



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

University of Wisconsin-Madison

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NEWS

A Conversation with Walter Mirisch (BA '42)

"If you look at the history of blacks in films—from the inception of American films until the late 1960s—In the Heat of the Night was a revolutionary film. This change was brought about by people in the film industry, people like Walter Mirisch, who were humanists and who believed in the brotherhood of mankind and wanted to make films that spoke to the sense of brotherhood in themselves."

SIDNEY POITIER

FINDING MYSELF IN HISTORY Life Stories from Our Alumni

Walter Mirisch (BA '42) exemplifies the best Hollywood has to offer. He is a producer, which in his case means he is an essential part of the film making process—from finding the story to editing to post-production. His intelligence, skill, experience, and humanity resulted in many films that enrich, educate, but most of all provide entertainment of the highest order. He tells his story in his recent memoir *I Thought We Were Making Movies, Not History* (UW Press, 2008). Recently, he took time from his busy schedule for an interview with John Tortorice.

Q: Were there any courses or professors in the history department that you recall in particular?

WM: Oh yes. There were some very extraordinary people there at my time. I was very influenced by William Hesselstine in American history. I took a wonderful course in the history of the British Empire with Paul Knapland. And of course there was Chester Easum, who directed my undergraduate thesis on the Rome-Berlin Axis. He was very helpful, and he taught me a great deal about historical writing. And there were other really excellent people, such as Robert Reynolds in Medieval history, and my advisor, Earl Pomeroy, with whom I studied Latin American history. It takes a little remembering to come up with some of these names from so long ago.

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WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A **History?** **Major?**

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The 1968 Academy Award winner's circle for *In the Heat of the Night*.
Left to right: Hal Ashby, Norman Jewison, Rod Steiger, Walter Mirisch. From Walter Mirisch's book
I Thought We Were Making Movies, Not History (UW Press, 2008).

Message from the Chair, David McDonald



Professor David McDonald

History matters. As I write these lines the conflict between Russia and Georgia has reached an uneasy denouement, the “new” China has decisively declared its arrival as a global power with the Beijing Olympics, and Americans have turned their attention to a major economic crisis and a memorable presidential election. These events spring from forces and processes that reach much farther back in time and memory than the currently fashionable measures of three-month economic performance reports, two- or four-year electoral terms, or the continually self-refreshing and self-obsolescing twenty-four hour news cycle. By the same token, these and other events challenge Panglossian assumptions that globalization will efface outmoded nationalism or regional particularism [see Scotland or Xinjiang, for example] or that the end of the Cold War declared the “end of history” as the product of ideological conflict, a contention that seems implausible, for better or worse, wherever one looks.

Our department has long championed and nurtured this mode of thinking. Frederick Jackson Turner, George Mosse, Gerda Lerner, and Jan Vansina revolutionized their fields of scholarship with a combination of rigor, originality, and thoughtful consideration of evidence. Their successors continue to remind us of history’s centrality to human experience, whether in Steve Stern’s current work on Chilean society’s struggle to assimilate and overcome the legacy of the Pinochet years, or Ned Blackhawk’s reflections on the devastating legacy of the absorption of the Southwest basin into the ambit of the European imperial system, Francine Hirsch’s research on the overlooked part played by the Soviets at Nuremberg, or André Wink’s ongoing study of the religious, cultural, political and economic ties that connected the heterogeneous world of early modern south Asia in ways that resonate into the present. Our success in maintaining this signal Wisconsin tradition is reflected in the continuing high quality of the graduate students who come here each year for their professional training, and in the reputation the department enjoys as a result of the 300-plus of our PhD recipients teaching at institutions throughout North America.

During my term as chair, however, I have had the pleasure of building relationships with

another important constituency who appreciate that “history matters”—all those of you who continue to support History at UW–Madison and who continue to express your devotion to this life-enriching pursuit. In letters, e-mails, and personal meetings, I’ve been delighted to learn how well you have absorbed a historian’s perspective, even while earning distinction in fields that bear little apparent connection to our calling. Two examples come immediately to mind. In February, the department hosted a visit by Allan H. “Bud” Selig, the Commissioner of Major League Baseball and an alumnus of our department. He had generously agreed to inaugurate a new annual lecture series entitled “What Can You Do With a History Major?”

In a riveting talk Selig illustrated clearly and succinctly the ways in which his study of history at the University of Wisconsin helped frame his approach to managing the sprawling institutions associated with the national pastime. In May, I had the pleasure of accompanying John W. Rowe, another of our alumni and CEO of Exelon Corporation, to Spring Commencement, where he received an honorary doctorate from the university. Throughout his career Rowe has sustained an interest in history as an avocation, both in his voracious reading, and also in his family’s endowment of two professorships in our department. More broadly, he has incorporated the Wisconsin Idea in his life as a citizen.

Selig and Rowe represent only two of the many, many examples I could cite of alumni who have assimilated and put into practice the perspectives offered by the study of history. Each year brings new evidence of your continued interest in our shared field of interest and, especially, your support for the department that introduced you to this rich and intellectually rewarding discipline. My colleagues and I value your continued attachment to our larger community. To help strengthen these ties, members of the department will continue to visit our larger alumni communities; we have also begun to expand and simplify our Web site, beginning with an ongoing project to document the storied past of the History Department. I invite you to visit us at history.wisc.edu and, even more, to maintain contact with us by e-mail, letters, or in person, because you matter to history.

Rowe Family Endows a Professorship in Greek History

As president and CEO of the Chicago-based Exelon Corporation, one of the nation's largest electrical utilities, John Rowe ('67, J.D.'70) is at the forefront of discussions about the energy future of the United States. He directs the innovative approach of Exelon to the complex issue of energy needs and greenhouse gas emissions through a plan that pledges to cut greenhouse gas emissions by making Exelon's operations more efficient, cutting the energy use of electricity customers, and building low-carbon generators to replace older less efficient plants. The plan also allows for the utility to turn a profit from helping the environment and providing energy to its customers. Recently John Rowe spoke about his background, and his family

"I was born in a small town in southwest Wisconsin to Welsh parents who were Methodists. The town also included Swedish Lutherans and Irish Catholics; all Northern European immigrants. Religion was the only difference they could fight over, and the distinctions of religious beliefs often crowded out deeper shared convictions. I came to UW-Madison with little background in history, and my mind was opened to the origins and results of religious strife through the centuries. I was inspired by my teachers George Mosse, Michael Petrovich, Merle Curti, and later Willard Hurst in history and law. I don't think I could have received a better education at any other school, public or private."



Jeanne and John Rowe.

The commitment to education runs deep in the Rowe family; John, his wife, Jeanne, and their son Bill give to public and private educational institutions at all levels, including the Rowe-Clark Math and Science Academy in a low income neighborhood in Chicago. Most recently John, Jeanne, and Bill have endowed The Rowe Family Professorship in Greek History at UW-Madison to complement the professorship in Byzantine history they endowed in 2000: "I am keenly aware of how difficult it is to fund the humanities, and history and also science are particularly meaningful to me. History provides the lens through which I view a great many things and the benefits of good science to our society are essential to our future."

■ **Susan Davis** (BA '73) and **Miles Gerstein** (BA '70) have created a fund to provide opportunities for undergraduates to pursue their research interests. Miles Gerstein writes:

"We have always held a high respect for history and historians dating back to our undergraduate years in Madison, and our ties to the History Department are different, but strong: Susan's work as an archivist has always kept her close to the historical world through her positions at the New York Public Library and other institutions; I received a small stipend from the History Department that allowed me to visit the Library of Congress to further my research under the direction of Professor Ed Gargan. This was the most meaningful educational project I have ever worked on as I learned not only how to conduct historical research, but how to synthesize and shape information. I have never forgotten the generosity of the History Department or the support and guidance I received from Ed Gargan. We want to acknowledge our great education at UW-Madison, and provide opportunities for undergraduates."

■ The History Department has received a generous gift from the estate of **Professor Peter K. Cline** (BA '64). The unrestricted gift was given "In memory of my mentor George L. Mosse." Peter Cline taught history at Earlham College for thirty two years, and was known for the excellence of his teaching and for his deep commitment to the power of history to enrich the lives of students. He was also known for his sparkling wit and wicked sense of humor. He passed away in 2007.

■ The History Department as part of a consortium of Madison area educational institutions has received a \$900,000 grant from the **Department of Education** to enhance and enrich the teaching of American history through connecting teachers directly with current cutting edge research in the field. Professors Bill Reese, Jeremi Suri, and Emeritus Professor Stanley Schultz will work with project coordinator Bill Tishler to create state of the art online learning opportunities for teachers. They will also organize and direct a summer institute in the History Department to engage teachers in new ways of teaching history to "tech savvy" visually oriented students.

A New Chapter for Environmental History at UW–Madison

The Center for Culture, History, and Environment (CHE)

PROFESSOR BILL CRONON
Director (CHE)

With the creation in 2007 of the new Center for Culture, History, and Environment (CHE), the University of Wisconsin–Madison has consolidated its position as almost certainly the leading institution in the world studying environmental history from many different disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives.

UW–Madison has for more than a century pioneered the study of past interactions between human beings and the landscapes and environments they inhabit. Although the History Department's Frederick Jackson Turner more than a century ago put land at the center of his approach to American history, scholars and scientists from many other UW departments and schools have made

equally important contributions to this great Wisconsin tradition. Benjamin Horace Hibbard in Agricultural Economics wrote a benchmark study of the history of the public lands in the U.S. James Willard Hurst in the Law School focused on land and resources to become one of the greatest American legal historians of the twentieth century. John Curtis in Botany produced a benchmark study of Wisconsin vegetation that placed particular emphasis on past ecological change. Andrew Hill Clark founded a school of historical geography that has ever since made the UW Geography Department a leader in people-environment studies. And Aldo Leopold's classic *A Sand County Almanac* is as much a work of history as of ecology, teaching its readers to “read the landscape” as a historical document. Leopold in many ways laid the

foundation for the field of environmental history (to say nothing of the modern environmental movement) as we know it today.

Until the founding of CHE, however, UW–Madison's great strength in the field of environmental history was also among its greatest weakness. Precisely because the historical study of environmental change so permeates the intellectual life of the university, the professors and students who investigate this subject are widely scattered across different departments and schools. Their disciplinary diversity is evident from the institutional affiliations of the professors and students who created and participate in the CHE. Although all have an affiliation with the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, their primary departmental homes are American Indian Studies, Anthropology, Botany, English, For-



CHE Place-Based Workshop Visits Coon Valley, Site of the First Erosion-Control Watershed Project in the U.S.



Celebrating at the "Tales from Planet Earth" film festival, from left: Gregg Mitman, Bill McKibben, filmmaker Judith Helfand, and Bill Cronon.

est and Wildlife Ecology, Geography, History, History of Science, Journalism and Mass Communication, Law, Landscape Architecture, Limnology, Rural Sociology, and Women's Studies. Currently, eight graduate students from the History Department are affiliated with the center.

Wonderful though it is to have colleagues from so many different disciplines sharing a common interest, the departmental structure of the university can sometimes get in the way of their cooperation, especially when it comes to training graduate students. In an effort to start building a stronger intellectual community for students and faculty members alike, a core group of professors and grad students, with strong representation from the History Department, began holding a biweekly Environmental History Colloquium in the spring semester of 2002. It proved an instant success, with meetings regularly attracting 30–40 participants drawn from more than a dozen different departments, typically divided roughly 1/3 to 2/3 between faculty members and graduate students.

This initial community-building effort finally bore fruit during 2007 when a remarkable series of events finally brought CHE into being. Under the strong leadership of the center's

founding director Gregg Mitman, the initial faculty team began the formal institutional process of petitioning the university to create the new center. At the same time, thanks to Dean Gary Sandefur, physical space became available in the newly refurbished Bradley Memorial Building, part of the old UW Hospital complex. This gave CHE a physical home with student and faculty offices, a lounge, a classroom for seminars, and a theatre for viewing documentary films. Then, an anonymous donor provided the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies with a generous endowment, the income from which was directed to supporting CHE as a center for humanities-based environmental work on campus.

Finally, a committee developed a new CHE certificate in environmental history which enables graduate students from any department on campus to be trained in the field while learning about the wide range of disciplines that contribute to it. Among the exciting features of the new certificate are an interdisciplinary methods course and an annual "place-based seminar" in which faculty members and graduate students visit a place of environmental and historical significance to explore and analyze it together. Thus far, CHE

has run these place-based seminars on the south shore of Lake Superior, in the driftless area of southwestern Wisconsin, and in Yellowstone National Park. This year, we'll be visiting Chicago and the Indiana Dunes.

CHE's most visible achievement to date was the November 2007 launching of what we intend to become the biennial "Tales from Planet Earth" environmental film series. Starting with a keynote address by the noted environmental writer Bill McKibben, *Tales from Planet Earth* screened dozens of documentary films relating to environmental history, some of them classic, some of them contemporary, with commentaries by filmmakers and scholars alike. That fall, two filmmakers in residence, Judith Helfand and Sarita Siegel, co-taught with Gregg Mitman a seminar in environmental filmmaking for UW students, and the resulting student documentaries were among the highlights of the weekend.

Even though it is still less than two years old, CHE has already had a huge impact on the study and teaching of environmental history at UW–Madison. Students applying to many departments on campus, not least our own, now clearly regard CHE as among the greatest intellectual reasons for studying environmental history at UW–Madison. Although the challenge of funding and sustaining the Center for Culture, History, and Environment goes on, CHE is off to a roaring start, and there is great optimism about its future.

*To learn more about CHE, visit the Web site at <http://enwhist.wisc.edu>. The next *Tales from Planet Earth* film festival will be in November 2009, and those interested in attending can monitor plans for it at www.nelson.wisc.edu/tales.*

Mirisch Interview

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Q: You are doing a fantastic job. I don't think I could remember all of my professors from not that long ago. In your memoir you mention that you were offered a graduate fellowship in history.

WM: Yes.

Q: But the chair suggested you not take it because, quote, "I needed to understand that there really wasn't much opportunity for a man like myself in the academic world." You also say you considered this an episode of blatant anti-Semitism.

WM: Well, I assumed it was that, although on the other hand he may just have been giving me good advice [laughs]. But at the time that's what I felt it was.

Q: You mention that this was your first episode of blatant anti-Semitism. Did it open your eyes to how anti-Semitism operated in those years?

WM: It did to a certain extent. It was one of the rare experiences I had in my young life of what I judged to be anti-Semitism. I decided not to continue in history.

Q: Well, history's loss was Hollywood's gain. Yet through the films that you have produced, you've had an enormous influence on the transformation of American society.

WM: Well maybe. Some years ago I was asked to preside at a session of the American Historical Association that was being held in Los Angeles. As I recall it was a session on history as it's been reflected in the movies. I thought that would be fun and so I agreed to participate. At the end of the session an older gentleman came up to me and said "I don't know if you remember me, but I'm Earl Pomeroy, one of your teachers at Madison and I thought I'd come by and say hello," and I said wonderful, thank you, and he said, "You know,



Walter Mirisch with Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon on the set of *Some Like It Hot*.

I always thought that it was a shame you hadn't gone on in history, until I saw the *Pink Panther*. Then I knew you'd done the right thing."

Q: Oh that's funny!

WM: So there you are! I've had no regrets since then.

Q: Yet some of your films have had an enormous impact.

WM: Thank you. I've done a number of films with historical background, such as *Wichita*. I also produced a biography of Sam Houston called *The First Texan*, and an English historical picture about the Black Prince that was called *The Warriors*, and then later on I did the *The Battle of Midway*, about the crucial World War II battle.

Q: In the 60s, you made *In the Heat of the Night* and other movies with a strong social justice message that reflected the times.

WM: Yes, but those were really more fiction than history, but I hope they had some effect on attitudes.

Q: Yet, if cultural evidences, politics, are "history in action" then you were reflecting and influencing the history of the period in your films.

WM: Yes, that's true. Of course the civil rights revolution was in process at the very time that we made *In the Heat of the Night*.

Q: If we look back on it, given the enormous impact of the film it is

difficult to say "it's only fiction." The role films such as this play, the influence films have on the perception of history, on historical memory is hard to calculate, but it is enormous.

WM: Well I hoped it would be that. Thank you for saying that because if it resonated with you then all of us who were involved in the making of the picture accomplished what we sought to do.

Q: Did your study of history at UW-Madison have an effect in how you subsequently interpreted events, on how you chose projects?

WM: Obviously, I've always been interested in historical subjects.

Through my entire life I've done considerable reading of history, and it's remained a lifelong interest of mine.

Q: You made many different kinds of films, but your films are above the average films of your contemporaries.

WM: Well, I hope they have had some effect on our society.

Q: Do you think that today film and other media can present history in a way that is more effective with visually-oriented students? Do you have any insights into how film can be employed in teaching history?

WM: When I was young I wanted to see all the historical films, and I learned a great deal from them. They often weren't completely accurate history, and they were often fiction based on historical events such as the story of Louis Pasteur or the life of Emile Zola, or whether it was *Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet* or *Madame Curie*, or *Alexander Hamilton*; I could go on and on. There have always been pictures of that type made. They certainly influenced me, and I am sure many others and I hope filmmakers will continue to make them. I believe they are very instructive to people who may not have had any other exposure to those subjects.

Tell Us Your Story. Submissions to "Finding Myself in History" can be sent to: historynewsletter@lists.wisc.edu

Finding Myself in History: The History Department in the Early '40s

FINDING MYSELF IN HISTORY Life Stories from Our Alumni

I first saw Madison in January, 1943, at the end of a sleepless night on a train from New York City. The streets in Madison were packed with several inches of hard snow. The lake was frozen, and students were skating on rinks in front of the State Historical Society. The University had sent me a list of rooming houses, and I took the first room I found, on North Murray Street.

The war economy had enabled my father to get a job; my family didn't need financial help from me. (Both my parents were Swedish immigrants with the three years of schooling given farm children then, and the Depression had hit them hard.) After graduation from high school, I had worked for a year so that I could attend the University of Wisconsin.

It was the second winter of U.S. participation in World War II, and in New York and along the Atlantic coast there were blackouts. With no certainty of victory over the Germans and the Japanese, it was a time of great anxiety. In Madison, men were being drafted for war service—students and young faculty to the front lines, and professors to Washington for various war-related jobs.

Mathematics and English had been my favorite subjects in high school, history seemed tedious. My calculus teacher at UW was **Professor Stanislaw Ulam**, a mathematical genius from Poland. He wrote elegant equations on the blackboard and explained them in exquisite detail while looking dreamily out the window or scratching himself somewhere. He was to leave UW for Los Alamos where he provided Edward Teller with equations needed for the H-bomb.

Somehow I got into **Merle Curti's** course Social and Intellectual History. Professor Curti made history thrilling. I had never encountered a man so passionately involved with



Joyce Fuller with daughter, Anne, Madison, 1953.

ideas, his whole person transformed by them, as if thinking were the supreme pleasure of life and understanding the forces of history the key to being fully alive in the world.

I decided math was too lonely a pursuit, that I could read literature by myself. I registered for one history class after another: Medieval History with **Professor Post**, The Civil War and Reconstruction with **Professor Hesseltine**, and Diplomatic History with **Professor Harrington**. I wrote a six-credit paper on Thomas Mann, focusing on his politics. I studied Greek and the classical world with **Professor Walter Agard**, another remarkable humanist.

I moved into Groves Coop, the first interracial house on campus, and certainly a significant component of my university experience. I should confess that part of the attraction of Groves was that during the war years it was able to rent a fraternity house on North Henry Street between Lake Mendota and glamorous Langdon Street.

With most men off to war, other opportunities for women opened up. I became the circulation manager of

the *Daily Cardinal*, and carried the Langdon Street paper route. I also wrote reviews for the paper.

Short of help in the war years, a local defense plant encouraged anyone with six hours of free time any hour of any day or night to work on its assembly line. I became a spot-welder, working alongside housewives, businessmen, professors, other students, and soldiers home on leave. I worked 20 to 30 hours a week through most of my college years. At the end of eight semesters, I thought I had to leave, though I was six credits short of my history degree.

It was deeply depressing to be back at home without having fulfilled my dream, and for a while I drifted. Fortunately, I got a job with CARE, sending help to Europeans still suffering from World War II. And I got involved in early off-Broadway theater. By sheer coincidence, I had a small part in a play directed by Uta Hagen. (I had seen her in Madison in *Othello*, opposite Paul Robeson, and I had taken an art history course with her father, Oskar Hagen.) Our play was Tolstoy's *Power of Darkness*
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Bud Selig Visits the Department

On February 28, 2008, Commissioner of Major League Baseball Allan H. “Bud” Selig, Jr. (BA ’56) visited the History Department to inaugurate a new lecture series, “What Can You Do With a History Major?”

**WHAT CAN
YOU DO WITH A
History?
Major?**

During his day-long visit Commissioner Selig had lunch with undergraduates, met with graduate students, and lectured to several hundred history majors on how his history major provided him with the critical thinking skills necessary for a career in business.



The Mosse Undergraduate Research and Service Award

NED MEERDINK (BA ’08)

As a student in the History Department, I have come to understand that history exists in the here and now. I have cultivated an intense interest in the methods by which history interacts with present social and political conditions, especially in sub-Saharan Africa where history plays out on a very tangible, practical level. Through my education, I was well aware of the legacy of colonialism throughout central Africa and the role it plays in some of the current political conflicts and lack of economic development in Africa that limits access to fundamental rights such as education, health care, due process, and economic opportunity. Yet it was only through personal experience with Africans in Africa that I could see how these historical phenomena dominate everyday life, and to witness the lives and strategies of citizens in Uvira/ Sud Kivu, Congo, some of the poorest, most threatened, and neglected populations in the world. People I met in the Congo were all too aware of the international support and complacency that has accompanied the rise of two tyrants, Joseph Désiré Mobutu and Laurent Kabila, who hold large responsibility for the 5.4 million deaths in Congo since 1998. Current statistics document that 45,000 Congolese die each month due to situations associated with continuing

insecurity and underdevelopment.

The Mosse Undergraduate Award will be used to support Mutuelle Jeunesse Active, a local Congolese organization which I was lucky enough to work with from July 2007 to January 2008, when I returned to Madison to complete my undergraduate degree. I returned to Congo this past August to continue my research on the development of local organizations in regions of the world in transition away from conflict under the direction of Professors Neil Kodesh (History) and Aliko Songolo (French).

On October 30, Ned Meerdink sent an e-mail update, part of which is quoted below.

“I am working for two NGOs that work on educational and

recreational programs for children, and an NGO that investigates and reports of human rights violations and war crimes (all too common) committed throughout North and South Kivu provinces. One of the things most kids here really lack is consistency, so we try to organize things that they can look forward to and depend on each week, every day. The numbers coming out about the current increase in violence in this area are shocking: in the last two months, more than 200,000 people in eastern Congo have fled their homes due to new fighting. Sixteen villages were raided and burned last week by rebels who then abducted at least 160 children to fight with them. The use of rape as a weapon of war is endemic.”



Ned Meerdink visiting Runingu School, South Kivu, Congo.

Gender Workshop Builds Intellectual Community

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR NAN ENSTAD

Gender and Women's History is now an established and integrated part of the department curriculum, with a core of graduate students in the field. The idea for a workshop in gender history was hatched at a Program in Gender and Women's History potluck in January, 2006, as students brainstormed what they wanted from the program. More academic and social community was the overriding concern. In response, five graduate students—Jeff Hobbs, Jenn Holland, Jessie Manfrin, Crystal Moten and Lesley Skousen—took matters into their own hands and initiated the PGWH workshop that has met twice per month ever since. The workshop has a fluid structure: sometimes there is a panel of student research presentations; occasionally faculty members will present their work. Workshop participants have viewed and discussed documentary films, dissected theoretical articles, and met with speakers who were visiting campus to give public talks. The workshop coordinating committee also occasionally organizes entirely social events off campus, including a party during recruitment week when prospective students visit Madison. Entirely graduate-student organized and led, the workshop has become the lifeblood of the top-ranked graduate gender and women's history program.

The workshop's founders wanted first and foremost to create more opportunities to talk about gender outside of formal seminars. "The History Department has a phenomenal number of professors and graduate students interested in gender," says Jenn Holland, "but had no place

outside of seminars for people to get together and talk about their work." Crystal Moten agrees: "I would say you can get lost in the History Department unless you have a group of people you feel you can go to. We saw the workshop as a way to create a sense of community among people interested in the same topics. When it came time to talk about our own work, we had relationships with each other and a supportive environment." For Jeff Hobbs, the element of outreach was paramount. "Maybe you're not primarily a gender historian but you want to use gender in your work. We wanted the workshop to bring everyone interested in gender together." Indeed, even the founders did not all know each other well when they began because they work on diverse topics in three different countries (England, France, and the United States) and across four centuries. "I worked with incredibly dedicated people that I wouldn't have met otherwise," says Holland. "It was heady to start something like this."

The workshop has been the most successful attempt to address the growing pains of the Program in Gender and Women's History. Once focused exclusively on U.S. history, the program has for the past several years been transnational in focus, offering graduate tracks in U.S., European, and Latin American history and team-taught graduate seminars that explore gender in history across the globe. With ten faculty and dozens of graduate students in the department who focus primarily or secondarily on gender, the program has an exciting new curriculum and dynamic possibilities to further both transnational approaches to history as well as broader understandings of gender.

Gerda Lerner

Gerda Lerner was awarded the degree of honorary doctor of letters by Harvard University on June 5, 2008, at their 357th commencement exercises.

The citation reads in part "Credited with the development of the curriculum of women's history at numerous academic institutions, Lerner is widely recognized as having introduced women's history as a formal academic field. A past president of the Organization of American Historians, she is also well known as an advocate of civil and women's rights and was a founding member of the National Organization for Women."

History Department Launches New Undergraduate Web Resource

Students often ask, "What can I do with a history major? My parents want to know."

In response, the History Department has launched new Web resources for students to explore future career paths and to pursue graduate studies. The new Web pages provide students with step-by-step guides on how to apply to graduate school, information on career opportunities for students holding liberal arts degrees, and much more. The Web pages include a feature that documents what our alumni are doing now, as well as testimonies and biographies of our alumni so that students are better able to understand the wide array of career paths available to them. If you are interested in sharing a brief history of your career path on our Web site, please e-mail historynewsletter@lists.wisc.edu.

UNDERGRAD CAREER EXPLORATION
history.wisc.edu/undergraduate/career/careers.htm

GRADUATE SCHOOL EXPLORATION
history.wisc.edu/undergraduate/graduate/graduate.htm

Doris G. Quinn Graduate Fellowships

Doris G. Quinn started her master's degree in history at New York University in her sixties. She observed that several of her fellow graduate students were working two or three part-time jobs to pay for school and living expenses to finish their graduate degrees. Through her vision and generosity, the Quinn Fellowship was designed to have a significant impact on the quality of historical scholarship in the United States by funding scholars during their last year of PhD studies. A Quinn Fellow's "job" is to finish the dissertation without distraction. History grad students **Helen LaCroix**, **Steven Turley**, and **Michel Hogue** received Quinn Fellowships for academic year 2008–09.

History Graduate Student Opportunities Fund

Fellowships offered by major foundations and scholarly associations allow graduate students to concentrate on their seminar work or dissertations, enhance their academic profiles, and shorten the time it takes to complete their studies. Yet the fellowships often do not cover the costs of tuition and benefits. In response, the History Department has created the **History Graduate Student Opportunities Fund**. The History Department will grant the first fellowships in 2008–09 for the following academic year. Because this is a new endeavor with limited funds, the graduate program welcomes donations. Please use the attached envelope to make your contribution.

The History Department has posted a list of PhD recipients on its Web site at history.wisc.edu/databases/db_asp/phd.asp.



Franklin W. Knight (PhD '69, Professor of History at Johns Hopkins University) gave the Schomburg Lecture in October 2008.

History Graduate Program Photos



Grad Advisor Leslie Abadie with grad students



Eric O'Connor



Associate Professor Neil Kodesh and David Gilbert



Liz Preston, Al Senn, and Jane Williams



Vikram Tamboli and Genevieve Dorais



Leah Webb-Halpern and Crystal Moten

Recent Faculty Retirements

Professor William J. Courtenay

During his forty-two-year teaching career in the History Department, Bill Courtenay has earned virtually every honor offered by UW–Madison and by his field of scholarship. These honors recognize a truly exceptional and distinguished career as a scholar, a teacher, a trainer of generations of historians—thirty students have received their doctorates under his direction—and an exemplary citizen of his university and his profession. He joined the Department of History as an assistant professor in 1966, and was awarded a WARF chaired professorship in 1988, which he named after the distinguished Wisconsin professor and medievalist Charles Homer Haskins—the historian who attracted Frederick Jackson Turner to Madison. “When I first arrived in Madison, WARF funded research time off for scholars in the humanities, something that was not available at any other school at that time. In addition, the excellent research collections in the UW libraries attracted me to Madison. The study of medieval history at Wisconsin has a long and distinguished record, from Charles Homer Haskins, his student Robert Reynolds, Gaines Post, David Herlihy, to my colleagues Maureen Mazzaoui and Karl Shoemaker. I do hope the university will continue to support this rich legacy of teaching and scholarship.” He is doing his part through the establishment of a graduate fellowship to support students studying medieval history in future years and by funding the purchase of research collections for UW Libraries.

Professor Laurence Dickey

By the time he joined the Department of History at the University of Wisconsin–Madison as an associate professor in 1989, Laurence Dickey had already gained recognition as a prominent historian of European thought. He earned his doctorate at the University of California,

Berkeley, in 1980, and established himself as an authoritative scholar in the history of two distinctive yet related veins of thought: the context that gave rise to the philosophical vision of G. W. F. Hegel, the preeminent religious, legal, and historical philosopher of nineteenth-century Germany, and the formation in the eighteenth century of the so-called *doux commerce* tradition, associated with the Scottish Enlightenment.

During his tenure at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, from 1989 until his retirement in January 2008, Dickey enjoyed a distinguished career as a scholar, a popular and effective undergraduate teacher, a rigorous trainer of graduate students, and an active participant in departmental affairs. Dickey’s status as one of the two or three leading English-language specialists on Hegel is founded on his book *Hegel: Religion, Economics, and the Politics of the Spirit* (Cambridge, 1987), a book that led to a series of other publications, including a critical edition of *Hegel’s Political Writings* and substantial contributions to two editions of the *Cambridge Companion to Hegel*.

As generations of his graduate students can attest, Larry Dickey took seriously his responsibilities as a trainer of professional historians. He also developed a strong following among undergraduate students. His courses on religious thought, the influence of Greek political thought in the western tradition, and early modern political thought all drew large enrollments. With his characteristic commitment and energy, Dickey often sat well past his already ample office hours to offer patient critiques or intellectual advice to his students.

For more information on William Courtenay and Laurence Dickey, visit the History Department Web site: history.wisc.edu/home/courtenay_dickey.htm.

Emeritus Professor Paul S. Boyer



It is sometimes said that historians do their most creative work in “retirement.” The amount and range of scholarly work Paul

Boyer has undertaken since his retirement in 2002 confirms that historians never really retire. Most recently, he coedited *Religion and the Culture of Print in Modern America* (UW Press, 2008) with his colleague and friend Charles (Chuck) Cohen. He is also revising chapters of *The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People*, of which he is the coeditor. “I miss teaching, but I love research and writing, and the ability to work at home with fewer obligations allows me to get more work done. I tend to immerse myself in my work to the detriment of other aspects of retirement, but I also enjoy joining my wife, Ann, for travel especially to visit our grandchildren in Minneapolis and Southampton, England.” The resurgence of interest in political and religious messianism and the growth of groups with an apocalyptic vision of America’s future ensure that he is in great demand as a lecturer and conference participant. A recent issue of the *William & Mary Quarterly* included a retrospective analysis of the impact of *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge, 1974), an influential book he coauthored with Stephen Nissenbaum. It was a great opportunity to reevaluate the book and to critique current trends. “It was an extremely valuable exercise, and I greatly benefited from the critical attention of my colleagues.” He has also enjoyed investigating new areas of research: Paul recently gave the keynote talk for a conference on “The Amish in American Culture” and contributed an essay to a volume in honor of the ninetieth birthday of Leonard Bernstein.

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starring an unknown Jack Lemmon. At CARE and in the theater I got to know a number of Hitler's refugees and to learn from them of their war experiences.

In 1950, while campaigning for a reform Democrat in Greenwich Village, I met Jeffrey Eastman Fuller, who worked for the ACLU. We were married in 1951. For 15 years, working at home on weekends, with a little help from me, he produced *Civil Liberties*, the ACLU's monthly newsletter.

In the summer of 1953, when our daughter Anne was eight months old, he encouraged me to go back to Madison to finish my degree. Anne enjoyed being the center of attention on the Memorial Union Terrace, and I was happy finally to finish my degree in history.

Joyce Fuller lives in New York City. For many years her family lived in a community built for the United Nations where she produced a community newspaper. She received an MA in teaching English as second language, and an MED in applied

linguistics from Columbia University's Teachers College. She taught for many years at Queens College, and for two years in China.

She went to China first in 1980, the same year her daughter Cordie took part in the UW's College Year in India program. Cordie has two MAs from UW-Madison: economics ('85) and agricultural journalism ('88). Joyce's older daughter, Anne, is working with the UN in Sudan.

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