie (senior history major) created as part of her podcast on her quest to find the burial place of Rafael Rodriguez Gonzalez.

Photo: Students with members of Camden 28

With thanks to Anthony Giacchino, Jennifer Mittelstadt for planning and leading the course and project. Thanks to Kristin O’Brassill-Kulfan, the History, Law and Social Justice Initiative, ROHA, the History Department, the ISGRJ, the Law School, and the Office of Undergraduate Education for their support.

Photo credits: Jennifer Mittelstadt
Power and Protest in New Jersey

50 Years After Rebellion in Camden: Recovering Histories, Exploring Memory

Fifty years ago, two rebellions took place in Camden, New Jersey—one against the Vietnam War, and one against police violence. On this anniversary, join student researchers, scholars, and protest participants to discuss how we understand and commemorate this history.

Panel One:
9:00-10:30AM
The Camden 28 and Catholic Left Protest Against the Vietnam War

Michelle Nickerson (Loyola, Rutgers BA, 1996), Sean Peters (University of Wisconsin, Madison), Anthony Giaconia (filmmaker of “Camden 28”), Thea Johnson (Rutgers Law), Student Researchers

Panel Two:
11:00-12:30PM
The Anti-Policing Uprising
Kendra Boyd (Rutgers Camden), Michelle Nickerson (Loyola University, Chicago), Simon Barta (University of Wisconsin, Madison), Johanna Fernandez (Raroch College, City University of New York, New York City), Student Researchers

Panel Three:
2:00-3:30PM
Historical Commemoration and Memory
Join a group discussion of event participants, students, scholars, and community members about how to commemorate and preserve the memory of the events in Camden.

Panel Four:
4:00-5:00PM
Podcast Event
Listen to new podcasts on the event created by student researchers led by Academy Award-winning documentary filmmaker Anthony Giaconia, director of “The Camden 28.”

Event Sponsors: The Rutgers Law School • The Department of History, Rutgers University-New Brunswick • The Rutgers University Institute for the Study of Global Racial Justice • The Office of Undergraduate Education, School of Arts and Sciences, Rutgers University-New Brunswick
Interview with Dr. Deborah Gray White
Board of Governors Distinguished Professor of History

Sarah Coffman: How did your early experiences in the academy shape your approach to teaching and mentoring graduate students?

Dr. White: I had such a hard time getting *Ar’n’t I a Woman* published. I was told more than once that it’s ready for the trash heap. The dissertation was delayed over a year, and what was happening with the project was that I was encountering the archive that as we know now, murders black women again and again and again. I think that experience has shaped me more than any experience as far as being understanding towards graduate students in my mentoring. While I was going through it, it was horrendous, but it really has taught me to run with graduate students and their projects: “This is your idea. Stay with it; let’s see what we can do with it.” And it has taught me to be open to what people are encountering in the archive.

Sarah: What is your proudest accomplishment over the course of your entire career?

Dr. White: My two girls. But in terms of work, *Ar’n’t I A Woman*. That was such blood, sweat and tears. It was so many nights of crying. And the fact that I stayed with it, not just through the dissertation, but through tenure, and I didn’t follow the advice of so many people who told me to try and find another subject. I just kept working on it, and I came up with a gendered interpretation of slavery which had not been done before. That’s my proudest accomplishment.

Sarah: What has changed most in the academy over the course of your career?

Dr. White: The way we speak, theorize, and understand history, and not just African American women's history. Certainly I think that African American women's history has taught people to be suspect of the archive. I'm writing a piece for *Genealogy*, so I had to go back through *Ar’n’t I a Woman*, and there are passages where I don't have the language that we have today. I was trying to define intersectionality, but I didn’t have the vocabulary for it yet, and I’m struggling to figure it out. Over the past thirty years, by changing the way people approach the study of Black women, we have reworked how we deal with all other subaltern people by bringing in new methodologies.

Sarah: What are your thoughts on the state of the field of African American history generally? How about Black women's history?

Dr. White: Now, I'm biased, so we'll just put that right there. But I do think that Black women's history has totally revitalized African American history. Because for so long in most regular histories, women were excluded, left out, or overlooked. And yet, when I see the work that’s been done across the board, the innovation and the imagination in the ways that scholars are dealing with Black women it is so exciting.
Sarah: What was your favorite course you taught at Rutgers?

Dr. White: “The History of Race and Sex in America”. It helped me work out the whole issue of intersectionality; the course changed over time because our country and the issues we faced changed.

Sarah: Do you have specific hopes for the history department in the wake of your retirement?

Dr. White: I hope that there’s a greater understanding of just how important the humanities are. I hope we don’t start to think of college as just vocational.

Sarah: Do you have any advice for graduate students that you would like to share?

Dr. White: Whenever I taught the seminar I told my students, you think you’re training to be a historian, and you are, but first and foremost, you are a writer. Writing is when you do all your thinking and putting things together, and presenting new knowledge. And the other thing I would say to graduate students is, graduate school is hard. They just don’t give PhDs for nothing -- they make you struggle.

Sarah: How did you come up with the idea for the new endowed dissertation completion fellowship?

Dr. White: I watched students at Rutgers struggle to get funding. Everybody’s scrambling after their fourth or fifth year. I thought, I have extra money and I could either take it and have the government tax it. Or, I could use the money to fund something that’s going to help history students writing their dissertations. I started endowing it about three years ago. By next year, it ought to be fully funded. Anybody who wants to contribute can certainly contribute, but I have been pretty much the soul endower of this dissertation fund. I believe in African American history. I just do. I want to see African American history continue to thrive at Rutgers.

Sarah: Would you share details about the conference in March celebrating your career?

Dr. White: Professors Fuentes and Gill are planning it and they have gotten help from a lot of my former students. I told them I don’t know how I’m going to sit there, but it’s actually going to be an academic conference with papers about African Americans and African American women. They asked me to put together a list of my former students and postdocs, and I was surprised and shocked to see all the names: I supervised 10 postdocs and was the main advisor for 20 students. So, I’m excited about the conference. I’m a little nervous, and I’m humbled by it. I’m feeling the feelings, and I’m sharing that with my therapist.

Sarah: What are your plans for life after you retire?

Everything that I’m doing now, except teaching. Although I will teach in some capacity, most likely with my church. But I am writing an autobiography. It’s amazing to research yourself. I’ve gotten records from my college, a program that I was in and all these documents. I’m looking at my name and looking at how people were talking about me. There’s even a film that I’m in from 1967 or 1968. It’s amazing now to be in the archive and to be able to research myself. It’s sort of creepy, but it is fun too. I’ve finished five chapters so far.

I’m working on a project with my alma mater to do oral histories of the people who came out of the affirmative action program that I was part of. Also, I grew up in the Lincoln Center area of New York City. There are a couple of projects that are ongoing about the tearing down of San Juan Hill, which was a Black neighborhood. And so, I’m working with them.
Dr. Pietruska is an associate professor in the History Department and author of *Looking Forward: Prediction and Uncertainty in Modern America* (University of Chicago Press, 2017), a history of forecasting that explores how the routinized predictions of everyday life functioned as tools for risk management as late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Americans came to believe in the promise and accept the limitations of predicting the future. Her current research explores paperwork, bureaucracy, and investigation in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century United States.

*The History Department sat down with Jamie to discuss her approach to online teaching.*

**What do you enjoy most about online teaching?**

It has been very rewarding to watch students’ intellectual journeys through my online courses through a series of twice-weekly “micro-assignments” that offer them the opportunity to engage with primary and secondary sources and connect them to lecture material.

Students in my online courses still write papers and do “unessay” projects, but it is in the small, incremental steps students take through each module where they often make the greatest strides.

Students in my online courses more readily draw connections between different topics and themes in the course as a result of this sequence of “micro-assignments,” and they do an excellent job of synthesizing the course material and connecting it to the present day.

**How do you make online courses successful and student-friendly?**

In my experience, organization and communication are critical to the success of an online course. Canvas sites for an online course are not static repositories for content but rather carefully curated spaces for active student engagement with the course material and our intellectual community.

I communicate frequently with students in a variety of different formats, including video announcements, weekly “What’s Happening” newsletters, Canvas announcements, automated reminders, and personalized emails, in addition to the regular feedback students receive on their twice-weekly submissions in Canvas and Hypothesis.

I am grateful to the History graduate TAs who help teach the course. Without their labor these large online courses would not be possible.

**What additional tips can you share regarding engaging students in an online course?**

A common assumption is that student engagement is automatically more difficult in an online course simply because of the format. My students and I have actually found that not to be the case at all (and indeed some of my students have remarked that they feel more engaged and connected to our online intellectual community than they do in some of their in-person courses).
In addition, I have also redesigned my lectures as what I think of as video podcasts, with an emphasis on big ideas, edge-of-your-seat storytelling, and weird-but-true details.

I also rely extensively on the Hypothesis social annotation platform, which we use each week. In Hypothesis, students can annotate a text for a variety of different purposes: choose a passage they found most surprising or significant, connect a passage to a concept from the lecture, work together with classmates to answer reading questions, compare a reading with another source, reply to classmates’ annotations, and annotate a passage related to a paper assignment. I also have experimented with annotating images and videos, which has worked very well. Students report that they love using Hypothesis because it allows them to see what their classmates think about a particular source and have a conversation with their classmates in the margins. Hypothesis is an excellent and simple way to create collaborative online space for student interaction and intellectual community. Hypothesis has had such a positive impact on my students and my courses in a relatively short time, and now I can’t imagine teaching without it. I use Hypothesis in my in-person teaching as well, and students are similarly enthusiastic.

What you are most proud of in your creative retooling of your course as an online experience?

One of the things that has been most gratifying about my online courses is that they have attracted large numbers of students from across the disciplines. In all my courses (Accidents & Disasters in the US & the World, Technology & Nature in American History, History of the Future, and Data: A Social History, which I am now teaching in person), I aim to bridge the humanities and the STEM fields by designing all my courses with a focus on big ideas, interdisciplinary topics, and present-day relevance to appeal to students with diverse intellectual interests and professional goals.

In all my courses, we shift back and forth between the past and present as we think critically about how we got to where we are today. My courses are designed so that every student can succeed, regardless of their experience or background in History.

I have been delighted to learn that students have shared some of the course material with family and friends and, in my Accidents & Disasters course, have discussed topics like climate change and nuclear weapons accidents at the dinner table. It has also been very gratifying to watch students work together so collaboratively and collegially online – students report that my online courses have had a sense of intellectual community, which is thanks to my students and their eagerness to engage with each other and the course material.
Featured Faculty Awards

Dr. Stephen Reinert

Lifetime Career Achievement Award
in recognition of Stephen’s distinguished contributions to undergraduate education.
(Rutgers SAS)

Professor Stephen Reinert’s contributions to the undergraduate experience at Rutgers and the chosen subject matter of his history courses have something in common: they represent sweeping historic, transformative journeys that have wide-ranging, long-lasting impact.

If it seems like an exaggeration to describe a teaching career in this way, consider the numbers alone. Since joining Rutgers in the early 1980s, Professor Reinert has taught approximately 4400 students in over 20 different courses offered in the History and Classics department. These include courses on Byzantine literature and civilization and the empire, Greek prose, Medieval studies, Medieval Christian view of Islam, the rise of the Ottoman Empire, the Crusades, and Dracula. These courses range from smaller advanced seminars to large introductory courses at the 100- and 200-level. He has also directed or co-directed many honors theses since 1991.

No matter the size or the audience, Professor Reinert has been consistently praised by students for making historical content exciting, for his passion and enthusiasm, for his ability to weave together humor, depth of content knowledge, sources, deft lecturing, and constructive feedback.

Professor Reinert has consistently sought ways to expand the concept of the classroom, the mode of delivery, and the subject matter itself. His European survey course disrupted the Western bias by showcasing the divisions between Western and Orthodox regions and the influence of the Islamic civilization. His course on the Crusades not only guides students along the routes, conditions, and movements of the armies, but tracks the cultural and political ramifications.

His course Dracula: Facts and Fictions features the legendary Vlad of Wallachia (Vlad the Impaler) and his various reincarnations, inviting students to explore his life, the interpretation of his career based on surviving works, how his character and deeds were vilified, how the versions of this legend took shape over time, and Dracula evolved as an enduring icon of pop culture.

Photo: Students at the Arsenal Museum in Paris on a “guided tour” of the 12th-century translation of the Qur’an into Latin which the Cluniac Abbot Pierre the Venerable commissioned, along with his treatise against Islam.
In these classes, Professor Reinert focuses not only on the history, but on close reading skills, presenting arguments and positions based on textual analysis, and the complexity of interpreting the past—all while presenting the material in an accessible, captivating, relaxed way.

Professor Reinert has always embraced both traditional chalk talk and new technology. Well before the pandemic hit, forcing everyone to pivot to online instruction, Professor Reinert was already a pioneer of the online modality. And well before ever instructor had a dedicated course website or LMS, he launched extensive course sites in the Fall of 1996. All of this without any instructional designers or IT support.

Professor Reinert’s courses have never been constrained to the walls of a classroom—well before “experiential learning” was a movement. His students traveled to France to explore the monastery that was the subject of their course on Cluny, and to Philadelphia to the Rosenbach library. It seemed only natural that he should be the Dean of the Rutgers Study Abroad program from 2006-2012.

"[This is] one of the best courses at Rutgers...[It] really encourages student understanding of the world and how we got to where we are today."

"Professor Reinert is one of the best professors at Rutgers by far."

"I enjoyed how immersive this course was. It really tried to recreate historical and archaeological experiences at Cluny through Professor Reinert’s detailed lecturing and copious amounts of sources."

-- Students’ comments on "Medieval Cluny, Christendom, and Islam."

Above: Professor Reinert above (middle) with his co-teacher Dr. Cathie Healey (far right) who oversaw the Rutgers in France program and the honors students who took part in the trip to Cluny and Paris.

Source: Achievement award citation, The School of Arts and Sciences, Rutgers University
David Greenberg, Professor of History and of Journalism and Media Studies, wins two major fellowships

In Spring 2023 the Guggenheim Foundation awarded a fellowship to Professor David Greenberg for work on his biography of the late congressman and civil rights leader John Lewis. David has also won a National Endowment for the Humanities Public Scholar fellowship for 2023-24 for his work on John Lewis.

Aside from Lewis’ memoir, written in the 1990s, and a partial biography by Jon Meacham that covers the highlights of his life in the 1960s, Greenberg said his book will be the first “full-scale Lewis biography” to cover the last 50 years of the civil servant’s life.

The idea of writing a biography on Lewis came to Greenberg in 2018, but he didn’t start on it until the following year, after meeting with Lewis and receiving his blessing. Not long after he began working on the biography, Lewis was diagnosed with cancer and he died in 2020. The biography, which Greenberg hopes to complete this year, aligns with Lewis’ long-held belief in teaching the history of the civil rights movement.

“He helped create the Smithsonian Museum of African American History, led pilgrimages to Selma every year, and wrote his own graphic memoir to tell the story to young people,” said Greenberg. “He really believed in history and devoted a lot of his later years to making sure the story of the movement would be known by future generations.” (1)

(1) Quoted in Rutgers University story, “Two Rutgers Professors Named 2023 Guggenheim Fellows,” (April 17, 2023).

The Thomas A. Edison Papers win an award from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)

The Thomas A. Edison Papers Project, a research center at Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences, is one of the most ambitious editing projects ever undertaken by an American university. Since 1978, the Edison Papers Project has edited the 5 million pages of documents that chronicle the extraordinary life and achievements of Thomas Alva Edison.

The Edison Papers received a three-year grant (October 2023-September 2026) from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This will allow the Edison Papers to complete and publish Volume 10 (January 1890-June 1892), which marks the end of Edison’s two decades of leadership in the electrical industry. During the period of the grant, The Edison Papers also plans to edit two thematic volumes: Volume 11 (Sound Recording), Volume 12 (Motion Pictures). We also will continue adding materials to our digital image edition.

In addition, the Edison Papers was awarded new one-year grants from both the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and the New Jersey Historical Commission. Congratulations to the Edison Papers for these important awards.

Dr. Paul Israel is the Director and General Editor of the Thomas A. Edison Papers at Rutgers.
Camilla Townsend co-wins the inaugural Mortensen Award.


Mr. Mortensen was a generous benefactor for many Rutgers units, including the Rutgers University Press and the Mason Gross School of the Arts.

The inaugural Mortensen award winner is Camilla Townsend, History, who co-wrote On the Turtle’s Back: Stories the Lenape Told Their Grandchildren.

Professor Townsend will be recognized at the Celebration of Scholarship on November 8, 2023 and will be the keynote speaker.

Professor Townsend became interested on this topic while researching sources at Special Collections and University Archives for the Scarlet and Black, volume I.
NEW FACULTY BOOKS

1. The Cambridge History of the Pacific Ocean
2. Susie King Taylor: Slave, Teacher, Freedom Fighter
3. The Military and the Market
4. Animal Spirits: The American Pursuit of Vitality from Camp Meeting to Wall Street
5. Cautivas de la Libertad: Esclavitud y Emancipación Glaubl in el Pacífico Negro Colombiano
6. Yearning and Refusal: An Ethnography of Female Fertility Management in Maravi, Agya
Rutgers History Department professors enjoy the Spring 2023 Senior Celebration:

Elaine LeFay
Paul Hanebrink
Jennifer Jones
Nicole Burrowes
Kristin O’Brassill-Kulfan
Chie Ikeya
Melissa Feinberg

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THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

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Meet our newest doctoral students, p. 24-25

Shauni Armstead

Advisor: Dorothy Sue Cobble

Hannah Groch-Begley

“Mother, Sister, Soldier, Killer: Violent Women and the First World War, 1914-1918”
Advisor: Seth Koven

Eri Kitada

“Intimately Intertwined: Filipino Women in the U.S.-Japanese Imperial Formations, 1903-1956”
Advisors: Chie Ikeya and Jennifer Mittelstadt

Celso Mendoza

“Painting Colonialism with Words: The Aztecs Recording and Resisting Spanish Rule a Generation after Conquest.”
Advisor: Cami Townsend

Timur Mukhamatulin

Advisor: Jochen Hellbeck

Carie Rael

“In the Shadow of Disneyland and Conservative Orange County Politics: Latinx Resistance in Anaheim and Santa Ana, 1942-2012”
Advisor: Donna Murch

Henry Snow

“Making Revolutions: Labor and Power at the Atlantic Dockside”
Advisors: James Delbourgo and Seth Koven

Brooke Thomas

“To Capture a Vision Fair:” Black Sorority Women and the Shift From Respectability Politics to Public Policy, 1935-1975”
Advisor: Deborah Gray White

Lisette Varon-Carvajal

“Caring Women: Midwives and Female Healers in New Granada, 1700-1810”
Advisor: Tatiana Seijas

Emmet Von Stackelberg

Advisor: Jackson Lears
Major External Fellowships

Adam McNeil
McNeil Center Consortium Dissertation Fellowship at the McNeil Center for Early American Studies at the University of Pennsylvania

The James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference at Emory University Dissertation Completion Fellowship

The Marilyn Yarbrough Dissertation/Teaching Fellowship in the Department of History at Kenyon College

The Thurgood Marshall Fellowship from the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies at Dartmouth College

Adam will be taking the fellowship at the McNeil Center

Jesse Siegel
DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) Grant, Munich, Germany

Adam Stone
Fulbright IIE Open Study Award, Russia

Lisette Varon-Carvajal
2023 Women’s Studies Fellow at the Institute for Citizens and Scholars

Master’s Degrees Conferred

Global and Comparative History

Joseph Mcmenamin

Angharad Rebholz
Jobs & Postdoctoral Fellowships

Lisette Varon Carvajal
Assistant Professor in the History Department, Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia

Sam Hege
Two year postdoc at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin for a position in a new research project focused on "Environmental Knowledge in Times of Crisis."

Sam also won a 1 year postdoc at the Yale Program in Agrarian Studies. He will be declining the Yale postdoc and going to Berlin.

Celso Mendoza
Position as Bridge-to-Faculty Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Illinois, Chicago. These positions generally transition to tenure stream within two years.

Henry Snow
Visiting Assistant Professor of Early American History at Colby College

Emmet von Stackelberg
Full-time Lecturer, History and Literature program at Harvard University

Brooke Thomas
Assistant Professor of African American Studies in the Department of Gender and Race Studies at the University of Alabama

Brooke also won a postdoctoral in African American History at the Richards Civil War Era Center and Africana Research Center at Pennsylvania State University. She’ll take this postdoc before assuming her position at Alabama.
Recent Ph.D. Proposal Defenses & Working Titles

Joshua Anthony
“A Nahua Family History: Kinship and Memory in Chalco, Mexico, 1465-1640”

Ayelet Marron

Ilya Slavutskiy
“Road Not Taken: The Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionaries and Ukrainian Socialism, 1917-1920”

University Short-Term Awards & Grants:

Kiamsha Bynes:
John Whiteclay Chambers II Oral History Graduate Student Fellowship

Laura De Moya-Guerra:
Rutgers Digital Humanities Initiative Graduate Seed Grant

Javier Gonzalez Cortes:
Neal Ira Rosenthal History Travel Award

Dalia Grinan:
Neal Ira Rosenthal History Travel Award

Alison Hight:
Neal Ira Rosenthal History Travel Award

Ayelet Marron:
Edward Spaulding Perzel Endowed Dissertation Fellowship Award

Jeongeun Park:
Rutgers Digital Humanities Initiative Graduate Seed Grant

Jesse Siegel:
Neal Ira Rosenthal History Travel Award

Adam Stone:
Neal Ira Rosenthal History Travel Award

Daniela Valdes:
John Whiteclay Chambers II Oral History Graduate Student Fellowship

Publications

Eri Kitada.

Sarah Roth.
External Short-Term Awards, Grants and Prizes:

Josh Anthony
Rockefeller Brothers Curatorial Research Fellowship from the Hispanic Society of America in New York City

Josh Anthony
“Missionary Manuscripts in Mesoamerican Languages,” cohosted by Princeton University Library, the Library of Congress, and Dumbarton Oaks, Summer Workshop Grant

Kiamsha Bynes
North American Society for Sport History (NASSH) Dissertation Research Award

Yulia Chernyavskaya
The Linda Hall Library of Science, Engineering, and Technology Virtual Research Fellowship

Mary Gently
Bordin/Gillette Fellowship at the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan

Ilya Slavutskiy
Silas Palmer Fellowship to do dissertation research at the Hoover Institution Library and Archives

Ilya Slavutskiy
Ukrainian Studies from the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) Dissertation Research Grant

Ayelet Marron
Allan R. Millett Dissertation Research Fellowship Award from the Society for Military History

Ariel Mond
Ithaka S+R Fellowship, research non-profit focused on advancing equity in higher education

Ariel Mond
Rikers Public Memory Project Summer 2023 internship through the Rutgers Graduate Public Humanities Internship Program

Adam Stone
Title VIII In-Person Summer Research Laboratory Associateship Research Laboratory (SRL) Program at the University of Illinois. Supported by the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center (REEEC) and the Slavic Reference Service (SRS) at Illinois

Jian Ren
History & Political Economy Project Summer Research Grant to support his project on “The Political Economy of China-Latin America Relations, 1960-1990
Lauren Rorie
Lauren’s research interests include Black women’s intellectual history, Black women’s expressive culture, and Black women’s internationalism across the diaspora in the twentieth century.

Ethan Dunn
Ethan is interested in the history of technology and capitalism in US at the turn of the 20th century. Ethan studies the innovations of mechanical computers and imperial finance by analyzing the use of machines in metropolitan banks.

Cydney R. Taylor
From Elk Grove, CA, Cydney’s research focuses on the culinary history of African American and West Indian cuisine and its diaspora during the Second Great Migration.

Avigyan Banerjee
From Kolkata, India, Aviguyan is interested in sociocultural histories of South Asia, colonialism and empire, migration, death and dying, urban and spatial histories, and oral narratives and memory.

Cherene Aniyan
From Kochi, India, Cherene is interested in the labor histories of migrants across the Indian Ocean, particularly South Asians working in the Arabian Gulf under British colonialism.

Yuntian Xuan
From Shanghai, Yuntian (Christopher) is interested in the production of “chinoiserie” and “occidenterie” in early modern Europe and China, and how global consumption of these goods shaped ideas about gender, sexuality, and humanity.

Bea Pearson
Coming to us from South Jersey, Bea utilizes Black feminist public humanities methodologies to research Black women's early American archival (after)lives.
PH.D. STUDENTS

Xiaoli Pan

Hailing from Philadelphia, Xiaoli investigates in healthcare and “systems of wellness” in the Middle Ages. Her broader interests include medical humanities and ethnomedical systems today, and healthcare as an industrial enterprise.

Kyra March

Kyra is from Darlington, South Carolina and studies African American women’s history during the Civil War, Geechee culture, questions around public memory, and public history.

Colin O’Connell

Colin’s research examines the dichotomy between the nature of Margaret Thatcher’s Conservative government and the vibrancy of queer life during the HIV/AIDS epidemic in 1980s Britain.

Nathan Darmiento

Nathan comes to RU from Salt Lake City. He studies migration from Guatemala and El Salvador in southern Mexico in the 1980s. He is also interested in the impact of interstate Cold War policies on local communities.

Anh Adams

Anh studies women’s history in the Progressive-era American South. She explores policing, sexuality, labor, and the construction of the carceral state.

Sydney Smith

Sydney’s research interests include 10th-century Black feminism, motherhood, and Black women’s autobiographical writing during late 20th-century Black liberation movements.
The 45th Annual Warren I. Susman Graduate Conference

The panels & faculty chairs

“Histories of Print Culture”
James Goodman

“Archival Appraisals”
Camilla Townsend

“Confronting Empire”
Seth Koven

“Practices of Commemoration”
Kristin O’Brassill-Kulfan

“Articulating Black Identities”
Tiffany Gill

“Histories of Childhood”
Rachel Devlin

“In Pursuit of Freedom”
Marisa Fuentes

“The Medicalized Body”
Elaine LaFay

Keynote Address

Dr. Nicole Burrowes delivered the keynote lecture on her forthcoming book *Seeds of Solidarity: African-Indian Relations and the 1935 Labor Rebellions in British Guiana.*

Keeping with the theme of the conference, Dr. Burrowes grounded her lecture in how the small region of the Caribbean has such an immense significance for the modern world.

Quoting Lillian Guerra, “Caribbean history is not merely about the ‘colonial origins of poverty’; it addresses the most fundamental questions of who we are, what we believe, and how we got that way.”

Professor Burrowes demonstrated how Guyana exemplifies this sentiment, while providing tools and strategies for graduate students who study subjects similar to hers.

She concluded her keynote address by providing more tips and noting the importance of maintaining community inside and outside academia.

Thank you Dr. Burrowes for being our keynote speaker!

-- Rosa Cordero, Kiran Baldeo, A.J. Boyd, Sarah Coffman, and Isaac Guzman (The Susman Steering Committee)
This year’s 45th annual Warren Susman History Graduate Conference showcased microhistorical methodology and brought together scholars from across the region to share scholarship and fellowship with one another—uniting in person for the first time in four years. We were very proud to showcase the scholarship of some of our department’s students: Yazmin Gomez, Jeongeun Park, Sarah Roth, Kiamsha Bynes, and McKenzi Christensen.

This year’s steering committee consisted of Rosa Cordero, Kiran Baldeo, A.J. Boyd, Sarah Coffman, and Isaac Guzman (pictured below from left to right).

When we deliberated themes in early September 2022, we looked inward at the circumstances that brought us into academia. “Small, but Mighty” reflected our experience as an incredibly small cohort of five marginalized individuals who were admitted during a pandemic.

Our theme also reflected the historical subjects we have chosen to study, those who could be “lost within the historical processes or in an anonymous crowd” (Georg G. Iggers, 1997). By choosing the theme “Small, but Mighty,” we wanted to highlight the work of scholars who center historical subjects relegated to the margins. The scholars that presented at Susman approached the theme in unique ways beyond what the committee could have imagined.

While we are a small cohort, we felt that our impact on the legacy of the Susman could be great by hosting the first in-person conference in four years. Planning a return to an in-person gathering was not easy. However, with the assistance and institutional memory of the history department’s and RCHA’s administrative staff and Rutgers Catering, we were able to cultivate a space where junior and senior scholars exchanged ideas, shared meals together, and sported matching RU History Susman tote bags. It was an intellectually stimulating day from the first panel session to the keynote lecture.

Photo to left, from left to right: Jeongeun Park, Sarah Roth, Yazmin Gomez, and Dr. James Goodman (Newark).

Looking forward to the 46th annual Warren Susman History Graduate Conference, we hope that next year’s committee will hold another successful event replete with tasty food, scholarly networking, interdisciplinary dialogue, and an equally, if not more, stylish tote bag (see to the right).
Undergraduate News

2023 Undergraduate History Awards

Departmental Awards

Ceil Parker Lawson Memorial Prize:
Samuel Lurie, History & Jewish Studies double major, Class of 2023

Dr. Martin Siegel Prize in History:
David Ogilvie, History major, Class of 2023

Edward McNall Burns Award in History:
Jens Knutsen, History Major, Class of 2023

Edward Romano Memorial Award:
Katherine Silva Sedana

Harold L. Poor Memorial Award:
- 1st Place – Reuven Weintraub
- 2nd Place – Robert Proko
- 3rd place – Richard DiFalco

Daniel Horn Award:
Samuel Lurie

Society of Colonial Wars Prize:
Reuven Weintraub

Henry Rutgers Scholars Award

Samuel Kao – “No Such Thing as a Free Lunch: The Struggle Over Public Universities in the Postwar Era” – History Major, Class of 2022

James Reed Award
Elijah Hanebury

Lloyd Gardner Fund
- Julia Fuchs – History Major, Class of 2022
- Reuven Weintraub – History Major, Class of 2022

University Awards

Helen Prager Miller:
Gillian Carmien, History Major, Class of 2023

Joseph B. Bradley Memorial Award
Richard DiFalco

Margaret Atwood Judson
Claire Apel

Maurice DuPont Lee Jr. Fellowship in History
Katharine Little, History Major, Class of 2022

Dr. James Delbourgo with Samuel Lurie, recipient of the Ceil Parker Lawson Memorial Prize
Claire Apel
“Back to the 1950s: How American Cinema of the 1980s and 1990s Discusses the Postwar Decade”
Advisor: Rachel Devlin

Reuven Weintraub
“Be Upon Your Guard Then, My Countrymen: John Adams and Virtue: 1753-1787”
Advisor: Paul Clemens

Richard DiFalco
“Roman Hanniballic Army and the Allies: Foreign Alliances Key to Roman Expansion”
Advisor: Thomas Figueria

Elijah Hanebury
“The Human Museum: An Undeniably Rutgers Story”
Advisor: Kristin O’Brassill-Kulfan

Robert Proko
“Prohibition in the Nation and New Jersey”
Advisor: Richard McCormick

Jens Knutsen
“Pillar of Hate in the Garden State: Alma Bridwell White and the New Jersey Ku Klux Klan”
Advisor: Andy Urban

Lilith Lee
“A Common Project: Visions of a Reformed Civil Society in the Cahiers de Doléances and the Code Napoléon”
Advisor: Jennifer Jones
Profiles in Public History

Maria J. Marin
Rutgers Oral History Archives (ROHA) Internship, graduating with Public History Certificate

“My experience with ROHA in the Summer of 2020 was beyond rewarding for my career, my interests, and for the impact I hope to have in the world.

I had the honor of interviewing women veterans and listening attentively to their stories of their service overseas and how their family was a pillar to their success.

Their stories motivated me to pursue a career in the US Navy, in the Navy I have been proud to represent women and hope to inspire younger generations to serve the world just as the female veterans I interviewed at ROHA inspired me.

At ROHA I also transcribed and translated Spanish interviews which made me aware of how I am lucky I am to be fluent in both English and Spanish. The internship made me excited to dive deeper into the study of history and made me realize that living history is everywhere!”

Adithya Venkateswaran
Rutgers Oral History Archives (ROHA) Internship, graduating with Public History Certificate

“Throughout the time I was involved in the Public History Program, I have been instructed on how sites push to keep memory and preservation as their core goals.

ROHA’s mission is to capture the oral histories of veterans and citizens. I felt this experience transformed my overall skillset in the way that I learned to conduct interviews and ask questions that will be of interest to the viewers viewing the site. Thank you, Dr. OK and Shaun Illingworth, Director of ROHA, for this incredible opportunity!”

Click to find out more about the Rutgers Oral History Archive
Recognition and Celebration
May 2023

2023
Public History Certificate Recipients

Dhestyknei Abdullah
Kiran Andrews
Louis Bartolomeo
Elijah Hanebury
Enya Laumbach
Shenghui Li
Maria Marin
Katherine Miller
Amanda Nyarko
Katherine Scagl iota
Katherine Silva Sedano
Claire Sosnowski
Adithya Venkateswaran
Gil Stuart Woody

2023
Law and History Certificate Recipient

Sebastian Chiaramonte
Adithya Venkateswaran

2023
STEM in Society Certificate Recipient

Adithya Venkateswaran
From History Majors to Law School

Madison Payer
History Major
Psychology Minor
Class of 2023
Phi Beta Kappa, junior year
Phi Alpha Theta
Summa Cum Laude

University of Miami School of Law

Why did you select the University of Miami?
Madison: Cost, location, and opportunities all played a part in my law school decision. I like the Miami area—warm weather, being on the water, etc. Miami Law offered me a competitive scholarship. And, last but not least, I found that a variety of courses, clinics, and journals—among other things—are offered by Miami Law.

Is there a particular area of law in which you plan to specialize?
Madison: As of now, I am interested in many different practice areas.

What are you most looking forward to?
Madison: I’m excited for everything! For example, I cannot wait to start learning new material and meet my peers.

When did you first realize you wanted to attend law school?
Madison: The law has been an interest of mine for as long as I can remember. I think I was drawn to the practice of it because it combines subjects that interest me—for example, history and the government—and things that I like to partake in, such as reading and writing.

What other careers have you considered?
Madison: I have, at times, looked into other careers. Teaching is one example.

How have your studies at Rutgers prepared you for law school?
Madison: My time in law school will certainly be affected by my time in the History Department at Rutgers. For example, I think the research and writing skills in any law school curriculum are skills that I have practiced and refined during my time as a history major at Rutgers.

Have you had any experience working with lawyers or in a law firm?
Madison: So far, my work experience has been unrelated to practicing law.

Who are your mentors and how were you advised?
Madison: I received advice mostly when I was deciding on a law school rather than applying to them, as I was very adamant in pursuing a career in law. My parents and twin sister were instrumental in helping me choose the law school that was the best fit for me. An aunt of mine who lives in the Miami area was able to connect me with people associated with Miami Law so that I could hear their opinions on the school. Additionally, professors in the History Department at Rutgers played a part, such as by encouraging me, offering to write recommendation letters, writing recommendation letters, etc.
Sumit Bedi
History/Poli Sci Major
Philosophy Major
Medieval Studies Major
Class of 2023
Phi Beta Kappa, junior year
Phi Alpha Theta
Summa Cum Laude
Pritzker School of Law
Northwestern University

Why did you select Northwestern?

Bedi: Northwestern gave me a pretty large scholarship and I've always wanted to go to Chicago, so it worked out well.

Have you picked an area of specialization?

Bedi: Though I'm not entirely decided yet, I'd like to specialize in public international law. I've always been interested in how states interact on the global stage, and I believe that there's a lot of progress and change to be made in that area in particular.

What are you most looking forward to?

Bedi: I'm most looking forward to meeting all my fellow first-year students in law school. I'd like to know how different people approach studying law in different ways – while I come to it from a historical/political background, I'm interested in seeing, for example, how an English major, or an engineer, views the law.

When did you decide to go to law school?

Bedi: I've wanted to go to law school since my freshman year of high school – I've had a longstanding interest in debate and public speaking and I've long felt like becoming a lawyer's been the best way for me to apply my skills to a career. When I came to Rutgers I had considered going into academia, specifically in philosophy or history, as an alternative path, but I ended up going with law because I felt like it was better suited to my personality. I enjoy studying the aforementioned fields, but I wasn't sure if I was up to the task of devoting myself to them for the rest of my life, so law was the natural choice.

How have your studies at Rutgers prepared you for law school?

Bedi: I feel like my coursework most prepared me for law school by honing my argumentative writing skills. Over my years at Rutgers, through the various liberal arts classes I had taken, I developed my ability to marshal evidence for and argue in favor of various positions well – critical skills for budding lawyers.

I think majoring in history is a great path to law school if that's where one wants to go with it. Combing through old archives, comparing contradictory accounts of the same period or tracking the changes that occur in a society across time (or any one of the skills historians use day-to-day) have a uniquely relevant connection to studying law. In many ways, every lawyer is required to have a certain command over not just the modern interpretations of, but also the history of their own legal system.

Do you have work experience in the field?

Bedi: While I never worked for a law firm while in college, I had previous experiences with the application of law in the public field while interning with my local Chamber of Commerce while in high school. In retrospect, this probably impacted my desire to specialize in public international law as well, as it revealed to me the inner mechanisms of the law in relation to societies and economies as a whole.

Who are your mentors?

Bedi: I had several friends who ended up attending law school after attaining their undergraduate degrees who helped guide me through the process of putting together my application and studying for the LSAT.
MADHIA ABDUL MAAJID
ANNE-MARIE AFRIYIE
KIRAN ANDREWS
CHARLES BAKER
BRUNO BATTAGLIA
CODY BROOKE
SARAH BRUNO
GARETH CONWAY
MIA DE ANGELIS
JACOB ESLINGER
AVA FELDMAN
LUKE FERRELL
CAL FODOR
MICHAEL GIAQUINTO
ALEXANDER HALL
ASIA HARRIS
KATHERINE JACKSON
REBECCA JOLIUS
ANNE KUDRLE
MATTHEW LASUSA
KATHRYN LEE
LILITH LEE
YONNY LEIVA
JOHN MICHAEL MCGEE
MARIA J. MARIN
CASSIDY MOTT
PATRICK MULLEN
FABIAN PAREDES
SHIVALI PATEL
BRANDON POPESCU
ISABELLA RUITER
SYDNEY SANTOS
HENRY SHOTWELL VI
AMY SMITH
LAUREN SULTZBAUGH
AYANA TAPPER
ANNA TARALLO
DEEPTI VAJAPEY
MADDISON VAN DER MARK
ROBERT WARGASKI
RUIZHE YIN
DUSTIN YOUNG
JENNA UNGER

Maria Martin receives her PAT certificate

Dr. James Delbourgo presents the ceremonial red carnation
Spring Events from Rutgers Day to Senior Celebration
Leslie Alexander

The past year was an exciting one for me! The biggest news, of course, is that I officially joined the History department as the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Professor of History. I feel lucky to be in this extraordinary community of brilliant scholars, and I’ve been so deeply impressed by the quality of our students and the dedication and care of our staff. I also published my second monograph, Fear of a Black Republic: Haiti and the Birth of Black Internationalism, which won the Pauli Murray Book prize from the African American Intellectual History Society.

During the past year, I received a fellowship from the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard University, and I will be continuing my work with them over the next academic year, focusing on the long history of policing in Black communities.

Perhaps the most inspiring intellectual interaction this year came from the Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis, which focused on the theme of “repair.” In that community, I further developed my own historical analysis and forged meaningful connections in my new intellectual home.

Beyond the university, I have been serving on the Advisory Council for the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD), and I will be departing shortly for our conference in Ghana. I was also elected to the Board of the Montpelier Foundation, and was recently voted as the Board’s vice-president. Over the next few years, the Montpelier Foundation will be striving to create a more holistic and inclusive understanding of our nation’s founding—one that acknowledges the vital role that enslaved Black people played in building America.

Yesenia Barragan

It’s been a wonderful professional past year for me. I’m so happy to share that my recently published book, Freedom’s Captives: Slavery and Gradual Emancipation on the Colombian Black Pacific (Cambridge University Press, 2021), received several awards and recognition, including the 2022 Wesley-Logan Prize for best book on African diaspora history from the AHA and the Association for the Study of African American Life & History, the 2022 Best Book Award for the 19th Century Section of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA), the 2023 Early Career Book Prize from the Center for Cultural Analysis at Rutgers University, Honorable Mention for the 2022 Michael Jiménez Prize for the Colombia Section of LASA, and was a Finalist for the 2022 Outstanding First Book Prize from the Association for the Study of African Diaspora (ASWAD). A Spanish translation of Freedom’s Captives (Cautivas de la libertad: Esclavitud y emancipación gradual en el Pacífico negro colombiano) is available with Editorial Planeta/Universidad de los Andes (Bogotá, Colombia). My recent article, “Commerce in Children: Slavery, Gradual Emancipation, and the Free Womb Trade in Colombia” in The Americas, also received the 2022 Antonine Tibesar Prize from the Conference on Latin American History affiliated with the AHA.

When I’m not working on the next book project (A Country of Their Own: African Americans and the Promise of Antebellum Latin America), I’m running after my two awesome boys, Xavi (5) and Omar (2.5), or in the kitchen trying a new recipe. My new hobby is cooking and baking, so please feel free to share your favorite ones!
Alastair Bellany

I spent the academic year 2022-23 on leave, decompressing from four challenging years as chair of the department while resuming research and writing for my survey history of Britain and Ireland (“The Isles”) from the Stone Age to the Enlightenment. I made a few major thematic additions to the book over the past year, introducing new threads on climate change and the history of epidemic disease, while figuring out some better ways to think and write “archipelagically” about these complexly entangled and interconnected spaces. I’m now on the final stretch of the project, writing up the chapters on the early modern material I know the best.

I’ve also been working on my new archival project on the impact of the Little Ice Age climate on early modern Britain and Ireland. After giving nothing but Zoom papers for three years, I hit the live lecture and conference circuit again in the spring of 2023 and debuted my first climate history papers to audiences at Vanderbilt and the Huntington Library. The research is fascinating and challenging and has pulled me far from my familiar methods while forcing me to look at what I thought I understood in a completely new way—in other words, it’s been a bracing and necessary experience. I’ll be back in the classroom in the fall, but will spend next spring at the Institute for Advanced Study focusing more seriously on the Little Ice Age project in advance of what I hope is a serious stint in the archives over the following summer.

I continue to spend some of my spare time playing and writing rock and roll songs, and enjoying my second job as an occasional royal pundit. My children have both now left the nest. My son David, born the month after I arrived at Rutgers, is covering crypto for the New York Times—he has had a very busy year! My daughter, Rachel, got her MA from Columbia Teachers College in May and will begin teaching this fall in an elementary school in the South Bronx. My wife, Deborah, continues to write freelance articles while speaking regularly on Jane Austen and Austen fandom to various audiences and media outlets.

We’ve managed some fun (only semi-work related) travel—a jaunt to the 2022 Jane Austen Society of North American annual conference in Victoria, B.C. (more regency costumes on display than at the typical AHA); a trip early this summer to Iceland (one of the most remarkable places I’ve ever seen); and a trip later in the summer to India (equally remarkable, and a chance to check out some of the architectural splendors of the Mughal arts of power).

Carolyn Brown

Submitted by Barbara Cooper.

Save the date:
Thursday, March 28, 2024
is the day friends, colleagues, and students will celebrate the inimitable Carolyn Brown. There will be panels, a keynote, and a dinner to celebrate Carolyn and her long career in the fields of History and African Studies.

Feel free to contact Barbara Cooper directly if you questions: bacooper@history.rutgers.edu
Nicole Burrowes

I am very excited to announce that the special issue that I co-edited with Mónica Jiménez on “The Afterlives of Empire in the Caribbean,” for The NACLA Report on the Americas, is complete and coming out this fall! It features scholars, journalists, artists, and activists, and truly takes on many of the big questions of our collective existence pertaining to the question of empire—both its historical and present-day consequences. I also have an article coming out about the historian and activist, Walter Rodney, in the edited collection Beyond Inequality: New Paradigms for Addressing the Future of Work, forthcoming from Columbia University Press.

I was honored to be asked by our remarkable second year graduate student cohort to be the keynote speaker for the 45th Annual Warren Susman Graduate Conference, “Small But Mighty: Celebrating Big Histories of Marginalized Individuals, Spaces and Communities,” held in April. I also presented at the American Historical Association, the ALARI Second Continental Congress on Afro-Latin American Studies, and the Organization of American Historians, all in-person after the last few years of virtual conferences.

Finally, in the spring, I convened a virtual gathering about women’s organizing and the politics of oil in Guyana, featuring activists from the grassroots group, Red Thread, and scholars from the region, to discuss the challenges wrought by ExxonMobil and other extractive multinational corporations, and what it means to uphold the needs of communities and climate futures in the face of death threats. It was sponsored by the Rutgers Advanced Institute for Critical Caribbean Studies and featured an eloquent presentation by Kiran Baldeo, our history graduate student, where she discussed the high stakes of the kinds of work engaged in by the women of Red Thread.

Our lives this academic year were quite tumultuous. We have seen uplifting union movements and social justice struggles, sitting alongside the efforts to reshape and shrink public education and limit access to higher education, book bans, jaw-dropping supreme court rulings, war, and global turns to fascism. These shifts have been dizzying and our work as historians and educators will be harder and much more critical as a result. In my personal life, I have attended, given eulogies, and organized my share of funerals for the last three years. There doesn’t seem to be much time to stop, but I have a wide circle of amazing family, friends, and colleagues, and I am quite grateful for them.

Paul Clemens

At the risk of repeating what I announced in an earlier newsletter, I plan to retire on June 30, 2025. This fall I will be teaching Famous Trials—a course I have previously taught with Warren Susman and Steven Lawson—and a course that recently several of my colleagues have generously given guest lectures in to help broaden the scope of the material. I will also be teaching Making of America: Origins to Civil War (what many of you may remember as the Development of the United States I), which has been aptly taught by my colleague Peter Silver for the last few years, and will again after this final offering by me. My memory of the past year will forever be of the leadership, participation, and support offered by my faculty and graduate student colleagues in the AAUP-AFT strike at Rutgers.
Belinda Davis

Belinda, pictured above with Yazmin Gomez, her fellow History Department strike captain, stayed busy keeping the faculty organized and motivated throughout the Spring 2023 AAUP-AFT strike.

James Delbourgo

This year was a particularly challenging one for the undergraduate program because of the departure of our long-time administrative officer Anuja Rivera after several years of devoted service. The months after her departure came at the busiest time of the academic year involving senior certification, graduation, the honors conference, senior celebration and more. That it all came off so well is largely thanks to Marilyn Reyes and Amanda Gravenhise (now also sadly moved on!) who helped out enormously. Thanks also to Melissa Feinberg and Jennifer Jones, as well as Johanna Schoen, Jamie Pietruska and Paul Clemens for all their kind assistance.

Since June however, it has been my pleasure to get to know and work with Dr. Kenny Linden, our new undergraduate program coordinator. With a PhD in Mongolian history, Kenny is a scholar as well as an administrator so he will bring a vast range of new knowledge and expertise to this position, benefiting both students and faculty. I’ve already had the pleasure of working closely with him and he is also excellent company. He is a great addition to the department as a whole.

I also continue to work on my manuscript on the history of collectors, forthcoming from W.W. Norton & Co., and to study Mandarin Chinese. I briefly visited Pisa this summer on the 850th anniversary of the Tower (still leaning) and also Scotland. My wife Laura and I visited Abbotsford – the home of the novelist Sir Walter Scott and alleged inventor of Scotland – which was delightful because it still houses his vast collections relating to Scottish history (including, for example, Rob Roy’s purse). But we also made the mistake of spending a day in Edinburgh during the fever pitch of the Edinburgh Festival, from which it took many drams to recover.

Melissa Feinberg

In addition to starting my term as department chair, this year I began work on a global history of Communism that I am co-editing for Routledge with Soviet historian Lisa Kirschenbaum. We assembled a fantastic group of scholars from around the world to contribute chapters, including Rutgers PhD Dora Vargha, who will do the chapter on public health. I am excited to be working on a collaborative project and I think I will learn a lot from everyone involved. While I love my work, I was also very glad this summer to be able to take some time away from it. We spent two weeks hiking in the Dolomites and returned refreshed and ready to face another year. Plans for 2023–2024 outside of the office include too many book reviews, a roundtable about the history of abortion in Eastern Europe at the AHA and thinking about the history of anti-gender activism in East-Central Europe.

Melissa, our happy Dept Chair, with Chie Ikeya and Kristin O’Brassill-Kulfan
Tom Figueira

Tom Figueira reports that the Working Group on Athenian Hegemony (which he founded in 2009), is publishing this summer its second collection of papers (from a session held in Montreal in 2017). He is editing this project along with Aaron Hershkowitz (Rutgers PhD, 2018; Krateros Project, Institute for Advanced Study) and Michael McGlin (Temple University). It is entitled The Athenian Empire Anew. Acting Hegemonically, Reacting Locally in the Athenian Arkhē, and will appear as a supplement to the e-journal Classics@, Center for Hellenic Studies, Harvard University.

Tom notes that he spent two lovely weeks in Portugal during early July, where he attended the annual review and planning meeting of the Centro de Estudos Clássicos e Humanísticos (CECH), for which he has served as advisor since its inception. This was followed by the second meeting there of 14th Celtic Conference in Classics (another favorite venue), where he was busy chairing a plenary session, and cochairing (with Ellen Millender, Reed College and Paula Debnar, Mt. Holyoke) the latest iteration of the International Sparta Seminar, which was dedicated to the memory of a dear friend, Anton Powell, who founded the ISS. There he helped to reorganize the ISS with a new Steering Committee of prominent scholars on Sparta. Four days of papers included Tom’s “Differentia for Judging the Atypicality of Spartan Social Structure.”

David Greenberg

I have spent the last year trying to finish my biography of the civil rights leader and congressman John Lewis. I wasn’t altogether successful; I think I have many months to go. But I can say, even at this point, that no book project has brought me as much satisfaction as this one. As historians and scholars, we’re taught to take a critical stance toward our subjects, and I believe have avoided hagiography. Still, there is no getting around the inspirational power of John Lewis, his fundamental goodness as a person and as a public servant, and his exemplary qualities make me want to jump in to learning and writing about him when I wake up each day. The challenge is to do justice to his amazing life. With luck (and with me hitting my deadlines), Simon & Schuster will publish the book in the fall of 2024.

Jennifer Jones

Last fall I enjoyed teaching a lecture course on Fashion and Design in European history for the second time. And throughout the year I had fun working with Alison Hight, our GA for Outreach, to promote our department’s many accomplishments on social media and beyond. I learned a lot from collaborating with Rebecca Cypess (Mason Gross) on a proposed collection of essays on the Salon and the Senses that we have submitted to the journal Aphra Behn Online. My contribution to the collection of essays explores our experience simulating an 18th-century salon. In the spring I began conceptualizing a new project exploring the moment when fashions make the “jump” from art schools to mainstream which will allow me to depart 18th-century France and hop through time and place to 19th- and 20th-century England.

In June, purely for fun, I finally visited Cornwall, a place that has had a particular hold on my imagination since falling in love with Ruth M. Arthur’s novel, Requieum for a Princess, in 4th grade. Other highlights of the trip to England included 18th-century sites in Bath, re-reading Mrs. Dalloway in London, and visiting Monk House and Charleston farmhouse in near Lewes.

Jennifer Jones at Charleston Farmhouse in East Sussex England
Samantha Kelly

After a busy spring semester teaching The Renaissance and Ancient Africa to a wonderful batch of students, I spent a month in Paris as Visiting Professor at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales.

The stay in Paris was punctuated in the middle by a trip to Rome for an amazing conference on “Ethiopians Abroad” and a special group visit to the ancient Roman church of Santo Stefano, just behind St Peter’s, where Ethiopian pilgrims formed a monastic community in the sixteenth century. The church has long been in disuse (except for the occasional wedding) but the contemporary Ethiopian community now lives just up the hill in the Pontifical Ethiopian College, which we also had the pleasure of visiting.

Since then, much of the summer has been spent organizing a series of conferences and panels for the coming year, and finishing up the final editorial stages for my book on those same Ethiopian pilgrims in Rome, entitled *Translating Faith*, which will come out from Harvard University Press in March 2024. Two cats and two children keep things lively on the home front, as ever.

Seth Koven

My book-in-progress, *Conscience Wars*, has taken me in all sorts of new, unexpected and challenging directions and to archives across the world. I’ve devoted the past two years to studying race, religion and conscientious objection to smallpox vaccination in Britain and its empire. In support of that research this past January 2023, I consulted the official state archives of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg (South Africa), the newspaper collections in the Bessie Head Library, and the Killie Campbell Africana Library manuscript collection in Durban. The generosity of archivists and the richness of the holdings were humbling. One reason that I received such a warm welcome in Pietermaritzburg was because I was following in the footsteps of our own Julie Stephens. Julie’s research brought her there several years earlier and she left a wonderful impression on everyone. The proprietor of the local curry shop fondly recalled Julie’s preferences for hot home-made pickle with her lunch!
Aldo Lauria-Santiago

This last year I worked on revisions to my book manuscript on the Puerto Rican community in New York City, 1910s-1950s for University of North Carolina Press. A second volume covering the 1950s to the 1970s is nearly done. Both need more fixes and edits. So instead of doing those fixes I finished a co-edited interdisciplinary 14 chapter book on Latina/os in New Jersey for Rutgers University Press. The book will have a companion website sponsored by the New Jersey Historical Commission. As part of that work and with colleague Kathleen Lopez we selectively digitized the archives of the Department of Puerto Rican Studies (1967+), soon to be published as part of a group of pages relating to Latinos in NJ. I also kept busy directing the Puerto Rico Archival Collaboration, which has grown beyond any expectations in just a year and a half (https://clas.rutgers.edu/projects-programs/puerto-rico-archival-collaboration). For Rutgers I have been directing the Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS.Rutgers.edu).

Jackson Lears

This spring saw two births in my life. One was the long-awaited (by me at least) publication of my Animal Spirits: the American Pursuit of Vitality from Camp Meeting to Wall Street, by FSG. The other, after a somewhat shorter gestation period, was the arrival of Margo, a brand-new granddaughter in Richmond, Virginia, where my daughter Adine teaches medieval literature at VCU. It was a difficult and dangerous delivery, but Adine is now doing well after a bumpy recovery. Margo, meanwhile, is flourishing—bestowing and evoking smiles all around, creating a peaceful kingdom (well, most of the time, anyway.) So, we are feeling fortunate—cheers all around!

Kathy López

This past year I became director of Global Latinx New Jersey, a long-term interdisciplinary project housed in the Department of Latino and Caribbean Studies. Continuing the work of former colleague Lilia Fernández, I held a six-week summer workshop with undergraduate researchers on sources and methodologies for uncovering and making public different facets of Latino New Jersey history. The students are finalizing their oral histories and digital projects for public dissemination. Last fall I gave a public lecture in conjunction with the exhibit “No Ocean Between Us: Art of Asian Diasporas in Latin America and the Caribbean” at Middlebury College Museum of Art. In June I presented new research on Chinese in the Anglophone Caribbean at the 13th Conference on East-West Cross-Cultural Relations, held at the University of Verona in Italy. Besides meeting international colleagues, a highlight of the trip was a new performance of the opera Aida at the Verona Arena, an open-air amphitheater built in the first century.

Norman Markowitz

The most important thing we all did was to stand together and win the most important faculty strike at a public university in U.S. history, defeating an administration which used classic union busting tactics—refusing to bargain in good faith, having faculty work without a contract for a year, going over the heads of the union to issue false statements to faculty and finally threatening to get an injunction to break any strike. I was never prouder of our history department, which was on the picket lines in greater numbers than any other department day after day, from my observations.

During the year, I participated in a number of zoom conferences on socialism and imperialism, wrote a number of articles on the dangers of the Biden administration’s destructive and self-destructive continuing Trump’s cold war revival policies, this article “The Trumpist Supreme Court: Off the rails of democracy,” on the Court’s history and its present “back to the future” policies.

Our family, which included two dogs and many cats, have recently been through difficult times. Linus, a sweet old shaggy dog, whom we got from a shelter after he had been abandoned by his owners, two of our cats, Sidney and especially Biff, also shelter animals passed away after long illnesses. Right now, though we are doing everything we can to help Raymond, a stray cat from the Bronx (where I grew up) who has struggled with feline aids and heart problems. We are hopeful that he will survive. I have no plans to retire in the foreseeable future, unless Rutgers offers socialized veterinary care.
Matt Matsuda

I returned to the History Department after more than a dozen years in administration to catch up with longtime colleagues, learn more about our amazing younger ones, and—especially—try to get a sense of who students are these days. Over the last year I took over the Gardner Fellows Program in Social Policy, leading a cohort of up-and-comers through contemporary issues, generational perspectives, and visits to the United Nations and policymakers, lobbyists, and media leaders in Washington, D.C. (shout out to colleague David Greenberg for some great connections).

This last year’s seminar was dedicated to Responsibilities and Rights, and intentionally framed by generational knowledge. I posited the formative experiences of millennium expectations, September 11th, and the Great Recession. The Fellows underscored the Trump years, January 6th, and the George Floyd murder. I talked about institutional media and news. They articulated TikTok. We connected around the Supreme Court, climate change, and cultural appropriation.

In scholarly terms, I’m excited that almost 7 years of work on the Cambridge History of the Pacific Ocean have been realized and published. I served as one of the volume co-editors, and it’s been quite a voyage. The team and I will be talking about that at forums in the coming year. I’m also pleased that one of my earlier works, Empire of Love, came out in a Chinese translation, and I have a current manuscript on my interests in Pacific histories and genomes and genealogies currently working its way through Palgrave Macmillan.

If I talk about the last year with others, though, the conversation tends to turn to the faculty strike in the spring, for which the department made a proud display with leaders and commitments, and the continuing questioning about the future of higher education. The latter, I think, is unlikely to change in the years ahead. Interesting times.
Kristin O’Brassill-Kulfan

Over the past year, the undergraduate Public History program has deepened its ties with regional museums, archives, and historical non-profits, including the American Labor Museum, Roebling Museum, and Puerto Rican Community Archives.

Our students have continued to intern with sites and agencies across the state, and we have also had an unparalleled opportunity to engage students in every phase of the work of inventorying the historical, anthropological, and geological collections at the Rutgers Geology Museum. Many of our students have been cataloging minerals, conducting original research on the museum’s curators, leading tours of the museum, and researching artifact provenance, alongside our science colleagues. I even got to help clean out the museum’s attic – a genuinely thrilling experience, hunting for artifacts under the mid-nineteenth century rafters.

Students in the program also took the first post-pandemic off-campus field trip to the Roebling Museum in South Jersey, where we received a personal tour from the museum’s director of their new exhibit and the labor and social histories in the well-preserved company town. We also hosted an alumni engagement event with recent graduates of the program who are now working as public historians, Hallel Yadin and Cara Del Gaudio. Another of our recent graduates, Noel Dempsey, now represents the department and program on the New Jersey Historical Commission’s staff, and we are collaborating on Revolution NJ, preparations for the Semiquincentennial in 2026!

At the graduate level, our partially department-sponsored Certificate in Public Humanities was approved and I taught the core course for the first time in Spring 2023, Introduction to Public Humanities. Thanks to a grant from the ACLS, we also expanded our graduate public humanities internships substantially.

At the RCHA, Jochen and I have been thrilled with the incredible dialogue the seminar has generated this year and look forward to a second year of considering how historians can engage with the messiness of history in the present, and historical efforts at “repairing the past”.

This summer, I was elected as a Councilor to the American Historical Association’s Professional Division.

And as my first research sabbatical approaches this fall, I’ve turned earnestly to a new research project: *Surviving the New Nation: A Material History of Poverty in the US*, and have been thrilled to spend time in the archives conducting research for this project and a related one on early American rent distraint, during three short term fellowships, at the Massachusetts Historical Society, Library Company of Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission.
From Almanacs to Algorithms and giving invited talks in Gothenburg, Vienna, Graz, and Prague.

Stephen Reinert

2022-2023 was definitely one of those proverbial liminal, transitional years for which one is never quite fully prepared—fantasies and boundless notions of self-confidence to the contrary. I would summarize it all as a process of “phasing out” and defining new directions, as retirement looms (contractually) on the horizon for 2024. Suddenly I fully identified with the tales of my retiring and retired friends and the rituals through which they went. Most of us are fully burdened with books, and a time comes when one must decide … what to keep, and what to dispense with. But the biggest challenge was finding anybody interested in arcane books on Byzantine, Balkan, and Ottoman history. The Alexander Library is sternly enforcing a ban on faculty donations and the famed Book-4-Cause seemingly went down in the pandemic. But eventually I was able to move twenty-five or so boxes of books from Van Dyck 218 to the welcoming arms of the Princeton Library Sale. I still have the core libraries on the third floor of our house in Trenton to think about, but not just yet.

Equally challenging was organizing the transition of directing the Modern Greek Studies Program from me, to a successor. The program is fortunate in having Tim Power from Classics stepping up to the plate, and I showered him with a barrage of advisories and Zoom meetings on “what to do, and what not to do, and when and where.” I believe the program is in good hands and has a bright future ahead. It was a pleasure collaborating in the fall with Emmanuel Aprilakis to get “Greek Food from Antiquity to Today” launched, and I hope it will continue.

Otherwise I found myself planning my future life beyond the banks of the Raritan and our beloved old neighborhood (Mill Hill) in Trenton. Joe and I have pretty much resolved we are on the glide path to emigrating to France, where we have a beautiful home in southern Burgundy and love the French way of life and its incomparable culture. This won’t in truth be that hard for me, since I’m already a EU citizen (Luxembourg), France is part of the EU, and I just more or less “go home.” But I will miss DeLorenzo’s pizza, which originated in Trenton to be sure.

But what of scholarship and all that? I can’t quite give that up since so many of my longstanding projects are still in development, and it will be a godsend to finally have full time to turn to these. As I write (July-August 2023) I’m researching and writing various (egregiously overdue) articles on early Ottoman history for the third edition of Brill’s venerable Encyclopedia of Islam. The fun part is catching up on developments in scholarship with the younger generation and seeing how fields (Byzantium, Ottoman Empire, medieval Balkans) have hardly stagnated (at least in Europe) and are flourishing alive and well. It’s of course a total bore to go back to the chronological confusions and uncertainties of the fourteenth century, inwardly knowing that these will likely never be sorted out or resolved in my lifetime. But hey … isn’t life itself a grand uncertainty principle, and the sooner you accept that the calmer (perhaps not happier) you’ll be? And vis-à-vis historical studies, however important they are, there is much more than chronology and sorting out the sequence of “one damned event after another.” Trust me.

References to my retirement have assuredly clued any readers I might have that I am no longer a spring, or even winter, chicken. One is ever conscious that life ends, often so quickly and unexpectedly and brutally. The illnesses and deaths of friends one has known since childhood, graduate school, in the course of one’s career, or simply in the adventure of life, are a constant sorrow. I understand now so well what the divine Julia Child meant when she would announce to husband: “Well, Paul, another one has fallen off the raft.” Both of my parents are now recently departed, and that leaves one with a biting loss and disorientation. But the flip side … the many good and wonderful things I have, and to be explored. I shall always be grateful for having had the privilege to be a professor in the History Department at Rutgers, and to have met over the years so many truly wonderful (not to mention brilliant) colleagues. One of my students wrote to me, on learning of my retirement: “You had the chance to meet and get to know such amazing people – like Traian Stoianovich, Harold Poor, Rudy Bell, and Bonnie Smith!”

Yes, I do treasure that, very much.
Gary Rendsburg

Blanche and Irving Laurie Chair in Jewish History.

I had the good fortune of a full-year leave in 2022–2023, which allowed me to teach, lecture, and pursue research in four countries: Israel, France, Italy, and England.

I taught "Egypt and the Bible" at Bar-Ilan University (Israel) and "How the Bible Reached Us" at the Pontifical Biblical Institute (Rome), in addition to delivering lectures in Israel, Rome, and England.

My time in France was spent exploring the rich medieval Jewish history in Provence (Avignon, Montpellier, etc.). I spent many hours studying medieval Hebrew manuscripts at the National Library of Israel (Jerusalem), the Vatican Library (Rome), and the Bodleian Library (Oxford).

With all this travel, however, there is nothing as engaging as teaching Rutgers students, my main pursuit during Fall 2023 semester.

Gary Rendsburg reading the Damascus Crown, a complete manuscript of the Hebrew Bible, written in Spain in 1260, held for centuries in a synagogue in Damascus, now housed in the National Library of Israel (Jerusalem).

Festschrift for Gary Rendsburg

A scholarly symposium in Gary’s honor.

Monday, November 6th at 4:30 pm
Rutgers University

Zoom participation will be available for anyone who cannot attend in person.

Contact Azzan Yadin-Israel
Professor of Jewish Studies and Classics
Rutgers University
Johanna Schoen

Yale University School of Medicine selected Johanna for the 2023 annual Award Lectureship Humanities in Medicine.

Nancy Sinkoff

I continue to serve as the Academic Director of the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish life, and, once again, have had the privilege of organizing great public in-person lectures and virtual online courses for the upcoming year. On the docket for March 4-5, 2024, is also a symposium I am co-organizing with a Bildner Center Visiting Scholar, Donavan Ramon (PhD, Rutgers English), "Black Americans, Jewish Americans: Historical Intersections, Collisions, and Passings."

In March, I participated in the Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis, France—Rutgers-NB exchange and gave a series of classes and lectures in Paris during the strikes against the pension reform bill in the French Parliament. Those talks included: "Could the Enlightenment be Religious? The Case of the Haskalah;" "Reforming the Soul: The Transcultural Connections Among an American Philosopher, A Polish Noble, and an Enlightened Jew at the end of the 18th Century;" and "Salvaging Jewish Cultural Property: The Story of Lucy S. Dawidowicz (1915-1990)." Upon my return, as we know, Rutgers faculty were also on strike. In the latter case, the outcome was excellent, thanks to the incredible union team here in New Brunswick.

I also spoke virtually about Lucy S. Dawidowicz for Globio Conversations, the University of Utrecht; the Parkes Institute, University of Southampton, UK (the Karten Memorial Lecture); and in the Seminar in Modern Jewish Thought, in association with Centre for the Study of the Bible, at Oxford University.

My book From Left to Right: Lucy S. Dawidowicz, the New York Intellectuals, and the Politics of Jewish History (Wayne State University Press) was reissued in February 2023 and my co-edited volume (with Halina Goldberg, Indiana University), Polish Jewish Culture Beyond the Capital: Centering the Periphery, was published in September. A website with the concert’s instrumental and choral music accompanies the book’s print launch (https://polishjewishmusic.iu.edu/).


This year I also published a review of Meir Kahane: The Public Life and Political Thought of an American Jewish Radical by Shaul Magid in the Journal American Jewish History.
In July I returned, happily, to the archives in real time, madly scanning materials from one of Shneiderman’s archives (Tel Aviv). The project is taking me into new temporal realms (interwar Poland, Paris, and Spain) and intellectual topics (modernism—literary and artistic—colonialism, global Yiddishism, war reportage).

Shneiderman’s engagement with artistic modernism (including his relationship, by marriage, to the Polish Jewish photographer, “Chim”) has also opened a whole new realm of research into modernist photography, printmaking, portraiture, and the Montparnasse circle, as well as rekindled my own (past) involvement with letterpress printing. In mid-July, I was one of a handful of participants in a pilot Hebrew font/type intensive held at a foundry/letterpress studio in Skaneateles, NY. It was amazing (a word I rarely use)!

On the personal front, the most thrilling news was the marriage of our eldest son, Ezra, to his sweetheart, Jessie, in late April in San Francisco, where they live. I was happy to thank her parents in one of my toasts that not only had they done a wonderful job rearing my son’s life partner, but they also, as NJ residents, paid part of my salary. The joke landed.

I still spend as much time as possible on Adirondack ponds, rivers, and trails, recently reconquering some High Peaks (over 4,000 feet) that I had done years ago. Happy to report that I can still summit and descend safely, but it takes me more time.
Samuel Baily
Distinguished Professor of History emeritus

Our beloved colleague Samuel L. Baily, distinguished professor emeritus, died on March 3, 2023 with his family at his side. He was 86-years-old.

Sam was raised in Reading, PA and in Philadelphia, PA where he attended Germantown Friends School. He earned a BA in History at Harvard University and a PhD in Latin American History at the University of Pennsylvania.

Sam began teaching at Rutgers College in 1964. He taught Latin American and Comparative Migration History to undergraduates and graduate students at Rutgers University for thirty-eight years until his retirement in 2002. Sam was a popular teacher who won teaching awards both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. He directed the PhD work and oversaw the master’s degrees of nearly three dozen students.

Sam was the author and/or editor of seven books and dozens of scholarly articles. His best-known works are his prize-winning comparative study, Immigrants in the Lands of Promise: Italians in Buenos Aires and New York City, 1870-1914, and his co-edited collection of letters, One Family, Two Worlds: An Italian Family’s Correspondence across the Atlantic, 1901-1922.

Sam’s Quaker faith was a foundational part of his life. He grew up as a member of the Coulter Street Meeting in Germantown, PA. As a conscientious objector to military service he undertook alternative service working in a small Mexican village for two years, which profoundly affected his life and influenced his choice of profession as a Latin American historian.

Sam had many interests outside of his academic work. He was very active in the development of several organizations devoted to finding a cure for Huntington's Disease (HD), a neurological disease of which his mother died. Rutgers University is particularly indebted to Sam for his work funding the Samuel L. Baily Huntington's Disease Family Service Center at Rutgers.

Music also brought Sam great joy. He began singing in choirs at a young age and continued throughout his life. Sam learned to play guitar when he lived in Mexico and would entertain children in the family with songs to sing and dance to.

Sam loved to travel. He and his wife Joan spent many years living abroad in Mexico, Spain, Italy, and England and also for his research work in São Paulo, Buenos Aires, Toronto, and Rome.

After raising their family in Piscataway, NJ, Sam and Joan retired in 2004 to Newburyport, MA, then RiverWoods, a retirement community in Exeter, NH.

Donald R. Kelley

James Westfall Thompson, Professor of History emeritus

Our distinguished colleague, Donald Reed Kelley, James Westfall Thompson Professor of History Emeritus at Rutgers University, died on August 24, 2023.

Born in Elgin, Illinois in 1931, Donald received his AB degree from Harvard in 1953 and his PhD from Columbia University in 1962. In 1953, he was drafted into the U.S. army and served as an MP for two years in Germany. After returning to university life, he taught at SUNY-Binghamton, Harvard University, the University of Rochester, and finally at Rutgers University from 1990 to 2004.

As an undergraduate at Harvard Don became interested in European intellectual history with a focus on early modern France. His interests developed over the years to include the history of language, law, and western historical thought. His book, The Beginnings of Ideology: Consciousness and society in the French Reformation (1981) is enormously influential and among his most well-known book of more than two dozen. Frontiers of History: Historical Inquiry in the Twentieth Century (2006) is among his most recent books. Don also wrote more than 130 essays. As a testament to his impact his books and essays have been translated into many languages and cited by scholars around the world.

From Istanbul to China and Washington D.C. he lectured widely and served as visiting professor globally, expanding his own horizons of knowledge. Recognized for his “dazzlingly erudite” scholarship he received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation (2), the Institute for Advanced Study (3) the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Humanities Center, the Woodrow Wilson Center, and the Davis Center at Princeton University among others. The American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society both elected him to membership, while in 2012 the American Historical Association honored him as “one of the master craftsmen of American historiography” with its award for scholarly distinction.

In addition to teaching and research, Don edited the Journal of the History of Ideas from 1985-2005, transforming it, according to one leading scholar, from a “somewhat backward looking periodical” into a wide-ranging “platform for important debates.” Over the years Rutgers Ph.D. students gained invaluable professional experience working at the Journal of the History of Ideas as they also enjoyed Don’s humor and mentorship.

As his failing eyesight prevented additional scholarship, Kelley took ever increasing enjoyment and intellectual stimulation during visits from former colleagues and students. He relished the presence of his treasured and adoring family: his children, John Kelley, Patrick Smith, and Patience Bloom, and his wife and collaborator, Bonnie G. Smith.

Don will be long remembered for his brilliance and singular charm. The Rutgers History Department will sorely miss him. Upon learning of Don’s death, one colleague voiced sentiments shared by us all, “They don’t make them like Don Kelley anymore: brilliant, generous, demanding, funny.”

Source: The Star Ledger, August 31, 2023
Sara Black  
(PhD 2016)


Chris Blakley  
(PhD 2019)

I’m glad to say my book, *Empire of Brutality*, is out with LSU Press. I’m still teaching at Occidental College, California State University Northridge, Chaffey College, Por-terville College, and Irvine Valley College. Recently I won grants to conduct research at the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming, and the Rubenstein Library at Duke University.

Kendra Boyd  
(PhD 2017)

I received a 2023–2024 Rutgers Research Council Award (Social and Racial Justice Awards Program), as well as the Rutgers-Camden Chancellor’s Award for Outstanding Research and Creative Activity and the Chancellor’s Award for Community-Engaged Scholarship for 2023. This coming academic year I am excited to be a faculty fellow at the RCHA’s “Repairing the Past” Seminar.

Lindsay Frederick Braun  
(PhD 2008)

This coming year is sabbatical, to finish the current book on settler colonial cartography and knowledge laundering in Southern Africa and begin the next big project. I’ve spent the last two years running our History undergraduate programs at the University of Oregon, and dealing with a number of health issues, so I’m happy to take this year to focus on my own work again. At home, we continue to improve our old farmhouse bit by bit for the benefit of the dogs if not ourselves. I’m most excited, however, that one of my very favorite students from the last five years will be starting her own PhD in the Department there this Fall.

Erika Bsumek  
(PhD 2000)

I’m delighted to report that my latest book, *The Foundations of Glen Canyon Dam: Infrastructures of Dispossession on the Colorado Plateau* is out and that I’ve been promoted to full professor at the University of Texas at Austin. Last spring I gave book talks in Salt Lake City and in Logan, Utah – where I got to see Colleen O’Neill and Tami Proctor! I’ll be traveling to a book festival in Mexico City and another in Salt Lake City, Utah to present on the book this fall.

In addition to my research and writing, I’ve been working in the field of digital humanities for the past few years and have created a digital timeline software called ClioVis. ClioVis started off as a small digital pedagogy project and has now become a webapp that anyone can use in their classes or for their research. Grad students have been using it study for their qualifying exams! (Side note: There are free and cost shared versions.) Students/users create “networked” timelines by plotting an event on a timeline. They can then connect it to other events. When a student connects two events, they have to explain the relationship they’ve identified. They are also prompted to cite their sources. They can also create category tags and tag all their events. Students can add images or to their timelines. They can then present directly from the timeline itself. Or, they can add audio narration to the timeline so it plays like a mini-documentary.
(Bsumek continued)

All the information in a timeline (event descriptions, sources, analytical connections, etc) can be downloaded in document format, so it can then become the draft of a paper. It’s been a fun but exhausting project. I’m happy to report that the platform has now been used by over 15,000 students at over 30 universities (including the University of Kathmandu!). The platform has also been used by non-historians: Professors in biology, chemistry, nursing, and social work have recently all adopted the platform for their classes. Turns out, historians really do have transferrable skills! And, as of yet, Chat gpt hasn’t been able to make a ClioVis timeline! I’m especially proud that the platform is doing so well – and that I managed to get a book done while building it. If you want a tutorial or are interested in learning more about it, please feel free to reach out. We also have interns on the project from University of Texas at Austin, Brown University, University of Houston, and Austin Community College. So, if your department is looking to place history interns, we might have a place for them.

Paul T. Burlin  
(PhD 1984)

Paul is a Professor Emeritus of History University of New England and it proud to announce his latest publication, Charles Fletcher Dole, Liberal Theology, and Reform: A Life Well Lived, Lexington Books, 2023.

James Casteel  
(PhD 2005)

I continue to teach at Carleton University in Ottawa Canada where I am cross-appointed between the Institute of European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies and the Bachelor Program in Global and International Studies. I just finished up four years as the founding Program Director for a new master’s and graduate diploma program in Migration and Diaspora Studies. When I agreed to design and launch the new MA, I never thought that I would be doing so during a global pandemic and meeting my first cohort virtually. But despite the challenges, the program has been a great success. We have a strong and amazingly talented group of students (my only complaint is that I wish more historians would apply!). Our graduates are already doing great things. I’m currently on sabbatical and have been enjoying the chance to recharge and get back to my book project on post-Soviet migrants and memory in Germany.

Bruce Chadwick  
(PhD 1999)

My 32nd history book, The Cannons Roar, Fort Sumter and the Start of the Civil War, an Oral History, was just published by Pegasus Books. It won strong reviews from major newspapers and magazines. My next oral history will be on the battle of Gettysburg, in the computer now. The oral histories, I am told, bring history stories to life and build up minor players in the American story to the level of Presidents and Generals. I enjoy writing these books very much.
**GRADUATE ALUMNI NEWS**

**Satya Shikha Chakraborty (PhD 2019)**

Hello Rutgers History friends! I am excited to report that my article “Nurses of our Ocean Highways: The Precarious Metropolitan Lives of Colonial South Asian Ayahs” has won the 2023 Best Article Prize from the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Women’s History*, as well as an Honorable Mention from the North American Conference of British Studies.

Last year, I published an article “Queer Labors: Female Intimacy, Homoeerosis, and Cross-Dressing in Mughal Courtly Paintings” in *Visual Culture and Gender*, and another article “Care-Work for Colonial and Contemporary White Families in India” co-authored with an LSE-based anthropologist in *Cultural Dynamics*.

I also curated a Digital History exhibition “Race, Gender, and the Visual Culture of Domestic Labor: Tradecards and Postcards, 1870s to 1940s”, in collaboration with The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) history students and StonyBrook (SUNY) Computer Science students. Here is a link if you wish to check it out: https://empirehistorycards.cs.stonybrook.edu/ I am ever-grateful to Rutgers History faculty for their support!

**Anna Clark (PhD 1987)**

University of Minnesota. I have just published a book chapter, “Anne Lister’s Search for the Anatomy of Sex,” in *Decoding Anne Lister: From the Archives to Gentleman Jack*, edited by Chris Roulston and Caroline Gonda, and published by Cambridge University Press. This is based on new research in the diaries of this nineteenth century lesbian, transcribed by a team of amazing volunteers. This summer I am finally finishing my book, *Rage against the Machine: Rethinking Individualism and Biopolitics in the British Empire*, which contrasts England, Ireland, New Zealand, and India.

**Alex Gómez del Moral (PhD 2014)**

Good afternoon from Helsinki, Finland, where I continue as a University Lecturer in Economic and Social History at the University of Helsinki.

I’m not sure I notified you all when my book came out in 2021, but *Buying into Change: Mass Consumption and Democratization in Franco’s Spain, 1939-1982* was published with University of Nebraska in May 2021, and recently became news-worthy again (at least for me), when it was named one of the two co-winners of this year’s Hayley Prize for best book in the field of business history, which is jointly awarded by the Hagley Library and the Business History Conference (BHC).

I’m also pleased to report that a book chapter I recently wrote titled, “Creating a “Land of Charcuterie”: Cured Meat Producers, Culinary Marketing, and the Construction of Gastronationalist Discourses in 20th Century Catalonia” will be appearing in an edited volume titled *Iberian Gastrocracies* to be published by Vanderbilt University Press. All in all, it has been a productive year and I hope to be able to report more good news next year!

**Lisa DiCaprio (PhD 1996)**

I have served for 14 years as the Associate Director of Curriculum and as a Clinical Associate Professor of Social Sciences in the Division of Applied Undergraduate Studies (DAUS) at NYU’s School of Professional Studies.

I am continuing to teach courses on various aspects of sustainability from a historical perspective, advocating for NYC and NYS environmental legislation, and writing articles for the Sierra Atlantic, the publication of the Sierra Club Atlantic (NYS) Chapter.

Since my previous contribution to this newsletter, I have published these articles in the Sierra Atlantic: “NYC’s Green New Deal,” “Carbon Footprints and Life-cycle Assessments - Educational Resources,” (continued next page)

In my Spring 2022 *Sierra Atlantic* article, “Doughnut Economics: A Thriving Economy Within Planetary Boundaries,” I discuss British economist Kate Raworth’s alternative economic model and how it is being implemented in various cities, such as Amsterdam. The outer ring of the doughnut represents the nine planetary boundaries identified by the Stockholm Resilience Centre and the inner ring is derived from the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2015. In her website article, “What on Earth is the Doughnut?...,” Raworth describes the space between the two rings as “an environmentally safe and socially just space in which humanity can thrive.” By contrast, the empty center is “a place where people are left falling short on the essentials of life.” For an overview of doughnut economics, see Raworth’s June 4, 2018 TED Talk: “A healthy economy should be designed to thrive, not grow.” As Raworth wrote in her August 12, 2012 Humans and Nature website article, “Doughnut Economics”: “The focus on G.D.P. growth is clearly long past its due date. The global crisis of environmental degradation and extreme human deprivation urgently demands a better starting point for economy theory and policymaking.”

**Arika Easley-Houser**  
(PhD 2014)

After completing her Ph.D., she taught for 5 years at Rutgers Preparatory School, she and her family relocated an hour north in Bergen County, NJ. She became the History Department Chair at Dwight-Englewood School in August of 2019. She completed the National Association of Independent Schools Aspiring Heads fellowship during the 2022-2023 school year and presented a research project with her cohort group entitled “Supporting Educators through Crisis: Pandemics & Polarities” at the national conference in Las Vegas in February of 2023.

**Bert Gordon**  
(M.A. 1964 and PhD 1969)

I am Co-Editor of the *Journal of Tourism History* and will serve as Moderator for the session “From Soviets to Space to Anti-Tourism,” sponsored by the Institute for Historical Studies, at the meeting of the American Historical Association in San Francisco in January 2024.

FYI: My wife and I recently had dinner with Marilyn Kann, daughter of Robert Kann, my Ph.D. thesis advisor at Rutgers. I had last seen her when she was a teenager and I would visit Professor Kann at his home in New Jersey. She and her husband now live about 15 minutes away from me in Berkeley.

**Atina Grossmann**  
(PhD 1984)

I spent the 2022/23 academic year in Washington DC as the Ina Levine Invitational Senior Scholar pursuing her (seems like “lifetime”) project on Central European Jewish refugees in Iran and India and their experiences of “Trauma, Privilege, and Adventure” in colonial and quasi-colonial “global transit” locations. To quote the blurb for my obligatory public lecture, my work examines the ambivalent, paradoxical, and diverse experiences, emotions, and memories of Jews who found refuge from National Socialism and the Holocaust in India and Iran after 1933. Always shadowed by the emerging European catastrophe, uprooted Jews were also precariously privileged as white Europeans, in non-western, colonial or semi-colonial societies. An extensive collection of family correspondence and memorabilia extending from wartime Nazi Berlin throughout the global diaspora of German Jewry as well as archival, literary, visual, and oral history sources illuminates refugees’ everyday lives, in the changing context of interwar fascination and contact with the “Orient,” global war against fascism, anti-colonial independence movements, and gradual revelations about the destruction of the European world they had escaped.
In other news, the year turned out a bit differently and more complicated than expected due to the overeager (that is to say premature) arrival of baby grandson Lal in September; he wasn’t supposed to make an appearance until November. But now he’s already in daycare, cruising around a fourth floor walk up Crown Heights apartment, and his time-pressed parents are wondering -- not really surprised -- why we aren’t the type of grandparents who are ready to become full-time nannies. But still teaching full-time at Cooper for at least another year; I don’t have to decide until March 1!

Matt Guterl
(PhD 1999)

After ten years in the job, I stepped down as chair of American Studies in the summer of 2022. And this summer, I stepped down as DGS in Africana Studies. Finding myself with more time, I am trying to finish a few lingering writing projects, including a book on racial passing from the 1960s to the present, a biography of Roger Case ment, and a book on Neverland Ranch. I also published a memoir - titled Skinfolk - about growing up in a large, multi racial adoptive family this past spring with Liveright.

Our two children are now 19 and 17. One is a freshman at Brown. The other is feverishly working on her college applications.

Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers
(Ph.D. 2012).

In 2023, I received the Dan David Prize, the largest history prize in the world. Dubbed the “MacArthur-style ‘genius grant’ for history” by the Washington Post, the Dan David Prize awards up to nine prizes of $300,000 each year to outstanding early and mid-career scholars and practitioners in the historical disciplines. The Prize is given in recognition of the winners’ contributions to the study of the past and to support their future endeavors.

Kathleen Keller
(PhD 2007)

In spring 2023 I was on sabbatical leave from teaching and spent the time working on my next book. I was awarded a grant from the American Philosophical Society to conduct research in France. So, I spent the month of July in Paris doing archival work. I am still teaching at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN where I am also the director of the African/African Diaspora Studies program.

Melissa R. Klapper
(PhD 2001)

I am still Professor of History at Rowan University, where I will also be starting a third term as Director of Women’s & Gender Studies after a 2023-2024 sabbatical. I’ll be at Brandeis University in the fall of 2023 on a residential fellowship. Like many of us, my current project has been much delayed by lack of access to archives during Covid, so I am excited about the opportunity to spend a year working on my book At Home in the World: American Jewish Women Abroad, 1865-1940. My recent publications include an article in the Journal of Modern Jewish Studies and a book chapter in Yearning to Breathe Free: Jews in Gilded Age America (Princeton, 2023). I continue to do quite a bit of public speaking about both American Jewish women’s history and my most recent book, Ballet Class: An American History (Oxford, 2020). Last but not least, in March 2023 I fulfilled a lifelong dream by appearing on Jeopardy! and becoming a three day champion.
Alissa Klots
(PhD 2017)

I am happy to report that I have been awarded a Humboldt fellowship to spend 18 months at the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies in Regensburg, Germany. The fellowship will allow me to start working on my second book manuscript tentatively titled The Restless Generation: Soviet Retirees and the Meanings of Active Old Age, 1950s-1970s. In the meantime, my first book Domestic Service in the Soviet Union: Women's Emancipation and the Gendered Hierarchy of Labor is going through the final stages of the publication process with Cambridge University Press.

Peter Larson
(PhD 2004)

Last year saw me starting on a new research project on occupational identity in northern England pre-1700, though more critical was working to strengthen the University of Central Florida’s program in Africana Studies. This coming year will be big, however; as of August my promotion to full Professor will take effect, and I will be leaving the UCF History Department to become an Associate Dean in the College of Arts & Humanities. It’s a big challenge but one I am looking forward to!

Raechel Lutz
(PhD 2018)

My first book is out!

https://wvupressonline.com/index.php/american-energy-cinema

Amrita Chakrabarti Myers
(PhD 2004)

I hope this finds you all keeping well. This fall, I will begin my nineteenth year of teaching at Indiana University-Bloomington. In addition to various other responsibilities, I am now Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) in the Department of History and continue to hold appointments in that department as well as in the Department of Gender Studies.

This past year was extremely hectic, both because it was my first year as DGS and because I was finishing up work on my second book. The Vice President’s Black Wife: The Untold Life of Julia Chinn, will be out with Ferris and Ferris Books through UNC Press in October 2023. It is already available for preorder online wherever books are sold. I’m excited to have finally finished Julia’s story, and I’m gearing up to attend book festivals and give talks on The Vice President’s Black Wife this fall. I look forward to connecting with members of the RU Mafia if I show up at a bookstore near you!

Send us your updated contract information. The RU History Department would love to stay connected.

Email Candace Walcott-Shepherd, administrative assistant to the chair, at shepherd@history.rutgers.edu
### Jessica Lauren Nelson (PhD 2020)

Jessica is beginning a new position as Assistant Visiting Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee this fall, after spending the past few years in the curatorial department at the Eiteljorg Museum of Native Americans and Western Art in Indianapolis, Indiana. She is also editor and contributor to the new book *Religion in the American West: Belief, Violence, and Resilience, 1800-today*, released fall 2023 by the University of New Mexico press.

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

### Dominique Padurano (PhD 2007)

Since earning my Ph.D. in U.S. History, I’ve followed a circuitous, but happy, path. I taught incredibly bright high school students at Horace Mann School for five years and at Scarsdale HS for two. Itching for a challenge (and, frankly, getting a little bored with the necessity of seeing Rome fall by October 27 every year), I opened Crimson Coaching on May 6, 2014. For almost a decade now, I’ve been helping high school students one-on-one to reach their dream scores on the SAT or ACT, to overcome academic or executive function challenges in school, and to write a college application essay that captures who they are and who they want to become. I love the business I’ve built — and have recommended that several students consider applying to Rutgers!

I haven’t completely left the college classroom: I’ve served as an adjunct Bronx Community College (part of CUNY) since 2015. My BCC students, many of whom are recent immigrants and speak English as a second or third language, push me to constantly refine my craft. (So does ChatGPT, but that’s a different story!)

While I haven’t published any academic pieces in a while, I am at work on a memoir about my years as an undergraduate at Harvard in the early 1990s. I would love to connect with any Rutgers History alumni and can be reached at info@crimsoncoaching.com. P.S. Though I named my company “Crimson Coaching,” GO SCARLET KNIGHTS! ;)}

### Alexander Petrushek (PhD 2021)

Postdoctoral position (3 years) at University College London for a research project focused on the “Socialist Anthropocene.”

### Carl E. Prince (PhD 1963)

Although few are around who will remember me, there is some interesting history here. I’m Dick McCormick’s first PhD. Born in the depths of the Depression in 1934 (yes, I am 88) when the birth rate was at a very low ebb, I got my PhD in 1963, just as the baby boomers following WWII were reaching college age. I am not saying this with any smugness, I was just plain lucky to enter the job market at a time when—if you can believe this—there were more jobs than there were qualified historians.

My revised dissertation on NJ’s Jeffersonian Republicans was published by UNC Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture; so after teaching a lot contentedly at NJ colleges for some years, I landed a job at NYU in 1967, where I have been ever since—still active in its alumni outreach. Among my ten books was the odd requisite for a baseball book (stunning McCormick himself). *Brooklyn’s Dodgers: The Bums, the Borough and the Best of Baseball, 1947-1957* was (and is, in several new editions in paperback) a NY Times and Amazon best seller. Yeah, I wrote a lot, but a 1934 birth year gave me the opportunity to be able to do that comfortably— not so easy for most of my own doctoral students over the years. They include Norma Basch, Graham Hodges, Howard Rock, David Mindich and others, who wrote successfully but had to deal with career stress in tight job markets along the way, something I never had to deal with. So yes, not smug about any of it, just a lucky birth date, and a willingness to keep learning, thanks to RPM (Richard P. McCormick).

Dick was a great mentor, and a warm friend all those years after 1956, when I became his student. My Rutgers education (all three degrees) was the best, especially that graduate training in the Department of History.
Dear colleagues, we are delighted to announce the launch of our new venture: Les Plumes Rouges, a developmental editing, translation (English-to-French & French-to-English), and mentoring company for academic authors across the disciplines, with a special commitment to early career and first-generation scholars: www.lesplumesrouges.com

We both resigned from our jobs as professors this last academic year and decided not to take other faculty positions. There wasn’t a single reason for our decision but the structural and political conditions of higher education in Texas and Florida worsened already difficult contexts in public universities. We will remain in academia, still writing and publishing, and doing the kind of intellectual work we enjoy in different ways and in different venues. Sandrine is at work on two book projects, one academic and one general non-fiction and now lives in San Antonio with an eye to Paris, as always, while Darcie is still in Tampa (hopefully not for much longer, though) and working on a whole bunch of projects.

We both feel that our training at Rutgers and the culture of the history department was invaluable to us as we negotiated our careers, the often inflexible structural constraints of our profession and its norms, and we hope to bring that spirit to our work.

We look forward to seeing many of you again, continuing many of the conversations we have enjoyed, and collaborating with you in new ways!

You can follow us on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook and email us at: sandrine@lesplumesrouges.com & darcie@lesplumesrouges.com

Sandrine Sanos
(PhD 2004)

Kara Schlichting
(PhD 2014)

I would like to report that I am on a research team that has received a Wellcome Trust Discovery Award for a new environmental and public health history project, “Melting Metropolis: everyday histories of health and heat in London, New York, and Paris since 1945,” – here the announcement. https://wellcome.org/grant-funding/people-and-projects/grants-awarded/melting-metropolis-everyday-histories-health-and.

Peter Sorensen
(PhD 2022)

Currently on a post-doc at U Penn, has accepted a tenure-stream job at Hong Kong Baptist University.

Felicia Y. Thomas
(PhD 2014)

I earned tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor of History at Morgan State University.

John Thompson
(PhD 1982)

I'm retired from teaching high school in the inner city, but I still write regularly for the Diane Ravitch blog and and other blogs and journalistic mediums. I'm really looking forward to the partnership between Oklahoma and national partners, like the Rutgers Education Law Center, who are challenging the constitutionality of the State funding a religious charter school.

Pamela Walker
(PhD 2021)

I am starting a new assistant professor position at the University of Vermont in the fall. I also won two national fellowships this year. I am a 2023 recipient of the ACLS fellowship and a 2023 recipient of the Ford Foundation Postdoctoral fellowship.
Andrea Weiss  
(PhD 1991)

I am thrilled to have completed an NEH-funded feature documentary that I’ve been working on for many years, *The Five Demands*. It tells the story of the little-known 1969 campus takeover of the City College of New York by Black and Puerto Rican students. The strike led to Open Admissions and to opening the doors to higher education much wider for students of color across the country. The film was shown in a number of film festivals, was positively reviewed in the New York Times and just had a very successful one-week cinema run in New York City. Read a review in the New York Times.

Taking so long to complete the film meant that it premiered just as the Supreme Court was striking down Affirmative Action; it is now, sadly, more timely than I could have ever imagined. If you’d like to get it for your university library to show to your students, please get in touch with the distributor Icarus Films. Along with some of the student strikers from 1969, I’ll be traveling a lot this Fall to film screenings in the US and Europe.

Meanwhile I just completed my 20th year as professor of documentary film at the City College of New York, where I direct the MFA program in Film. It feels great to be helping the next generation of diverse filmmakers find their voice and hone their skills.

Carol Williams  
(PhD 1999)

Re-entry into teaching after a bitter winter 2022 6-week strike (and lock out of faculty, students, and staff) at my university in Lethbridge (a mid size city across the border north of Great Falls, Montana) resulted in low morale and deflated confidence in our administration. Many colleagues fled or were head hunted to other provinces. Sadly, too, re-election of the extreme conservative party (known as the UCP) meant the potential for further erosion of educational opportunities. Consequently, after a very stressful year of overload teaching, I signed off to retire as Professor Emerita effective July 2024. Luckily the retirement package was incentivized by a year-long sabbatical that began this past July.

With the end of my 35-year teaching career (15 years as an itinerant adjunct and 20 years tenured faculty), I am particularly sad to let go of two undergraduate courses that I designed and developed over many years: Reproductive health and justice histories and Histories of Incarcerated women and abolition with content specific to the North American west.

However, the first episode of my sabbatical starts when I take up a month-long residency at the Wallace Stegner House https://stegnerhouse.ca/about situated in East End a small town in the Cypress Hills grasslands of Saskatchewan in Treaty 4 Territory. Stegner’s 1955 book *Wolf Willow: A history, a story and a memory of the Last Plains Frontier* is informed by his memories of this homestead from 1914 to 1920. As a historian of the North American west, it seemed right that I begin a new body of scholarship nested in the land, wind, and light where I have found joy, sorrow, and reconciliation as reflected in the region’s long colonial and settlement history.

My aspiration is to complete a manuscript proposal for an edited collection on Kainaiwa women’s beadwork based on an exhibition I co-organized in 2021 with author and artist, Hali Heavy Shield and a former research assistant, Kali Eagle Speaker. Here’s a link to a walkthrough of the exhibit with beaders, Kali and Torry Eagle Speaker: https://www.galtmuseum.com/articles/exhibit-walkthrough-we-visit-with-kainaiwa-beadwork-a-new-way-and-the-real-way-of-design
Kyle Edward Williams
(PhD 2019)

I am senior editor of *The Hedgehog Review*, a quarterly journal of cultural analysis and ideas at the University of Virginia. I’m also a fellow at UVA at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture.

Last year, I won a Best Article prize for an article I wrote for the *Journal of the Gilded Age* while I was finishing in the department: “Roosevelt’s Populism: The Kansas Oil War of 1905 and the Making of Corporate Capitalism” 19 (January 2020): 96-121.


Shannon Dee Williams
(PhD 2013)


Jasmin Young
(PhD 2018)

I am an assistant professor in the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Riverside. I’m happy to say that I was selected to be a 2023-2024 visiting scholar at the Charles Warren center for studies in American History. During the year I will develop my manuscript, *Black Women with Guns: Armed Resistance, SNCC, and the Black Liberation Struggle*.

Stay in touch!

The RU History Department would love to stay connected.

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Email Candace Walcott-Shepherd, administrative assistant to the chair, at shepherd@history.rutgers.edu
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