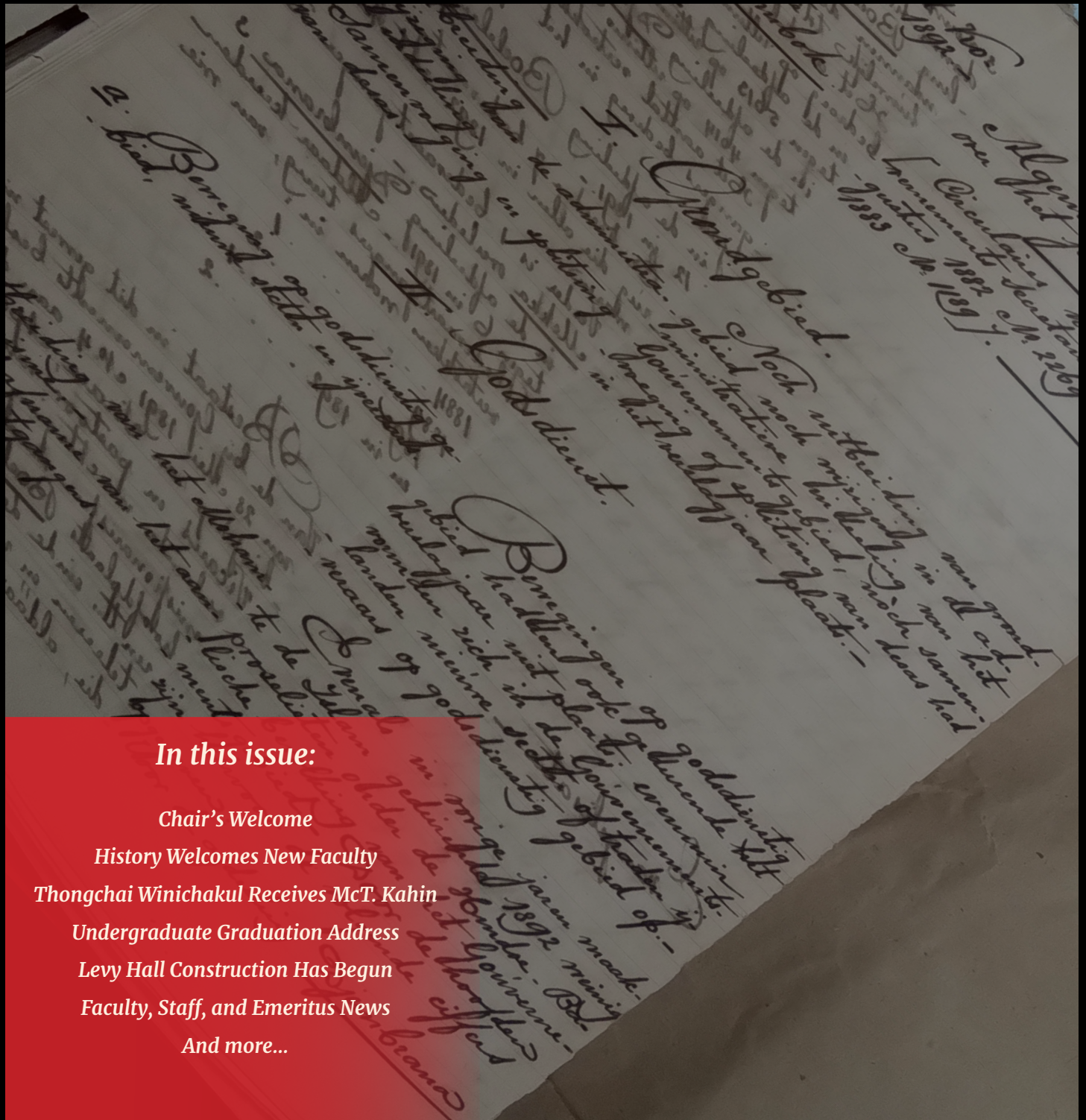




College of Letters & Science
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

The Past in The Present

2023/2024 News for Alumni and Friends from the Department of History



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Chair's Welcome

History Welcomes New Faculty

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Cover photo: *Algemeen Verslag over het jaar 1892*
(Algemene Secretarie Serie Verslagen 1830-1940)
 Photo courtesy of: Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia

Department of History Chair's Welcome



Dear friends of History,

It has been an eventful, productive, and sometimes challenging year in the History Department. As you will see from this newsletter, we have welcomed new faculty to campus, celebrated the launch of new books and innovative projects, and helped wonderful graduates complete their degrees and move on to the next steps in their lives and careers. You can read more about all of these things throughout this newsletter.

Among the most important of the year's events has been the groundbreaking for Irving and Dorothy Levy Hall, which will be the new home of the History Department starting in 2026. Many of you may have memories of the Mosse Humanities Building—perhaps fond memories, perhaps memories that we might call “character-building.” Many great things have happened in Mosse over the years. But its problems are also legendary. Our ability to do the kind of teaching that we want to do, and that students now expect, will be enhanced tremendously by our move to the new building.

Levy Hall will not just be a home to History and the History of Science, Medicine and Technology. It will also be home to seven other departments, including African American Studies, American Indian and Indigenous Studies, Asian American Studies, Chicano/a and Latina/o Studies, Gender & Women's Studies, Jewish Studies, and Religious Studies. Many of our faculty have joint appointments in these departments and programs and will be able to better integrate their life and work on campus. As a

physical space, the new building will be full of light and of community spaces for faculty and students. We are grateful for the support that has made this new building possible, including commitments from every member of our Board of Visitors. This is a major investment in the future of History on campus. It is a statement about the value that a well-rounded education in the liberal arts retains at the University of Wisconsin. You can read more about Levy Hall on pages 8 and 9 of this newsletter.

Finally, a personal note. It hardly seems possible that I stepped into the role as Chair just three years ago, still in the middle of the Covid pandemic. We are thankful that working and living conditions have improved since those difficult times, and proud of all of the accomplishments we have made since. My term as chair is now ending, but the department will be in excellent hands with chair-elect Neil Kodesh, who will step into his new role in the fall. I will be in Singapore for the year, where I will have the opportunity to return to my scholarship. It has been a privilege to serve this great Department as Chair. To all of you who are reading this document: thank you for being a part of this Department's legacy, and its future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Anne Jensen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "A" and "J".

History Welcomes New Faculty



Geoffrey Durham

Assistant Professor of History

I am a historian of modern Eurasia with a focus on imperial Russia and its international entanglements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Two main concerns motivate my research and teaching. The first is to understand how the Russian empire incorporated vast and diverse territories, resources, and peoples into an imperial system of state service and economic exchange. The second is to situate the Russian empire within its global context.

I explore these processes and related themes in my current book project, titled *Autocracy and the Politics of Standardization in the Russian Empire*. Weights, measures, and money emerged as key factors of imperial and international integration—in the Russian empire and around the world between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. The book asks how, why, and with what consequences this happened. It follows Tsarist officials from the ministries of Finances and Internal Affairs and scholars from the Imperial St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences who wielded standardization reforms to extract tax revenues, facilitate commercial exchange, and partake in what they understood to be the globalization of European civilization. By moving among metropolitan, imperial, and international sites of political engagement, the book evaluates the relationships between the Tsarist state and its subjects as well as among subjects themselves. I argue that social conflict, changing conceptions of sovereignty, and tensions between autocracy and internationalism determined how a global transformation in weights, measures, and money reverberated throughout the Russian empire. The book also uncovers how these dynamics within the Russian empire shaped the course of international standardization, and offers a new account of how the gold standard and the metric system came to be used throughout the world.

I am presently working on two other projects. The first is a history of platinum mining and minting in the Russian empire in the nineteenth century. The second is a study of imperial autocracy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that focuses on the diverse political cultures and institutions through which the tsars' subjects participated in the work of governance.

In addition to the social, political, and economic history of Eurasia and the Russian empire, my teaching interests include comparative histories of unfree labor and empire, nineteenth-century internationalisms, and the history of political and economic thought.



Emma Kuby

Assistant Professor of History

I am an intellectual, political and cultural historian of modern France and its empire. To date, my research has focused on the legacies of World War II's violence during the era of decolonization.

My first book, *Political Survivors: The Resistance, the Cold War, and the Fight against Concentration Camps after 1945*, examined a French-led activist campaign by Nazi camp survivors to expose ongoing crimes against humanity in the postwar USSR, Francoist Spain, Maoist China, French Algeria, and beyond. It showed that the project championed by these non-state actors — centered not on genocide but on concentration camps as sites of political repression — helped foster a universalist paradigm for defending human rights but foundered on the limits of members' own memory politics, the ideological pressures of the Cold War, and an inability to adapt to new forms of European violence in the context of decolonizing warfare. The book received the George Louis Beer Prize from the American Historical Association, the David H. Pinkney Prize from the Society for French Historical Studies, and the Council for European Studies Book Award.

My current book project, *The Outsider Turned Ambassador: American Jews, Holocaust Memory, and Tensions of Empire in Postwar France*, reconstructs the ephemeral community of Jewish American expatriates who lived and worked in France and its empire after 1945, and tells the story of their efforts to grapple with the violent legacies of the Second World War in a context of French domestic conflict and colonial crisis. As these writers, scholars, bureaucrats, journalists, NGO staffers, and politicians helped establish France as the headquarters for diplomatic and humanitarian efforts to rebuild a ravaged continent in the wake of catastrophe, they also made it the unexpected focus of a post-Holocaust, early Cold War intellectual quest to reclaim Europe as a site of "Western civilization" — and to redefine themselves as consummate transatlantic mediators of Western liberal values.

My teaching interests include modern Europe and modern France; colonialism and decolonization; war, atrocity, and post-conflict reconstruction; transnational activism; Jewish history; intellectual history; and gender and sexuality.



Dana Landress

Assistant Professor of Medical History and Bioethics

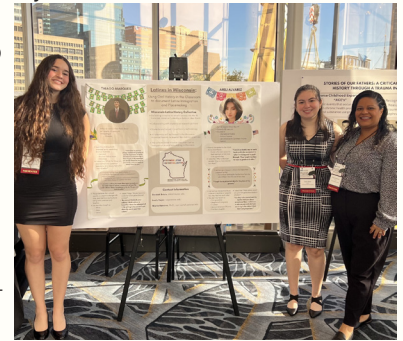
I am a historian of 19th and 20th century medicine and public health in the United States. My research examines the relationship between nutritional disease, community health work, and the political economy of capitalism in the U.S. South. Methodologically, my research blends the approaches and insights of social history, labor history, and oral history. I am especially interested in histories of structural racism, economic inequality, and community health activism as they pertain to patient encounters with medicine and public health. Additionally, I study histories of southern foodways, diasporic culinary traditions, and medicinal remedies of the rural South. Currently, I am at work on two projects. The first is a multidisciplinary collaboration with scholars, activists, and health providers to document community healthcare work in the wake of Covid-19. The second is a book project detailing the history of pellagra in the U.S. South.

In my spare time, I enjoy cooking and experimenting with new recipes (ask me about my historic cookbook collection)! I have a miniature schnauzer named Anna Belle who serves as the official taste tester for (dog-friendly) kitchen creations. Originally from the mountains of North Carolina, I also enjoy hiking and spending time outdoors.

Marla Ramírez and Undergraduates Present at Oral History Conference

Professor Marla Ramírez and two undergraduate students, Lezly Vejar and Zevdah Drizin, presented on their original research at the 2023 Oral History Association Annual Meeting in Baltimore, Maryland this October. The presentation, titled “Latinxs in Wisconsin: Using Oral History in the Classroom to Document Latinx Immigration and Placemaking,” highlighted oral histories conducted in Professor Ramírez’s undergraduate courses at UW–Madison. The classes partnered with the Wisconsin Latinx History Collective, an initiative to document the history and contributions of Latinxs in Wisconsin. All oral histories collected by the students were donated to the Wisconsin Historical Society to help expand the Latinx primary collections.

Professor Ramírez was also honored at the conference with an award for her article, “Gendered Banishment: Rewriting Mexican Repatriation through a Transgenerational Oral History Methodology.”



The Kemal H. Karpaz Center for Turkish Studies Update

The Kemal H. Karpaz Center for Turkish Studies was established within the Department of History in 2023. The Center was endowed by a generous estate gift from the late Prof. Kemal H. Karpaz, a pioneering historian of Ottoman and Turkish History who served the University of Wisconsin–Madison for 35 years. Recently, the Karpaz Center hosted three public talks reflecting on the centenary of the Turkish Republic. Prof. Reşat Kasaba (University of Washington) inaugurated this series in Spring 2023 with a lecture, attended by more than forty people, on 100 years of urbanization in Turkey. In the Fall of 2023, Prof. Aslı Iğsız (NYU) discussed legacies of the Greek–Turkish Population Exchange. Most recently, Prof. Selçuk Esenbel (Bosphorus University) visited campus for three days at the end of April 2024, meeting with graduate students and delivering a public lecture on the history of Turkish–Japanese relations, in an event co-hosted with the Center for East Asian Studies.

In addition to hosting public talks, the Karpaz Center provides scholarships and grants to graduate and undergrad-

uate students pursuing Turkish Studies at UW–Madison, including two History PhD students who currently receive summer funding through the Karpaz Summer Graduate Fellowships program. The Karpaz Center is helping to build UW–Madison’s research capacity in Turkish Studies by allocating funds to Memorial Library acquisitions and sponsoring the university’s membership in the American Research Institute in Turkey (ARIT) and the American Association of Teachers of Turkic Languages (AATT). Looking toward the academic year 2024–25, the Karpaz Center is helping to fund an additional instructor in the Turkish Language program, and is working with UW–Cinematheque for Turkish film screenings and with International Academic Programs to establish a Study Abroad Program in Istanbul.

A group of History graduate students have established a graduate society affiliated with the Karpaz Center. “K–Grads” aims to cultivate graduate education in Turkish studies by creating a lively intellectual community. K–Grads invites fellow graduate students to join them in building bridges between disciplines.

Carl F. Kaestle (1940–2023): A Remembrance

by William J. Reese & John L. Rury

Carl F. Kaestle, one of the nation's premier historians of education, died on January 5, 2023, in Bloomington, Indiana. Carl was enormously influential, having taught and advised students during his career at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, the University of Chicago, and Brown University. He befriended numerous individuals at different stages of their careers and earned an international reputation for his scholarship on the history of public education and of literacy.



where he taught from 1970 to 1994, he served as chair of the Department of Educational Policy Studies and director of the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research. He also the first Chair of the Advisory Board of the UW Center for Print Culture in Modern America.

We especially want to remember Carl as our mentor and friend. We both journeyed to study with him at Wisconsin in the mid-1970s after reading his book on New York City. Studying with him was

A graduate of Yale University and Harvard University, Carl was prolific: the author, co-author, editor, or co-editor of seven books and many articles, reviews, and commentaries. His prose sparkled, and his arguments rested upon prodigious layers of research. In 1973, he published a landmark study, *The Evolution of an Urban School System: New York City, 1750–1850*, and edited a model documentary history of Joseph Lancaster and the charity school movement. A decade later, he published *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780–1860*, which became part of the historical canon. His other books included ground-breaking studies of Massachusetts educational developments in the nineteenth century and the history of literacy. Over the years, he utilized a variety of methodological approaches, including quantitative analysis. His co-authored volume, *Literacy in the United States: Readers and Reading Since 1880* (1991), won the best book prize from the History of Education Society.

Carl was frequently honored for his scholarship. He received an award from the American Educational Research Association for the best review of research article (on literacy and readers). Named to endowed chairs at Wisconsin and at Brown, he was the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, served as president of the History of Education Society and the National Academy of Education, and was an elected member of the American Antiquarian Society and of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was Vice-Chair of the National Research Council's Board on Testing and Assessment and a member of boards or study groups sponsored by the College Board, Educational Testing Service, the Southern Educational Foundation, and the W.E.B. DuBois Center of Great Barrington. At Wisconsin,

among the most consequential decisions of our lives. Carl was open to our own unique views on politics, history, and education. He never sought disciples. He urged us to tap the intellectual riches of the university outside of our department. He cared deeply about the welfare of students and encouraged us to have faith in our abilities and prospects. He held the highest expectations for us but was gentle and nurturing.

On numerous Fridays, Carl and his advisees met for lunch at the Kollege Klub, located on the edge of campus. While consuming too many burgers and fries, we read each other's work-in-progress and sharpened our understanding of the historian's craft. When later in life we struggled with personal problems or had reached professional crossroads, Carl was always available to steady our nerves and to provide support. We admired how he encouraged many newer scholars at professional conferences, read their work, and wrote endorsements for their books. A scholar senior to us once remarked, "I never heard Carl say a foolish thing." He seemed so wise even when he was still so young. He reminded us of the proverbial gentleman-scholar, in the best sense of the phrase. Kindness was built into his persona.

By every measure, Carl was an amazing scholar, and his influence upon us was profound. He personified the very best liberal, tolerant values of his generation. Deeply learned, he encouraged others. Deeply humane, he cared about educational equity and social justice. Despite the many demands on his time, he always found time for us.

Farha Tahir Named Forward Award Recipient

As a History and Political Science major at UW-Madison, Alumna Farha Tahir likes to joke that much of her time as an undergraduate at UW-Madison was spent “stumbling into what I was meant to do.” In actuality, her path from almost-law student to Program Analyst in the U.S. State Department Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor is marked by sure-footed courage and steady steps toward strengthening democracy around the world.

Tahir arrived on campus with an interest in political science and history, which she assumed would eventually track into law school. But while sitting in a foreign policy class during her sophomore year, Tahir learned about a new internship program that paired UW students with opportunities in the nation’s capital. Tahir joined one of the first cohorts of the program, now known as the Wisconsin in Washington Internship Program.

Tahir, who grew up in Shorewood, Wisconsin, says she was initially “terrified” to apply. “I’d never lived in a big city before or taken a train to work or anything like that,” she says. “But I had the comfort of knowing the university would be behind me, and I had the support of my peers. I got [to DC] and never looked back.”

She did physically come back to Madison, though, to finish her degrees after her internship at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Along with three peers from the Wisconsin in Washington program, Tahir cofounded a student-run international development program called the EDGE Project that served the



small island of Lingira, located in Uganda’s Lake Victoria. With local leaders on Lingira, the students launched a farmers’ co-op, girls’ soccer team, women’s economic collaborative, and several other initiatives. The program lasted almost a decade after Tahir and the other founders graduated, with dozens of UW students participating over the years.

The EDGE Project was a learning laboratory for Tahir that solidified her own passion for development work. After graduation, she re-

turned to CSIS as a full-time research associate and then became a program officer at the National Democratic Institute, followed by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). She traveled extensively throughout sub-Saharan Africa and built especially close ties in Somalia, Malawi, and Tanzania.

“Being able to build grant-making programs in a variety of countries and watch as our partners changed the trajectories of their countries, and in some cases the continent, was so exciting to be a part of,” Tahir says of her time at NED. “I loved to be able to invest in the creativity and promise of an idea, watch it take root, and then see it blossom. I feel so lucky to have been able to invest in ideas I believed in and watch them turn into new organizations or media outlets, advocacy campaigns, or social movements.”

She transitioned to the State Department, where she now oversees programs that support democracy around the world as a program analyst for the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. She is also responsible for developing new strategies for democracy programming that aim to help democratic actors keep pace with citizen demands in an increasingly complicated international context.

“I have always felt that everyone deserves to be able to shape their lived reality, and that’s why I care about democracy,” she says. “If I can contribute to that in some small way, that’s the big goal. The power of democracy is not something we can take for granted.”

Outside of work, Tahir belongs to her local barre studio and a multigenerational monthly walking club that helps her explore DC’s neighborhoods, trails, and museums. “We are all at different stages of life, but we love the city, love to learn, and like meeting new people,” she says. Over time, the group has formed a strong, supportive community among its members. Step by step, together.

Stay Connected with the History Department!

Please follow us on social media and check out our website for updates on department life and upcoming events.



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Faculty, Staff, and Emeritus News

The University of Chicago Press published **Viren Murthy**'s book *Pan-Asianism and the Legacy of the Chinese Revolution* in 2023. In this book, Viren Murthy offers an intel-



lectual history of the writings of theorists, intellectuals, and activists—spanning leftist, conservative, and right-wing thinkers—who proposed new ways of think-

ing about Asia in their own historical and political contexts.

Neil Kodesh has been awarded a 2024 Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award.

Liz Hennessey has received a Vilas Faculty Mid-Career Investigator Award.

Gloria Whiting has been awarded a Vilas Associates Award.

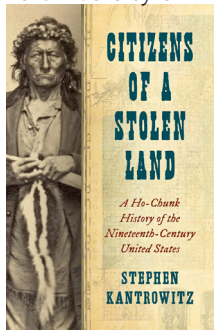
Giuliana Chamedes has been awarded a National Endowment for Humanities Fellowship for her intriguing book project, *Unpaid Debts: The European Left, North-South Dialogue, and the Fight for Economic Decolonization*.

Ashley Brown has been awarded a Vilas Faculty Early-Career Investigator Award from the Provost. "The College is delighted to have the Provost recognize Professor Brown with the Vilas Faculty Early-Career Investigator Award. Ashley's research is clearly dazzling, and her instructional impact is equally impressive. This award not only recognizes her major research contributions but also provides the research support she needs for her upcoming multi-archival research on the 20th century history of the Black press. Retaining and supporting such a brilliant scholar is our top priority." –Eric Wilcots, Dean of the College of

Letters & Science.

History Department faculty **Emily Callaci**, **Paige Glotzer**, **Sally Hayes**, **Jorell Meléndez-Badillo**, and **Daniel Williford** won the Fall 2023 Research Competition.

Stephen Kantrowitz published his book *Citizens of a Stolen Land: A Ho-Chunk History of the Nineteenth Century United States*, with the University of North Carolina Press in 2023. This history of Ho-Chunk sovereignty and citizenship offer a bracing new perspective on citizenship's perils and promises, the way the broader nineteenth-century conflict between "free soil" and slaveholding expansion shaped Indigenous life, and the continuing impact of Native people's struggles and claims on U.S. politics and society.

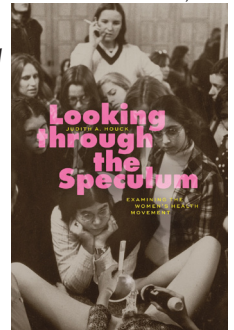


Emily Callaci has been appointed to join the editorial team at AHR as co-editor of the series History Unclassified along with Dr. Kate Brown of M.I.T. The History Unclassified section publishes various forms of historian writing that don't fit the conventional peer-review research article format. It is a space for historians to experiment with different genres and methods; to reflect on surprising archival finds, to experiment with new literary modes that arise with emerging forms of technology, or to think in new ways about what makes an "archive."

Simon Balto co-organized a symposium with Dr. Leslie Alexander of Rutgers on the theme of "History of the Carceral State: Policing in & Beyond the United States" at the Harvard Kennedy School. In his role as an HKS Carr Center for Human Rights

Policy Racial Justice Fellow, he also presented his new in-progress book project, *White Innocents: Terror, Racism, and Innocence in the Making of Modern America*.

The University of Chicago Press has published **Judith Houck**'s new book, *Looking Through the Speculum: Examining the Women's Health Movement*. The work highlights local history to tell a national story about the evolution of the women's health movement, illuminating the struggles and successes of bringing feminist dreams into clinical spaces.



Ashley Brown's book, *Serving Herself: The Life and Times of Althea Gibson*, has been awarded the Harry Shaw and Katrina Hazzard-Donald Award for Outstanding Work in African-American Popular Culture Studies.

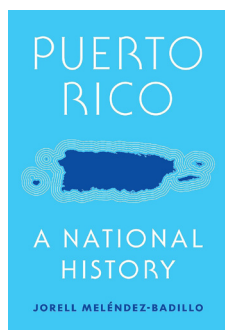
Mou Banerjee has been awarded the highly competitive University of Wisconsin-Madison Award for Mentoring Undergraduates in Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities. Banerjee is being recognized for her inspiring work with students in multiple courses and independent work, including [The Non-Violence Project](#).

John Hall has been elected to the board of directors of the National Humanities Alliance.

Devin Kennedy has received a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend for work on his book manuscript, along with a research grant from the Association for Computing Machinery History Committee to support his work on an article on computer scientists' changing understanding of social responsibility. Finally, Kennedy has been awarded a grant as the co-PI for a "Humanities

Responds to Global Challenges” Seed Program from the the Institute for Research in the Humanities and the College of Letters and Science. For this interdisciplinary project, he will co-lead a 5-member team composed of faculty from Philosophy, the International School, and Communication Arts on a project titled, “Artificial Intelligence & Uncertainty.”

Princeton University Press published **Jorell Meléndez-Badillo**’s new book, *Puerto Rico: A National History*. In this masterful work of scholarship, Meléndez-Badillo sheds light on the vibrant cultures of the archipelago in the centuries before the arrival of Columbus and captures the full sweep of Puerto Rico’s turbulent history in the centuries that followed, from the first indigenous insurrection against colonial rule in 1511—led by the pow-



erful chieftain Agüeybaná II—to the establishment of the Commonwealth in 1952. He deftly portrays the contemporary period and the intertwined though unequal histories of the archipelago and the continental United States. This book was published in English and Spanish concurrently.

Sasha Maria Suarez was awarded an Exceptional Service Award. This award recognizes Suarez for her considerable community-facing and university service while also maintaining a high level of research and creative productivity.

Happy retirement to **Todd Anderson**, who stepped down from his role as the Department Administrator. The Department of History would like to thank him for his hard work and contributions to the department while welcoming **Leslie Abadie**, who has transitioned to her new role as Department Administrator. And congratulations to **Scott Burkhardt**, who has taken a new role as the Academic Program Manager.

The Department of History is happy to welcome several new staff: **Carol Čizauskas** as the Department Administration Associate; **Zach Fithian** as the Main Office Coordinator; **Davis Fugate**, who has taken the role of HR Generalist; **Will Marx** who is now the Department’s User Support Specialist; **Iain McLoughlin** as the Financial Specialist; and **Susan Nelson**, who is the new Graduate Program Manager.

Additionally, congratulations to **Lisa Normand**, who has transitioned to her new role as Graduate Program Admission and Graduate Advisor. **Yasi Rezai** is the Department’s new Accountant, **John Persike** has taken the role as IS Comprehensive Services-Senior, **Christina Matta** has expanded her role as Career Advisor to include graduate advising as well, and **Jen Schumacher** is now the Department’s Curricular Coordinator. **Amelia Zurcher** has moved into a new role in History Administration as Outreach and Events Coordinator.

Q: What can you do with a degree in History? A: Anything you want!

History majors are used to well-meaning friends and family members asking what they plan to do with their degree after they graduate. Each semester, the Department teaches History at Work, a career development course that helps students answer that very question! In History at Work, students practice writing cover letters, resumes, and other forms of professional communication, and, more importantly, they learn from our own alumni about the wide range of professions in which History majors are successful. The course engages alumni from fields as diverse as sports management, IT, consulting, and international affairs – just to name a few! – to share their experiences, explain the day-to-day work for new hires, and offer advice for getting started in their field. The alumni speakers then become part of the students’ professional network, and many stay in touch to mentor students individually and help with everything from refining their resume to considering job offers.

Since Professors Sarah Thal and Leonora Neville launched History at Work over a decade ago, enrollment in the course has grown from its original 6 students to roughly 30 each semester! Most of these students are History majors, History certificate students, or students who have taken at least one History course, but the course often draws students

from other humanities majors for its general professional advice. The Department has even been contacted by other history departments who want to learn more – including Harvard, Rutgers, and Purdue Universities. We look forward to guiding our next cohort of History at Work students in navigating the vast landscape of career options before them!



Board of Visitors members Harry Handler and Jim Graettinger review student resumes in History at Work, taught in Spring 2024 by Professor Gloria Whiting

Alumni who would like to learn more about History at Work are welcome to contact Christina Matta, Career Advisor, at christina.matta@wisc.edu.



Construction Begins on the Department of History's New State-of-the-Art Home, Irving and Dorothy Levy Hall



Construction has begun on the History Department's new home on the corner of Park and W. Johnson streets, thanks to a generous lead gift of \$20 million made by UW-Madison alumni-cum-philanthropists Marv ('68) and Jeff Levy ('71). The new building, named Irving and Dorothy Levy Hall in honor of the brothers' parents, is scheduled to open in the Fall of 2026.

The current Humanities building has served the department well for nearly 55 years but is well overdue for replacement. Famed architect Harry Weese's brutalist design originally opened in 1969 amidst a series of budget cuts that were deemed acceptable at the time, as the building was only supposed to last for 30 years.

"Not long ago, I was sitting in a circle of 18 undergraduate students waiting for our Section to begin and discussing the disarray of the Humanities building," recalls dissertator Chris Hulshof. "As one student was speaking about how dangerous it had become, a piece of the ceiling actually collapsed and smashed into the floor in the middle of our circle, proving his point."

Thanks to generous donations from Marv and Jeff Levy, the UW Board of Visitors, and numerous other donors, the Department of History's housing woes are soon to be a thing of the past. In 2021, the Levy brothers provided a \$20 million lead gift to the College of Letters and Science for the construction of a new building. The state of Wisconsin followed the lead with a \$60 million contribution in the 2021-23 budget, and since then, fundraising has resulted in over \$10 million raised out of a planned \$15+ million from other donors. In total, approximately \$115 million will be spent on the construction of the new Irving and Dorothy Levy Hall.

"We offer this gift in honor of our parents, who established our family foundation in 1958," said Jeff Levy when announcing the donation. "We also recognize and remember our late brother Phillip ('64), who joined us in being a proud UW-Madison graduate."

The new L&S building will be 136,000 square feet and provide 1,100 seats in 13 state-of-the-art classrooms ranging in size from small seminar rooms to a large auditorium-style lecture hall. In addition, Levy Hall will house offices and support space for the History Department and nine other L&S academic departments, which are currently spread across eight different facilities on campus. In contrast with current facilities, the building's modern design will shower common spaces and individual rooms with natural light.

Irving and Dorothy Levy Hall is far more than a mere replacement location for the 70,000 course credit hours taught each year in the current Humanities building. The facility is an investment in the heart of UW-Madison itself. The College of Letters and Science is by far the largest of the university's 13 schools. Last year alone, over 4,000 undergraduate students graduated with L&S degrees, joining nearly a quarter million alumni. Students majoring in L&S fields account for 45% of UW-Madison students, while 65% of all undergraduate credit hours are taught by L&S faculty. Thus, the investment in Levy Hall is not merely an investment in the Department of History, the Humanities, or the College of Letters and Science – it is a centerpiece of the university's ongoing modernization projects to accommodate its ever-growing student population.

"We are proud to help make this building a reality. We hope it will be a central educational location for the undergraduate experience at UW-Madison," says Marv Levy. "Our hope is that by honoring our family legacy of charitable giving with this gift, we can offer to future generations some of the opportunity that the UW has provided us."

The project is poised to become a shining example of the value of liberal arts for universities in the 21st century and how investment in the humanities and social sciences can boost educational engagement and outcomes. The state-of-the-art facility will have classrooms that support active learning through modern technology, and multiple collaborative learning spaces for faculty, scholars, and students to come together. By bringing together previously dispersed departments, Levy Hall will maximize these collaborative learning spaces, teaching support, and cross-disciplinary research opportunities. The unique project provides a truly modern intellectual home for the Humanities and raises the bar for universities across the nation who traditionally spend far less on Humanities infrastructure projects.

Irving and Dorothy Levy Hall is scheduled to open in the Fall of 2026. We are excited to see this new home for the History Department.



Department of History Global Perspective Scholarship

The Department of History continues to offer the Global Perspective Scholarship to make the study and intern abroad experience possible for History Majors and those pursuing a Certificate in History. The Global Perspectives Scholarship provides students with financial awards starting with \$1500 towards short term programs, \$3000 towards semester programs, and \$4000 towards year-long programs. This scholarship was made possible thanks to our History Board of Visitors members.

Check out our awardees and some of their post program reflections below!

Elizabeth Gediman

My experience studying abroad in Copenhagen through DIS this summer was a valuable part of my exploration of future academic and career opportunities. I've been interested in design for many years and have recently been considering a number of design-related fields in which to pursue a master's degree. This summer provided me with the opportunity to delve more deeply into architecture, a field of study which was entirely new to me. Additionally, participating in the Architecture and Design Session of my program enabled me to foster relationships with people studying design and learn about different creative fields. It was a fantastic program to get a taste of a new field of study, explore a different region of the world, and make friends with students who have similar interests and ambitions. Going forward, my program has given me the literacy and connections to continue to explore opportunities for master's programs and job opportunities in an array of design fields.

Matthew Masonius

I believe that my experience in Washington, D.C., will greatly benefit me in the future. As a political science student, I was incredibly fortunate to work at the highest level of politics before even truly beginning my career. My program afforded me an incredible opportunity to get my foot in the door and make invaluable connections that I hope to leverage soon. Beyond proving myself to potential future employers and colleagues, I also got to sample a very unique city and work environment. Working on Capitol Hill is not for everybody, so I appreciated the chance to try it for a few months alongside other UW-Madison students. I found the experience greatly rewarding and exciting, and now I don't have to worry as much about moving to a strange city where I don't know anybody. My summer in D.C. was the best professional experience of my life, and I hope to make a career there someday.



Emily Olmedo

This experience has deepened my understanding of both the Spanish language and Costa Rican culture. Studying abroad in San Jose, Costa Rica, and living with a local host family allowed me to immerse myself fully in the language and customs, fostering a profound appreciation for the richness of this new environment. Participating in this program was the first time I fully immersed myself in another language and culture. Living with a host family and studying in San Jose, Costa Rica, opened my eyes to new ways of life and communication, marking a significant milestone in my personal and linguistic journey.



2023-2024 Scholarship Recipients

- Elizabeth Gediman (Summer 2023) Copenhagen DIS (Denmark)
- Matthew Masonius (Summer 2023) Washington DC WiW Intern (USA)
- Isabella Prenger (Year 2023-2024) Almaty ACTR Flagship (Kazakhstan)
- Emily Olmedo (Winter 2023-2024) San Jose UW Spanish Language (Costa Rica)
- Sam McQueen (Spring 2024) Tokyo Keio Univ Exchange (Japan)
- Julia Masterson (Spring 2024) Rome CIEE (Italy)
- Emily Johnson (Summer 2024) Copenhagen DIS (Denmark)
- Doruk Sahin (Fall 2024) Barcelona IES (Spain)

Prof. Emeritus Thongchai Winichakul Awarded the George McT Kahin Award and Fukuoka Grand Prize



Congratulations to Prof. Emeritus Thongchai Winichakul for his achievement winning the George McT. Kahin Prize from the Southeast Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies with his latest book *Moments of Silence: The Unforgetting of the October 6, 1976, Massacre in Bangkok*.

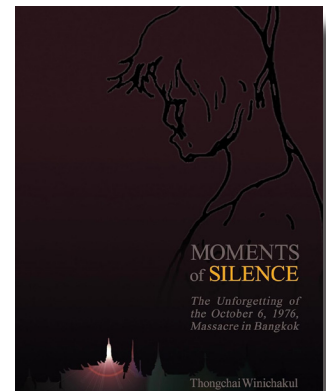
Moments of Silence focuses on the silence that surrounds the October 6 massacre. Silence, the book argues, is not forgetting. Rather it signals an inability to forget or remember—or to articulate a socially meaningful memory. It is the “unforgetting,” the liminal domain between remembering and forgetting. Historian Thongchai Winichakul, a participant in the events of that day, gives the silence both a voice and a history by highlighting the factors that contributed to the unforgetting amidst changing memories of the massacre over the decades that followed. They include shifting political conditions and context, the influence of Buddhism, the royal-nationalist narrative of history, the role played by the monarchy as moral authority and arbiter of justice, and a widespread perception that the truth might have devastating ramifications for Thai society. The unforgetting impacted both victims and perpetrators in different ways. It produced a collective false memory of an incident that never took place, but it also produced silence that is filled with hope and counter-history.

The George McT. Kahin Prize of the Association for Asian Studies is given biennially to an outstanding scholar of Southeast Asian studies from any discipline or country specialization to recognize distinguished scholarly work on Southeast Asia beyond the author's first book. The award was initiated in 2007 at the behest of the Cornell University Center for Southeast Asian Studies, friends and students of George Kahin, and the Southeast Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies to honor the contributions of George McT. Kahin to the field of Southeast Asian Studies. Professor Winichakul

shared the Kahin Prize with our very own alumnus Prof. John Roosa of UBC for his book *Buried History: The Anticommunist Massacre of 1965–1966 in Indonesia*, published by the University of Wisconsin Press.

Only months after receiving the Kahin Prize, Professor Thongchai Winichakul has been selected as the recipient of the prestigious Grand Prize for 2023 by the Fukuoka Prize committee. The Fukuoka Prize was established in 1990 to honor the outstanding work of individuals, groups, and organizations in preserving and creating the unique and diverse cultures of Asia. The prize aims to foster and increase awareness of the value of Asian cultures, and to institute a broad framework for exchange and mutual learning among the people of Asia. This year marks the 33rd anniversary of the inception of the Fukuoka Prize.

“In recent years, he has published eight sole-authored books in Thai that discuss the history, current status and future of Thailand's monarchy and democracy, nation state and rule of law. Through these publications, he has played a pivotal role to lead and support the development of political awareness and activism among Thai students and citizens. His commitment to the progress of democracy and civil society, along with the originality of his activities at international level in academia make him a role model for Asian intellectuals. For such a contribution, Prof. Thongchai Winichakul is truly worthy of Grand Prize of Fukuoka Prize.”



[*Moments of Silence: The Unforgetting of the October 6, 1976, Massacre in Bangkok.*](#)

Interview with Alumni: Courtney Rodriguez

Last December, History alumni Courtney Rodriguez ('17) spoke with the Board of Visitor's Amy Lambert about her time in Madison. Courtney is a Wisconsin native who earned BS degrees in both Political Science and History, with a certificate in Chicana/Latina Studies. She currently resides in Chicago, where she's an Implementation Manager at Jellyvision, a company that creates a software product for insurance benefit education & employee decision-making tools.

Why did you decide to pursue history as a major at UW-Madison?

I decided to study history because I craved more context as a Political Science major. Multiple courses were cross listed. However, I often found myself digging deeper and farther back than the syllabus. For example, I enrolled in a EU politics course when I studied abroad in London my junior year. This was a few months before the Brexit referendum took place. I registered for a library card to view multimedia about the issue from the formation to the present day. When I returned to Madison, I knew I had to make my relationship with history official. I was the only one who had qualms about switching to a History degree. I had stepped onto campus as a Biochemistry major, and I was still finding my sea legs after declaring Political Science my sophomore year. My main concern was what was I going to do after I graduated?



Alexander Shashko, and more, illuminated how laws, economic shifts, and race relations are tied to my family tree. This understanding compounded my appreciation for my heritage and sparked ongoing conversations with my family.

What have you been doing since your time at Madison? How has your study of history benefited you in that journey?

I spent two years at the Wisconsin Historical Society working in the Education Department as the Assistant State Coordinator of National History Day in Wisconsin. The people were incredible, and I worked with history and students each day. I ultimately left to explore the private sector. I realized I had worked in government roles/public service most of my life, and I wanted to move to Chicago for a new challenge.

Since then, I have worked at software companies with implementation and customer success teams. Essentially, I make sure the product is outfitted to the customers' expectations, and they are satisfied with their investment. I credit my history degree for my writing and research skills. At work, this looks like investigating problems through time stamps, scouring previous tickets with similar issues, and asking questions. The real catch is writing succinct emails to clients with the information they want to know and knowing what is relevant to include or omit. This is a similar process to essay writing! Albeit more challenging because instead of 10 or 15 pages to get my point across, I have maybe five lines depending on my audience. Written and oral communication skills are labeled as 'soft skills' on the job market, but they are my pillars for success in all of my roles and I credit my history degree for sharpening these skills.

How did you manage and overcome your concerns about a history major?

I visited SuccessWorks, which is the center for personal and professional development for Letters & Science students at UW-Madison, and confided in my advisors. Everyone was incredibly supportive and encouraged me to explore job boards. That search led me to working as a Frontline Staff Member at the Wisconsin Historical Museum and my first job in the History field!

As a history student, you focused on Mexican Americans post-war. Will you discuss that decision?

I chose to focus on this history because I am Mexican American, and I never saw my history reflected in school before attending college. Stories and slogans I heard at family events were given voice by Professor Benjamin Marquez in Latino History and Politics. This was the first time I ever heard an educator call my ancestors important and pinpoint their significance in military service, community organizing, and politics. My father's family were migrant farm workers, and several family members served in the Korean and Vietnam wars. My uncle and father attended college on the GI bill, and our family never had to work in the fields again. For this fact, I wanted to learn more about the factors and turning points that created these patterns for Mexican Americans. Professor Marquez, along with courses from Susan Lee Johnson,

What would you want to tell a prospective UW-Madison student about the idea of studying history as a major or taking history courses?

I was on a strong pre-med track in high school that resulted in multiple-choice test anxiety. Knowing I was up against the clock, to not only understand the question but select the correct answer, induced panic and doubt. I wish I would have known sooner that my grades could be determined by my writing and argumentation rather than memorization under a timer. History blue book exams or term papers were still nerve-racking, but my confidence

in the readings, discussion sections, and passion overcame the anxiety enough for me to focus on the assignment. I would suggest a history course to anyone in their freshman year (or to anyone who shares the same type of testing anxiety). I doubt I would have listened to myself say that, given how fixated I was on my chemistry courses, but “Young Courtney” needed to learn lessons, like how to embrace change. I am grateful for my nonlinear

academic journey because I now know what the “right fit” feels like.

Also, keep in mind that you are employable as a history major! That was my hesitation and I know I shared that with others. The skills you learn are universally beneficial in any career field. History sharpens your communication skills and all teams need a dependable voice.

Remembering Beth Ostreicher Steffen

By Patty Kaeding (BA 1989) Board of Visitors Member

Madison area schools lost a dedicated and beloved educator and school leader when Beth Ostreicher Steffen passed away unexpectedly on January 3, 2023.

From Marshfield, Wisconsin, Beth completed her Bachelor's Degree in History and English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1988, followed by a Masters Degree in English in 1990. She was always proud to be a Badger.

Beth was an accomplished and passionate educator for thirty years. Her first secondary school teaching position was at Beloit Memorial High School where she taught English. She then worked at Madison La Follette High School as an English teacher, literacy coach, and assistant principal. Following her 17 years at La Follette and the Madison Metropolitan School District, she served as principal at Edgewood High School, a private Catholic school in Madison, from 2018 to 2021. Most recently, Beth was a language, literacy, and equity specialist and then interim principal at Badger Ridge Middle School in Verona, Wisconsin.

Beth enjoyed traveling and history. She loved escaping the cold and dark Wisconsin winters, and always visited museums wherever she went. She was proud to be a civil rights advocate, both as an educator and as a member of the community. Beth pushed the boundaries of what teaching could do for students. During her time at Edgewood High School, she became intrigued by lawyer and equal rights advocate Bryan Stevenson after a trip to Montgomery, Alabama. She arranged for the entire school to read Stevenson's writings about his career defending disadvantaged clients. Themes from these readings were a focus throughout the school year. The activities Beth initiated helped students move out of their comfort zones and engage in meaningful discussions about these themes in a way that many of the students had not experienced before. Beth valued experiences over things. She valued



learning about people, the things that make us different and the things that make us the same. Beth spoke often with her family of the “ego-meter” and the importance of staying humble. She did not ask or look for thanks from any of the hundreds of people whose lives she helped for the better.

I met Beth during Spring Semester 1988 when we were students in Professor John Cooper's 600 series Advanced Seminar in History on American Intellectual & Political History. The seminar was rigorous. We read a different book in its entirety each week, with two weeks for the unabridged *Democracy in America* volumes I & II by Alexis de Tocqueville. Beth was impressive not only for her insights and perspectives on what we had read, but also for her positive attitude and straightforward and unpretentious nature. She made that seminar feel like a community.

Many years later I was pleased to discover that Beth was on staff at Madison La Follette High School, my alma mater. When I saw her at the high school's anniversary open house event in 2013, she was brimming with enthusiasm and energy about the school, her role, and her students.

Beth's enthusiasm for education went beyond the students she worked with at La Follette, Edgewood, and Verona. While principal at Edgewood High School, she served as an alumni mentor to undergraduate majors in the History Department, offering a valuable first-hand perspective on teaching and administration as career options.

Recollections of Beth shared on her obituary page and in media interviews depict an extraordinary educator and leader who was dedicated to helping her students in and out of the classroom, and positively impacting their lives beyond the boundaries of the classroom. She was the Wisconsin Idea in action.

Stay Connected

We'd like to hear from you. Please send your updates and news to:
history.wisc.edu/alumni-and-friends/stay-in-touch

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Get involved!

Want to help shape our major's professional futures? Consider being a career mentor! Career mentors might provide advice on how to get started in their field, read over resume or cover letters, or help current students build their networks. Contact Christina Matta at christina.matta@wisc.edu for more information.

Or join Badger Bridge to connect with other UW-Madison students, past and present. From backpack to briefcase, Badger Bridge is the only social network that brings together UW alumni from all generations to match online mentors and promote professional success. See badgerbridge.com for more information or to join!



Supporting Excellence

Gifts of any size make a difference for our faculty, staff, and students. Alumni and friends of the Department of History contribute to our excellence and ensure the value of History degree for current and future Badgers.

Giving Options:

Online Giving

Make a gift online through the UW Foundation at:

<https://supportuw.org/giveto/history>.

By Mail (use attached envelope)

Send a check made payable to the UW Foundation

(indicate "Department of History Annual Fund" on your choice of specific fund) to:

University of Wisconsin Foundation

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Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807



Join the Madison History Club!

The Madison History Club brings UW-Madison alumni together with people across Madison who are curious about the past and eager to learn and discuss history with others.

To learn more visit:

<https://history.wisc.edu/madison-history-club/>



Department of History Giving Societies

Professor Frederick Jackson Turner Society

Recognizes donors who make annual contributions to the History Department of \$5,000+

Professor George L. Mosse & Professor Harvey Goldberg Society

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The Department of History would like to sincerely thank each and every donor for their support. Due to a database conversion error, we were unable to retrieve a complete list of current Department of History Giving Society members in this newsletter; we look forward to highlighting these individuals in next year's issue. Our amazing donors make it possible for the History Department to provide opportunities to undergraduate and graduate students and to build a strong History Department. We are incredibly grateful, in particular, for the tremendous support of our Giving Society members.



History. We're Making it.

Since the first History class at UW-Madison more than 100 years ago, alumni and supporters like you have helped us fulfill our education mission.

UW-Madison's Department of History is in the top tier of history departments globally. We enroll over 6,600 undergraduate and graduate students in our courses and our faculty win teaching and research awards every year.

Please consider making a gift to support the History Department.

For more information, please visit:
<https://supportuw.org/giveto/history>

Recent Gifts

Mike Beland ('01) established the Beland Family Fund for the Study of History to provide support for undergraduate majors pursuing research or internship opportunities.

The David McDonald Writing Prize was launched by **Pasha J. Prem ('19)** to honor Professor Emeritus David McDonald and recognize outstanding undergraduate research paper in Russian or Sports History.

Miles Gerstein ('70) and **Susan Davis ('73)** doubled their generous gift to ensure that the Davis-Gerstein Undergraduate Research Award can be awarded twice per academic year, allowing the department to recognize more outstanding scholarship by undergraduate students.

Julie and Rod Gramer established two funds in honor of their late daughter, **Dr. Jennifer Gramer (MA '13, PhD '21)**. The Dr. Jennifer ("Jen") Ann Helen Gramer Writing Prize recognizes outstanding MA research papers in European or Cultural History, and the Dr. Jennifer ("Jen") Ann Helen Gramer Student Support Fund will help support graduate students in History or Art History.

David Hall (MA '76) and **Marjorie Devereaux** made an estate commitment to endow a professorship in the history of science program in honor of one of David's mentors in the History of Science, Professor David Lindberg.

Jim Heegeman ('59) deepened his support of the Ambrose-Hesseltine Chair in American History, and through his estate, ensures the full funding of the George L. Mosse Distinguished Chair in European History.

Marshall (PhD '74) and **Esther Lee** made an estate commitment to support graduate students' living expenses while conducting doctoral research in Western Europe.

Alice Mortenson's ('62) generosity ensures that the department will continue to be a leader in the study of Russian history. This year, she endowed a distinguished graduate student scholarship in Russian history in honor of retiring Professor Emeritus David McDonald.

Assistant Professor Gloria Whiting started the Darby Vassal Fund for the Study of Slavery. Whiting is donating the proceeds of her forthcoming book *Belonging: An Intimate History of Family and Slavery in Early New England* to provide support for graduate students in the history department studying slavery.

The History Board of Visitors has made a commitment to help fund the new home of the department—Irvig and Dorothy Levy Hall. To date, the board has collectively dedicated more than \$750,000 in philanthropic support for the project.

Historian of Science Devin Kennedy Wins Multiple Awards

The Department of History's Devin Kennedy's compelling research and superb work ethic continues to be recognized by multiple institutions. This year, Professor Kennedy has received not one, not two but three awards from prestigious academic bodies—the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) History Committee, and the Institute for Research in the Humanities.

Professor Kennedy received an NEH summer stipend grant to support the work of revising his first book manuscript, *Coding Capital: Computer Science and Economic Power in the United States, 1947–1987*, which is contracted to be published by the Columbia University Press. His book offers a new history of computer science, situating it in the developments and conflicts of postwar capitalism. The current project continues Professor Kennedy's interest in how technical stories can ground our understanding of social and economic developments.

"In the book, I describe how computer science reflected the needs of industry—in particular, the manufacturing and financial sectors—and enhanced their powers over industrial labor and capital in the 20th century," explained Kennedy. "This is a bit different from the way we typically talk about developments in computing. Normally historians emphasize factors like the role of the US military or the collaborations and conflicts among scientists trying to sort out what sort of science computing even was (for instance where it should live in a university). Those stories are very important, but I also believe that in our current era of 'big tech' it's critical to have a history that addresses the relationship between computer science and economic power over time."

In addition to revising his forthcoming manuscript, Professor Kennedy is working on an article funded by a research grant from the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) History Committee, one of the main professional organizations in computer science. The article explores how, historically, people who build computer systems have thought about their responsibility for the things they make. The project will focus on the 1970s and 1980s, when the anti-war movement sparked a debate by computer scientists on the contours of their responsibility, in the midst of a moment quite like the present, when computing's social consequences seemed increasingly pervasive.



"My interest stems from a general concern about contemporary technologies with the capacity to harm (including various commercial and military applications of artificial intelligence)," said Kennedy, "and a specific question about the factors that shape how technologists understand—and take action to address—the social or environmental consequences of their work."

To cap off the already impressive year of accomplishments, Professor Kennedy has also received seed funds from the Institute for Research in the Humanities, the College of Letters & Sciences and the UW–Madison Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR) for the "Humanities Responds to Global Challenges" program. The project began a year ago with gatherings of

interdisciplinary groups at UW–Madison developing humanistic and social scientific research and teaching activities related to artificial intelligence, prior to receiving institutional funding. Professor Kennedy and Professor Annette Zimmermann (Philosophy) co-lead a team who will launch the new program, which will support their emerging research collaborations and provide funds for a major public event in the Fall of 2024 focusing on the place of the humanities and social sciences in the study of artificial intelligence.

The Department of History is ecstatic to see Professor Kennedy continue to receive broad support and much-deserved recognition for his work. We look forward to seeing the fruits of his labor over the coming years!

Devin Kennedy is Assistant Professor of History at UW–Madison, where he teaches in the Programs in the History of Science, Medicine and Technology and Integrated Liberal Studies. A historian of science and technology by training, his main research interests are in the 20th century United States, the history of capitalism and finance, and the history of computing and related fields. He received his AB in Comparative Literature from Princeton and a PhD in the History of Science from Harvard. Before UW–Madison, Kennedy was a postdoctoral fellow at the New–York Historical Society. His next book project is a history of the "always-on" or 24/7 economy.

Interview with Alumni: Danielle Sklarew

The Board of Visitor's Amy Lambert spoke to UW-alumni Danielle Sklarew ('19) last winter to discuss studying History. Danielle works in Washington, D.C. managing multi-million-dollar budgets for an agency that partners with political campaigns. She also has a BA in History at UW-Madison with a major in Communications Arts. Post-undergraduate, she earned an M.A. in American History from Cambridge.

Why did you decide to pursue history as a major at UW-Madison? Was that an easy decision for you?

No, not at all. I came into college with no clue what I would major in. I knew I loved my history, government, and psychology classes from high school, but I didn't feel confident at all about what field I would pursue. I found a European history class and begrudgingly decided to take it even though I feared the 8:00 am start time. After starting that class, I was sold. History at a college level was 100 times more fascinating than I could have ever imagined. So, I declared my major as history before the first semester ended. I also graduated with a major in Communication Arts, but history classes were always where I felt most excited.

When you elected to major in history, did you or your family have any concerns about your decision?

I had people in my life who expressed worries over my History major as they feared it would be harder for me to get a job. Once I added the Communications major, most of them relaxed a bit. But I can't lie; I was worried, too. I loved the classes more than anything and thought I was learning so much, but I had no clue what careers would work for me.

How did you address these fears?

The History Department did a really good job of trying to bring in speakers who had been history majors but were now in interesting and sustainable careers. The History at Work course was really commendable in that way. Between that and great people on staff to advise and really be in my corner, I never felt like I was alone. The support network was strong and engaged. Moreover, in the course of obtaining my history degree, I had the opportunity to engage with professors who clearly loved what they were doing and were studying, and I wanted to be like them!

Looking back, what would you say to your college freshman self or to a current UW undergrad considering a history degree?

With a history degree, you can go into pretty much any field. The major isn't what determines your future and there is not one correct path to get to the next place. Because I loved the classes/profs, I tried particularly hard in them, and I got so much out of them academically, which helped in my future successes. I'd also say I think my initial concerns regarding a career path were more the problem of a lack of imagination on my part. I just didn't see a linear career path with that degree at first. However, it's the skills I got from my history degree that have served me so well in all my paths since Madison. Bottom line, I would say do it! Study history! If you love what you're learning, you'll get so much more out of it. Your major is not the only thing that



dictates your future — you will not be pigeonholed by your decision to study history.

What's one or two of your favorite or most interesting moments from your undergrad studies in history?

I took a class with Pernille Ipsen where I felt awestruck in almost every class. She used to show us primary source documents and encourage us to interrogate every detail of them to get a better sense of why the author wrote what they wrote and what it actually meant. She also taught me how to properly navigate an academic library. I couldn't believe how fascinating the stacks were and how much I could learn. Once I learned how to use the library, I felt like I could learn just about anything. I loved that class!

I also took my capstone class with Kathryn Cancia, where we each wrote a family history of immigration to the US. I wrote about my family's journey to the US from Lithuania by combining primary source genealogical documents with secondary sources focused on migration history. The process of the paper was so personal and fascinating — it allowed me to connect with my grandma about her family's history and made me a better historian as I thought more creatively about putting together a work of history.

What skills from your classes in History do you use today?

My job is to plan and run advertising campaigns that help win elections. I run ads on digital platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Hulu, Roku, etc. In 2022, I helped determine how to spend over \$20 million in ad dollars. Studying history taught me how to think critically and analyze well, which I use all the time. It also made me an immensely better writer. In addition, my coursework constantly exposed me to new perspectives on historical events. It helps to provide additional perspectives: that's what makes it complex and exciting. So, to me, History teaches empathy; the goal is to understand another perspective, that of someone different from you, and that's just a terrific life skill to have.

Center for Campus History Update

The past year has been a monumental one for the Rebecca M. Blank Center for Campus History (CCH). First and foremost, we were officially established as a campus center in July 2023! After four years of operation as the temporary Public History Project, the CCH continues and expands on that work on a permanent basis. The core mission remains the same: to uncover and give voice to those who experienced, challenged and overcame prejudice on campus.

Since opening up shop over the summer, we've hit the ground running with new projects. With help from student researchers and faculty partners, we expanded our collection of teaching resources for instructors to use in classrooms across campus. They include new teaching guides focused on Hmong history in Wisconsin, the experience of Jewish students at UW, and a curricular version of *Sifting & Reckoning*, our award-winning 2022 museum exhibition. We also released a collection of oral histories centered on voices of UW students in collaboration with the UW Archives.

In the fall, we launched *Siftings*, the Center's new online home for staff and student research and writing. Recent highlights include a data-rich exploration of institutional belonging from CCH Assistant Director Taylor L. Bailey, and a fascinating story uncovered through archival research by history graduate student Kyle Miron about private detectives brought to campus to investigate a string of attacks against women in 1911. New research from history graduate students August Brereton and Siobhan Ryan is coming soon.

We've been honored to receive recognition from partners at the university and peers in the community. The *Sifting & Reckoning* exhibition was selected by the Wisconsin Historical Society as the winner of their 2023 Museum Exhibit Award. The Center was also honored by UW Student Affairs as the recipient of their 2023 Partner Award.

Recently, our plates have been full with all sorts of new exciting projects. Center Director Kacie Lucchini Butcher and Assistant Director Taylor L. Bailey are hosts of *The Look Back*, a new series from PBS Wisconsin Education that explores eras from Wisconsin's history through artifacts. A narrative podcast diving into the history of campus policing is in the works for fall of 2024. And the Center is working actively with the university to locate a permanent physical exhibition space on campus.

The Center thanks all the faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members who supported the Public History Project and helped to make it a permanent fixture on campus. We hope that you will continue to support the Center and our work, and that you will continue to contribute to it. We believe that this work will be the most successful when it deeply engages all of those in our community. If you have a story to share, an event you think should be researched, or a person you think has been overlooked, please email us at centerforcampushistory@wisc.edu. To get updates on the Center including signing up for our newsletter and to read newly published research, please visit our website at campushistory.wisc.edu.

Marshall M. Lee, Donates Generous Fund in Support of Dissertation Research in Western Europe



From 1969 to 1974 I completed coursework and dissertation research for a PhD in Modern German History at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. I was awarded my PhD in the spring of 1974. It was my great honor to have been a doctoral student of Theodore S. Hamerow, and to have taken coursework in French history from Edward Gargan, on Nazi Germany from Robert Koehl, as well as having sat

in on the classes of George Mosse, Harvey Goldberg and James Donnelly while I was writing my dissertation. From this remarkable cohort of scholar/teachers I received the priceless education and training to move effortlessly into my own college classroom as a university professor in the fall of 1974, one of a handful of PhDs fortunate enough to land jobs that year, when there were fewer than ten openings in European History in the nation, six of which were tenure-track. Without question I attribute my success to the University of Wisconsin Department of History.

Throughout my career, which included outside consulting with corporate clients to write corporate histories of a handful of major Pacific Northwest corporations, I never forgot the principles of the professional historian so carefully taught by my professors in Madison. Whether in the public or the private realm the historian is first and always the servant of the facts as s/he sees them. We are here to tell the story these facts reveal to us, the historians, not the

story others may wish they told. At times in the past, and indeed today as I write these words in 2023, historians have had to face down angry audiences that may not want to hear what we have to say. But say it we must; for when the facts so speak, so must we, be it Holocaust Memorials or 1619.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Ted Hamerow for the standards he imparted and modeled in his writing. He was a true craftsman of language and those fortunate to be in his seminar left as better writers and with higher expectations for themselves and for their future students. He made us all better professional historians. His standards played no small role in my work decades later as a member of the Design Team of the Oregon Holocaust Memorial <https://www.ojmche.org/oregon-holocaust-memorial/> a project that took ten years from conception to completion. The Memorial is in Washington Park, Portland's premier public park, where the city donated land for its construction. And other than the survivors' quotes and the roster of families and their lost loved ones, all of the written texts are my words, carved

into granite. With such permanence in mind I felt Ted Hamerow was looking over my shoulder. And I was happy to have him there, I can tell you. Because when you have to relate the history of the Holocaust on just two granite tablets you are forced to narrate events and select your words with the most delicate care. It was very reassuring having his voice in the background.

From the summer of 1971 to the fall of 1972 my wife Esther and I lived in Europe — primarily Bonn, Germany — while I did my dissertation research. Although I was fortunate enough to have had an NDEA fellowship that afforded us this opportunity our living conditions were still quite spartan to say the least. So it is our hope through our endowed fund to help doctoral students with their living expenses while they undertake dissertation research in Western Europe. We know that this could make a very real difference in the lives of future grad students and would enable them to pursue their research knowing their living conditions were supported.

Shatrunjay Mall conducts research in India and Japan



After previous research last academic year in India and the United Kingdom, I feel fortunate to be in Japan this academic year as a Japan Foundation research fellow. Since arriving in Japan last August, I have had the opportunity to visit numerous libraries and archives across the greater Tokyo metropolitan area. Most

of my research work has been concentrated at the National Diet Library and at the library system of Waseda University, my host institution. Both institutions are rich in a variety of published sources, including old books, journals, newspapers, and pamphlets spanning the period of my research in the early to mid-twentieth century as well as more recently published compilations of older primary sources. Additionally, I have convenient access to Japanese language secondary literature. Further, I have had the opportunity to visit collections at the libraries of other universities, such as Daitō Bunka University and Hōsei University, and I have also visited local libraries and private archival collections in different parts of Tokyo and neighboring prefectures like Saitama and Kanagawa. Beyond published sources, at these institutions, I have also browsed unpublished sources, including letters and correspondence, as well as personal notebooks of the historical figures whom I study.

In Japan, it is possible to find museums and archives dealing with very specific topics and an array of historical

figures. In my experience, Japanese libraries and archives are well-catalogued and organized. Often, the libraries have digital repositories with searchable lists of sources and documents. The National Diet Library has an extensive and ever-expanding digital collection, although some materials can only be accessed via computer physically on-site. However, Japanese institutions can also be frustratingly bureaucratic and very punctilious about rules, to the extent that they hinder or slow down archival research. The libraries and archives that I have visited in Japan have vastly different rules regarding access and scanning materials. One of the libraries that I have visited forbids photography and photocopying – only note-taking and transcriptions by hand are allowed. Further, appointments for research visits at this library need to be made weeks in advance, and only through your affiliated institution. By contrast, another archive I visited allowed me to freely take photographs of the materials that I had requested. The National Diet Library forbids photography but has an efficient system in place for requesting photocopies of the materials.

Japanese language proficiency is necessary for archival research in Japan – not just to read Japanese language documents, but also to navigate logistics. Most libraries and archives only have Japanese speaking staff, with catalogues and rules only accessible in Japanese. Having said that, archives often spring up surprises. I have also accessed English, Hindi, and Bengali sources in Japan, and I also know people who have completed short research visits to Japan without knowing Japanese. I am thankful that many years of Japanese language study have prepared me for this work, and I am also grateful to the Japan Foundation for facilitating this productive year of archival research for me.

Ph.D.s Awarded, 2022-2023

Bailey Albrecht, "The Forest or the Trees: Timber Trade and Aid Between Japan and Indonesia"

Yaowen Dong, "Constructing the Revolutionary Past: Mass Movements, Traditional Wordviews, and Cultural Memory in Mao's China"

Joseph Robert Holwell, "Adoption and Innovation: Cultural Exchange and the Individual on Rome's German Frontier"

Emily S. Hutcheson, "The Living Seas: Marine Algae, Symbiosis and the Modern Conception of Coral Reefs 1880-1930"

Patrick Walsh, "Glands on the Market: Doctors, Drug Companies, and the Making of American Endocrinology, 1889-1919"

Philip Cerepak, "A Commodity History of Coconuts: Science, Philippine Political Economy, and Global Trade, 1880-1986"

Simon Daniel Fisher, "Trans Nonviolence and Queer Intimacies in Pauli Murray's Early Civil Rights Movement"

Joy E. Block, "Visitors, Citizens, and the Paths Between: South Asians in the United States, 1946-1965"

Brianna Lafoon, "Island Chains: The American Imperial Education Web in the Early Twentieth Century"

Donald A. Seablom, "How to Hide an Air War: The USAF's Secret War in Laos, 1964-1973"

Rachel Elisabeth Seablom, "Women Servicemember of the 1980s: Integration of the American Military through Presence, Persistence, and Advocacy"

Kathleen E. Alfin, "'An Exceptional Situation': Race, Sex, and US Army Forces in Liberia, 1942-1946"



Selected Graduate Student Awards and Fellowships

Verenize Arceo – Western History Association, WHA Graduate Student Prize; and Trennert-Iverson Conference Scholarship; Campus TA Award

Zada Ballew – Elouise Cobell Dissertation Writing-Year Fellowship

Isobel Bloom – Departmental Dissertator Fellowship

Patrick Eickman – German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) One-Year Grant

Jorge Trinidad Espinoza – Paul Glad Prize

Erin Faigin – Departmental Dissertator Fellowship

James Flynn – Fulbright

Juan Camilo Franco – Departmental Dissertator Fellowship

Max Greenberg – Campus TA Award

Jonathan Hackett – MEXT Scholarship

Chris Herde – Sandoway Graduate Writing Prize

Emir Karakaya – Inter University Center for Japanese Language Studies Fellowship

Napakadol Kittisene – Center for Southeast Asian Studies Fellowship

Tyler Lehrer – Assistant Professorship at Virginia Wesleyan University

Ye Lin – Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies

Carly Lucas – Departmental Dissertator Fellowship

John Merryfield – Boren Fellowship Award

Kyle Miron – Campus TA Award; Kate Everest Levi Prize

Fauzi Moro – ACLS Innovation Dissertation Grant

Mariana Sarkis Olson – 2024 Tinker-Nave Short-term Field Research Grant

Bree Romero – Departmental Dissertator Fellowship

Alex Scheepens – Claims Conference Saul Kagan Fellowship in Advance Shoah Studies

Patrick-William Travens – Departmental Dissertator Fellowship

Emily Tran – Departmental Dissertator Fellowship

Tiffany VanWinkoop – Mosse Teaching Fellowship

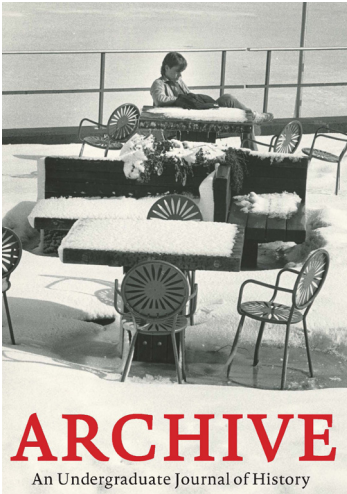
Zhaoshen Wang – Departmental Dissertator Fellowship

Emma Wathen – Madeleine L'Engle Research Fellowship, Schlesinger Library Dissertation Support Grant

Yacov Zohn – Cohen-Tucker Dissertation Fellowship

ARCHIVE VOLUME 26 NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE!

The newest volume of ARCHIVE is here! The University of Wisconsin–Madison Undergraduate Journal of History published their 26th volume May 2023. Editor-in-Chief Madeline McGlone, along with Editors Reilly Coon, Bella Costanzo, Sophia Halverson, Thomas Harb, Danielle Lennon, Claudia Liverseed, Zhengzai “Charles” Pei, and Kelley Schlise worked hard during this past year to produce a volume that encompasses writing from students at UW–Madison, University of Chicago, and the London School of Economics and Political Science. Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Kathryn Ciancia, served as faculty advisor to the editors as they worked on the publication.



Included in this volume:

- “Reimagining Imperium Britannicum: Walter Crane, The Imperial Federation Map, and Late Victorian Discourse on ‘Greater Britain’” by Avan Fata.
- “Scouting’s Human Crop: The Boy Scouts’ Ideological and Physical Influence on the Landscape of Public Recreation in the 1930s” by Evan McKenzie.
- “(Web)Sites of Memory: Notions of Home in AIDS Commemoration, From the Quilt to Instagram” by Mary Mouton.
- “Radical Student Press at UW–Madison: An Analysis of the Black Voice from 1971–1973” by Isabella Cerda.



ARCHIVE Editorial Board 2023

Read the full version of the journal <https://history.wisc.edu/undergraduate-program/archive/>.

2023 Undergraduate Students Awards

Alisa Ramirez – Digital & Public History Prize
Allison Elli – Farha Tahir Award in African History
Amaya Boman – Digital & Public History Prize
Andrea Corro – William F. Allen Prize
Anna Thompson – Paul Glad Prize
Ashton Jenks – John Sharpless Scholarship
Austin Sack – Goldberg Scholarship in History
Axell Boomer – Andrew Bergman Prize and Steven A. and Barbara S. Jaffe History Scholarship
Beatrice Windorski – Civil Resistance Prize
Chloe Foor – Civil Resistance Prize and Orson S. Morse History Scholarship
Dana Brandt – William F. Allen Prize
Evie Sellers – Baensch Prize
Grace Feller – William A. Brown Writing Prize for Black History
Isabella Cerda – Curti Prize
Isabella Prenger – Alice D. Mortenson Russian History Award

Jasper Nelson – Fred Harvey Harrington Prize
Kelley Schlise – Andrew Bergman Prize
Kylie Hollenstein – Willard L. Huson Scholarship
Lucille Steffes – Paul J. Schrag Prize
Maddy Hu – LGBTQ+ History Prize
Maddy McGlone – American Indian History Prize
Matthew Masonius – William F. Allen Prize and William K. Fitch Scholarship
Quinze “Karlsson” Zhao – Alfred Erich Senn Prize
Rae Kalscheuer – Davis/Gerstein Undergraduate Research Award
Sam McQueen – Farha Tahir Award in African History
Samantha Hertel – Andrew Bergman Prize
Samantha Muenchow – Paul Glad Prize
Zhengzai “Charles” Pei – Margaret E. Smith–Es-ther Butt History Scholarship and Philip Levy Research Award in History

Jim Heegeman Ensures the Full Funding of the George L. Mosse Distinguished Chair in European History

Jim Heegeman is a Wisconsin native who grew up in Racine, Wisconsin and graduated from Washington Park High School in the top of his class in 1955. As a first-generation college student, Jim was determined to bypass the typical process of attending a UW-extension campus for two years before transferring to the University of Wisconsin, and instead headed straight to Madison as a freshman. He pledged into the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity in his first semester, where a frat brother set him up on a blind date with another incoming freshman, his future-wife Margo. The two quickly became inseparable and dated for the entire four years of college before getting married a week after graduating in 1959 and spending the next half a century together.

After a semester in the School of Pharmacy, Jim switched majors and entered the School of Business, then known as the School of Commerce. While his parents helped pay for tuition, Jim worked throughout his four years in Madison to support himself. He worked “meal jobs” at various fraternities and dormitories, providing serving and dishwashing labor during mealtimes in exchange for food. Later, he became the treasurer of the fraternity, which provided free rent. During his junior and senior years, he received a small stipend from the Navy. Once Jim turned 21 years old, he also began to bartend at a local pub.

Margo was an Illinoisan by birth, but a Wisconsinite at heart. Her single mother worked full-time while Margo was in school and sent her daughter to a Campfire Girls camp in Wisconsin for the entire summer when school was out of session. Margo spent every summer at the Wisconsin camp beginning at the age of six, surrounded by children from Wisconsin. There, Margo fell in love with Wisconsin. When she got older, she became a camp counselor. It was then that she came up with the idea of going to UW-Madison to join her summer friends when they left for college. The only problem was that her parents insisted she go to college in Illinois for in-state tuition.

However, Margo was undeterred. She was a fiercely independent young woman and not apt to give up on her dreams so easily. At the age of six, Margo was spending three months away from her family in Wisconsin. At the age of ten, she was traveling by herself every weekend from her home in Kankakee to Chicago to visit her father. And by the age of eighteen, she was determined to follow her own path to the University of Wisconsin. After researching her option,



Jim and Margo Heegeman on Queen Elizabeth 2, ca. 1995.

Margo discovered a reciprocal scholarship between the states of Illinois and Wisconsin that she could use to get in-state tuition at the University of Wisconsin. Thus, she was able to convince her parents to send her to Madison. While in Madison, Margo was extremely active, engaging in numerous campus clubs and the university's Women's organization. During her junior year, she led a platform for the organization to

abolish unjust curfew rules that applied to women but not men – regulations that were eventually abolished. Margo also excelled in the classroom, graduating with a degree in English after completing the prestigious Integrated Liberal Studies program, where she took several courses in the Department of History, as did Jim.

In that same fateful semester that he met Margo, Jim also began his future career with the U.S. Navy. As a land-grant university, at that time, all men enrolled at UW-Madison had to participate in two years of Reserve Officers Training Corp (ROTC) in one of the branches of the U.S. military. Jim joined the Navy ROTC and then later decided to continue in the Navy ROTC program for his junior and senior years and receive a Navy commission upon graduation. After graduation, Jim and Margo traveled to Newport, Rhode Island (by way of Niagara Falls for a lovely honeymoon trip) to report for active duty. Jim spent the next 20 years in the Navy, serving in various ships and shore duty assignments. Margo worked numerous jobs and did volunteer work during this period as they relocated many times up and down the east coast. She also followed Jim's ship, many times, when it deployed to the Mediterranean and Northern Europe.

After retiring from the navy, Jim continued working as a contractor supporting the Navy until retiring in 1997. In retirement he started working as a tour guide in the Washington DC area. He also started, and continues to this day, volunteering as a docent at the National Building Museum giving tours of the historic building. Margo, meanwhile, after many years of moving every 2 or 3 years, was finally able to find steady employment and worked for Amtrak until retiring in 1990. She then started working as an office manager for a very successful real estate agent.

Jim and Margo's financial support of the Ambrose-Hesseltine Chair in American History can be traced all the way back to Margo's father's involvement in the Chicago Civil War roundtable, where he met Dr. William Hesseltine —a scholar of the Civil War in the Department of History at

UW–Madison. The two became good friends, spending each summer participating in the roundtable’s tours of Civil War battlefields. So, when Margo came to Madison, she quickly enrolled in one of Dr. Hesselstine’s courses. Her Teaching Assistant for the course was no other than Stephen Ambrose, a then–doctoral student working on his dissertation under Hesselstine’s supervision.

Three decades later, Jim and Margo reconnected with her old TA when they attended a lecture Ambrose gave to the Washington Area Alumni Club. Afterward, they learned that Ambrose made a sizable donation to start a professorship at the Department of History—the Hasseltine Scholarship. When Ambrose passed away, the University renamed the endowment the Ambrose–Hasselstine Chair in American History. Margo was inspired by Ambrose’s act and convinced Jim that they should donate the bulk of their estate to the University of Wisconsin as well.

Since Margo’s passing in 2014, Jim has made a substantial number of financial contributions to the Department of

History to endow professorships to attract the world’s best and brightest scholars to Madison. In addition to pledging his and Margo’s estate, Jim has generously donated distributions from his IRA, Margo’s stock funds, and the sales receipts of his lifelong coin collection—likely the most extensive and sought after collection of original New Zealand coins in the entire United States. In no small part due to Jim’s generosity, the Ambrose–Hasselstine endowment has been filled, enabling the continuation of the department’s Chair in American History for the foreseeable future. Since then, Jim’s gifts have also enabled the full funding of the George L. Mosse Distinguished Chair in European History.

Jim and Margo’s generosity and commitment to supporting the Department of History has guaranteed the retention of the world’s most distinguished scholars in American and European history for generations to come, ultimately ensuring that our students receive arguably the best training in history. We cannot thank Jim Heegeman enough for his support.

Neil Kodesh Led Global Gateway Botswana

In summer 2023, Neil Kodesh led seventeen first- and second-year UW–Madison undergraduates on Global Gateway Botswana, a four-week summer study abroad program designed to introduce issues of global importance to students from diverse backgrounds and academic fields. Global Gateway Botswana focused on the intersection of history, politics, and culture. The program combined formal coursework, supervised excursions, and independent learning in a way that both afforded students the opportunity to pursue their interests and gradually instilled in them the confidence to do so.

Students took two courses as part of the program. Kodesh taught “Introduction to Southern Africa,” a multidisciplinary introduction to the cultures, history, and politics of southern Africa, with a particular focus on Botswana and South Africa. The course integrated student experiences and group field trips with academic study of the region. The second course, “Setswana Language and Culture,” offered students an introduction to the Setswana language and various aspects of Tswana culture. The students took great pleasure in testing their newly acquired language skills during program outings. Both courses took place on the beautiful University of Botswana campus in Gaborone.

The program also included a full slate of excursions and activities in both Botswana and South Africa, where students spent the last week before returning to Madison.



The excursions complemented the content of the two courses. In Botswana, these included visits to the Deborah Retief Hospital in the village of Mochudi; Ditshwanelo Human Rights Center; a primary and secondary school; Orapa diamond mine; and the Botswana Meat Commission. In Johannesburg, the students toured Soweto, including a visit to the Hector Peterson Museum, visited Constitutional Hill, spent an afternoon at the Apartheid Museum, and enjoyed a food tour of the Fordsburg

neighborhood. A noteworthy highlight of the program for many students was the weekend stay at Madikwe Game Reserve in northern South Africa, during which the group stayed at an ecolodge, learned about community-based tourism, and of course viewed a host of wildlife during several game drives.

You can read more about students’ experiences on the program here: <https://blog.studyabroad.wisc.edu/archives/tag/uw-gateway-botswana>



Department of History 2023 Undergraduate Graduation Address

Emerita Professor Mary Lou Roberts, delivered this address to graduating History majors in May 2023.

Graduates, thank you so much for inviting me to speak to you today. It is a great honor for me to be able to share this moment of joy with you and your wonderful families.

In thinking about what I might say today, I couldn't help but think back to my own college graduation many years ago in my native New England. Like many of you on the day of graduation, I had no job, no job prospects and no ideas about what I wanted to do. I had loved college so much that I had not given any real thought as to what my life might look like after May 15. Many of my friends were off to law school or to med school or to some fascinating, lucrative job in Washington, DC. When they excitedly shared their bright future with me, I felt happiness, of course, but also panic and a little homicidal rage. Graduation for me was like jumping off a cliff into a black hole reserved for the hopelessly lost and shamefully unemployed. The abyss yawned ahead of me.

So absorbed was I in my anguish of existential despair that it did not occur to me that this was an important day for my parents. Since I was the youngest of four children, my graduation meant the end of a very long period of their lives, a period they would later describe as "spending all our money—as well as lots of money we didn't have—on our kids' education." Now their future was also indeed brighter. Their eyes that day danced with sugar-plum fantasies of a Caribbean vacation.

By now, my parents had attended over a dozen graduations, and my father had a stock set of jokes for the occasion. It did not matter that our teachers had never once laughed at these jokes. My father doggedly repeated them at every high school and college graduation. There were three things you could count on him saying. First he would complain that the ceremony conflicted with the day's Red Sox baseball game. He was good-natured about it for the most part, unless of course by some horrible turn of fate, the Red Sox were playing the Yankees that day.

Second, my father always told the same parking joke. It was so hard to find parking for graduation, he observed, that he should have started trying to find a place at the end of my junior year. And finally, and perhaps most excruciatingly, he



Photo Credits: Shalicia Johnson, Arrowstar Photography

loudly lamented that the fruit punch at the reception was not spiked, particularly considering the price of tuition.

My father was embarrassing. My strategy was to ignore him. And that I regret, for in fact the day of my graduation was particularly significant for him. In fact it crowned one of the great achievements of his life. My father grew up a poor shop owner's son in Belfast, Maine. When his father's store went south in the Depression, he had to be taken in by relatives to be fed and housed.

And yet he became a first-generation college student by sweating out ROTC at the University of Maine. His parents were unable to give him a dime for his education.

Educating HIS four children in private schools and colleges, he told me a few days before he died, was his most proud life accomplishment. But on my graduation day, I hardly thought to consider what the day meant for him. Again, I chose to ignore him and my mother, even though their pride in me was palpable. Yes, my parents were proud of my successes. But I was too afraid of disappointing them to acknowledge that pride.

Now my parents are gone and every day of my life I wake up missing them. In fact, I would give just about anything I own to spend ten minutes with them. So here's what I propose you do, graduates. Take a minute or two right now to turn to your right or your left and thank your parents or loved ones present for all their support over the past four years. If these people aren't with you now, give them a quick text. All you have to say is 'Thank you!' Remember this is a big day for them too, and they are proud of you even if that pride may feel painful at the moment.

* * * * *

I would now like to say a few words, graduates, to these parents and loved ones. We in the History department want you to know, first and foremost, that we are aware you have entrusted us with your most precious gift: your sons and your daughters. We get that. Many of us are parents too.

We faculty are immensely proud to be ranked as one of the top history departments in the nation. The high quality of our research and our teaching enables us to fulfill the great promise of a democratic society: that every young person, by virtue of their home residence in Wisconsin, has affordable

access to a world-class education. We believe in this promise! For me, it has been the engine of my entire professional life.

The latest research on that great pie in the sky—a job after college—has concluded that it doesn't really matter WHAT major you choose in college. The important thing is to choose the hardest major you can, where you get the best classes and the best professors. We think that means us! So congratulate your graduate for choosing a very challenging and demanding major. It will pay off for them in the future.

We also strive to make our classrooms safe learning spaces for ALL students, regardless of origin, class, race, gender, gender identity and disability, among many other differences. We have doubled down on these efforts in the past years, exploring greater inclusivity in our syllabi, our readings and our teaching. We want to make sure every young person who walks into our classroom feels welcomed, safe and warmly acknowledged for what they can teach us.

Like you we get up every day and go to work. We travel to that hulking building across the mall and dedicate our energies to making the department the best possible place for learning. That mission could not be fulfilled if it were not for our extraordinary staff in the History department. The path through the History major has been made infinitely easier and more fun for your sons and daughters thanks to the indefatigable energy and wise council of Scott Burkhardt, Sophie Olsen, director of undergraduate studies Kathryn Ciancia and our department chair Anne Hansen. I'll ask them to stand while we give them a warm round of applause.

According to the university mission statement, our purpose as faculty is "to encourage that continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found." If we have done anything in the past four years, we hope it is this: to teach you the value of truth—not only finding it but also telling it—at all costs. We have taught you, I hope, to be fearless in your quest of the truth and ruthless in your judgment of falsehood; we have shown you how to discern truth from lies, facts from opinions, good history from ideology. We have taught you, I hope, not only to read critically, but also to argue persuasively with specific evidence to support your claims. Because historical truth is always contradictory and open to interpretation, you have had to come to terms with a major truth about truth, that is, its nuance and complexity. There are and will be many attempts to distract us from the truth – or to prevent us from discovering it by purging historical narratives of acts of injustice, discrimination, and atrocity. Or by banning books that tell the truth. Our hope is that you will refuse such efforts, and chose instead the fearless pursuit of truth in historical narratives, social media, or anywhere that lies, erasures and exclusions predominate. Be critical readers of the world around you, as well as careful and discerning voters and responsible democratic citizens. If you do that, we have done our job right.

As an educator I have faith in the power of truth. Former

Czechoslovakian president Vaclav Havel claimed that there is what he calls a "human predisposition for truth." Havel was a dissident in communist Czechoslovakia during the 1970s and 1980s; he led the Charter 77 movement which ultimately collapsed Soviet rule in 1989. The political philosophy behind this movement was an essay, "The Power of the Powerless" which was written in 1978 and passed around by xerox in absolute secret. Under Soviet rule, anyone found with this document would go to prison.

Because Havel was what we now might call a hippie, he began the movement with the music of a rock group, The Plastic People of the Universe. This group was virulently anti-communist in their lyrics, and were outlawed to play in public, so they held illegal concerts and played at weddings and birthday parties. Havel saw The Plastic People as the beginning of the Charter 77 movement; he called them "unknown young people who wanted no more than to be able to live within the truth." What did Havel mean that these musicians were "living within the truth"?

To explain the concept, Havel used the example of the small grocery owner who puts a sign up in his window, "Workers of the World, Unite!" even though he does not believe it. He is doing it just not to get in trouble; the slogan is meaningless to himself. In this sense, the greengrocer succumbs to a set of lies—communist ideology—completely unconnected to any authentic reality. The role of lies in the Soviet system (and we could easily argue the same for Putin's Russia) was to guarantee the inner consistency and continuity of power. In this way, communist oppression was built upon an entire edifice of lies.

It works only as long as people are willing to live within the lie. And as such they are unfree — by displaying the sign, the grocery shop owner becomes a victim of his own lie and the system that produces that lie. But Havel believed that humans, such as The Plastic People, had a predisposition to truth. People innately want to live within the truth or live as an agent of an inner part of the self that was authentic. Every time we lie, we alienate ourselves from one of the deepest, most profound instincts we have — our desire to say, to live, to act on the truth. Only then are we free. Only then can we find happiness.

It is this power that Havel saw growing in the Plastic People of the Universe and in those who went to their concerts. It was particularly important to him that the group had no past history of political activity because it showed that the revolution can be made by ordinary people who just simply and suddenly decide to live within the truth. This was what the Revolution of 1989 was all about for Havel.

So graduates, I hope that now that you have acquired the skills to discern truth from lies, you will also choose to live in the truth, to live as an agent of your own true self, in dignity and with respect for others. Be an agent of the change you want to see in others by living truthfully and authentically as yourself. You will be surprised how powerful you will become in your modelling of truth; the people around you will be called to do the same. Once you tell the

truth, for example, others will as well. And as your older loved ones might know, if you live this way, you will always get a good night of sleep.

Take your time. God willing, you have a long life ahead of you. Take the time to find your career path because in fact, that path takes time to become clear, and it cannot be hurried. Discovering what work makes you happy happens by trial and error. It is, once again, a process of sifting and winnowing. Be patient with yourself. Like learning a language, you can't do it unless you make mistakes and make a fool out of yourself. Don't be afraid to make bad choices, because usually you can get out of any situation you are in. [With the possible exception of tattoos]. And do not be afraid to fail. Failing is part of life and it will make you stronger. Most importantly, have fun and don't lose your sense of humor!

It was not until I was 30 that I finally entered graduate school and, slowly but surely, realized that teaching and writing history was the reason I am here on this earth. My father desperately wanted me to become a lawyer, but he got over it. Remember that whatever you decide to do, your parents and loved ones will come around; they love you unconditionally. I graduated from grad school in my mid-thirties, an occasion my father took to once again tell

his three bad jokes, this time to a Professor from Hungary who didn't know what baseball was. And lo and behold, I found I had years upon years left in my life to develop my career.

There is lots of time in life, so don't be in a hurry. Existential despair is not comfortable but stick it out. You'll know you found your calling when the following thing happens: time flies by. If you are working a job and you suddenly realize you've been doing it for three years, and you can't believe it – guess what! You are in the right place. You have found your life's work.

And do not be a stranger. We have gotten to know you and we like you a lot. We're interested in how you take things from here, and we are happy to help. Please consider us a life-long resource for you, whether you are interested in connecting to our vibrant alumnae network for professional contacts, or you are just looking for some incredibly boring, obscure historical fact no one in the entire world could possibly know or care about—EXCEPT US. Stay in touch; we are proud of you too.

Finally, since I will retire at the end of this year after twenty one years at UW, I would like to say that it has been a honor and a pleasure to serve the people of Wisconsin. It has, in short, been my living in the truth. Thank you.



Department of History 2023 Graduate and Undergraduate Graduation Ceremonies



Graduating History Student, Cole Roecker, Wins Prestigious Theodore Herfurth and Teddy Kubly Award



Cole Roecker at his usual table at Wisconsin Historical Society

Graduating History Major, Cole Roecker, has been named the 2023 winner of the prestigious Theodore Herfurth and Teddy Kubly Award for Comprehensive Undergraduate Excellence, one of the oldest and most prestigious honors on campus. Only two students out of over 250 nominees received the award – a testament to how effectively they’ve used their time at UW–Madison. Award criteria include academic achievement, effective communication skills, leadership in extra-curricular activities, and financial self-support (such as scholarships and employment).

The Wisconsin–native graduates this month with honors, earning a bachelor’s degree in English and French history and a certificate in European studies. During his time at UW–Madison, Roecker founded the Audubon Society and contributed to a National Science Foundation project combatting flooding throughout the Driftless region of Wisconsin, providing historical research and context to ongoing ecological restoration and communication engagement efforts. He also served on multiple university committees as a student representative, such as the University Academic Planning Council.

As a capstone to his studies in the Department of History, Roecker completed a senior honors thesis, under the supervision of Dr. Elizabeth Hennessy, titled “The Illusion of Ecological Restoration: A History of Horicon Marsh Wildlife Refuge and the Trouble with ‘Restoring’ Land,” which was funded by the department’s Davis/Gerstein Undergraduate Research Award. With this source of funding, Roecker was able to dedicate himself to the project in lieu of working during the summer and academic year to pay for his studies. Ultimately, the History Department’s financial support allowed Roecker to finish the project with honors and move on to receive the prestigious Theodore Herfurth and Teddy Kubly Award.

“The financial generosity of the Davis/Gerstein Award allowed me to leave the job I worked [...] and focus solely on

researching my thesis,” said Roecker, “I sit here today with a completed thesis solely because of it.”

Roecker’s senior thesis began as a project focusing on the development of profession and amateur ornithology in Wisconsin in 1880–1940. However, after spending many hours researching the topic at the Wisconsin Historical Society and University Archives, it became clear that the scope of the project was more appropriate for a doctoral dissertation than an undergraduate thesis. Thus, Roecker wisely reigned in his focus and transitioned to a topic on the Horicon Marsh Wildlife Refuge. This topic led him off campus for research trips to the City of Horicon to access the archives at the Horicon Historical Society and conduct oral history interviews with current land managers and ecologists at the refuge.

“These trips represented some of the most impactful experiences of the thesis writing process, as I could finally begin to ‘see’ the archival information I had studied within the landscape,” reminisced Roecker. “I cannot understate the power of this experience, and sharing these stories with the individuals who continue to manage the land only made these visits more gratifying.”

While researching the project under the guidance of Dr. Elizabeth Hennessy, Roecker gained invaluable experience in archival research. Since few histories of the Horicon Marsh Wildlife Refuge exist, the bulk of the project’s sources came directly from primary documents. Roecker’s process in the archive became more efficient as he proceeded, allowing him to identify important actors and focus in on a finite topic that could be thoroughly encompassed within a singular thesis.

“Though my thesis focuses on a beautiful natural landscape and a sprawling refuge, the bulk of the research to historicize that landscape was necessarily conducted in the windowless reading room of the Wisconsin Historical Society,” explained Roecker. “As I slowly made my way through hundreds of archival folders, my process became more efficient, and I began recognizing the same names, the same organizations, and recurring themes in the boxes I pulled. In truth, there were so many tangents I had to forego exploring in the interest of time, though I have learned this is an unfortunate and frustrating reality of the nebulous nature of historical research.”

Upon graduation, Roecker will accept a job in France teaching English to underserved high school students as part of the French government–funded Teaching Assistant Program in France. Following the one-year post, he hopes to begin a doctoral program in history or English literature, either of which will be deeply informed by his experience as a student of the Department of History.

"I will be forever grateful to have been afforded the opportunity to complete an honors thesis in the Department of History. Your support, your generosity, and your belief in me has changed my life for the better," said Roecker. "I now walk away from undergrad with a history of my creation in hand, and the truly invaluable experience of conducting large-scale primary research and the undergraduate level. This is not an opportunity most young students are afforded, and I cannot thank you enough for having made this experience possible. I extend my gratitude once more for your continued support of students; though I cannot speak for us all, I can express my own conviction that your generosity is life-changing for students – certainly, this one."



The south end of Horicon Marsh on a high point overlooking the state portion of the refuge

JJ Reynolds–Strange Conducts Research in Taiwan on a Fulbright Fellowship



JJ in the southeastern mountains near Erge Shan, with the Taipei 101 in the background

I am a Ph.D. Candidate in History of Science, Medicine, and Technology and East Asian History. I was awarded a Fulbright US Student Program grant for a ten-month research trip in Taiwan. As a Fulbright fellow, I have spent most of my time visiting government and institutional archives. As a visiting scholar of Academia Sinica, I have used their extensive archives and databases to gather relevant sources. My dissertation, tentatively titled *Defined by Molecules: Chemical Reimagining of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Discipline Formation 1908–1960*, is a history of organic chemistry in China and Taiwan concerning pharmacological research on Chinese medicinal herbs. Pharmaceutical scientists, trained as pharmacists or organic chemists, were in a complex spot in China at the turn of the twentieth century. I have over one thousand relevant documents for my research, which I have kept wrangled by developing my database, which I used not just for the organization but also for simple statistical analysis on the publishing habits of my historical actors.

While I was in Hualien on the east coast of Taiwan, a

7.4 earthquake struck the island, with hundreds, if not thousands, of aftershocks, causing tunnel collapses, total road failure along the eastern coastal highway, the indefinite closure of Taroko Gorge, and landslides. The train line on the island's eastern side shut down, and I was effectively trapped in Hualien. I spent a day riding out the earthquakes, and while I slept, the Taiwanese military cleared the landslide off the train tracks, making it possible to return to Taipei within 24 hours of the earthquake's initial shake. I was never so glad to be back on a crowded train back to Taipei. Passing alongside the mountains, brown scars along the verdant green revealed how damaging the earthquake had been to Taiwan's environment. But, within a few weeks, Taiwan's eastern side was essentially back to normal, but there were regular aftershocks I often felt in Taipei. I've become accustomed to the moving ground as I look at 1930s pharmaceutical journals.

Along with accessing archives, my time in Taiwan has been highlighted by the people I met there. My sponsor, Dr. Kevin Chang, made it his mission to introduce me to any scholars he felt might be interested in my work. Through these meetings, I received opportunities to give talks at the Institute of Modern History and the Institute of History and Philology. I also completed the Taipei Grand Trail (92 km) and the Taipei Skyline Trail (200km) throughout my time in Taiwan. Hiking the beautiful mountain during the weekend became my favorite way to think through the problems and arguments of my dissertation. My office mates invited me to their monthly badminton meetup, which brought together an array of professors and visiting scholars who discussed my research with me and gave me wonderful ideas. Along with writing my dissertation, I will give conference talks at the History of Science Society (HSS) and Association for Asian Studies (AAS) in the forthcoming year.



Fall 2023 instillation of named chairs, included 4 History chair recipients: Profs. Brenda Gayle Plummer, Marc Kleiweigt, Francine Hirsch and Karl Shoemaker.



Clockwise:

Professor Jorell Meléndez-Badillo giving a talk at an off campus event.

Professor Mou Banerjee mentoring undergrad students (Photo Credit: UW-Madison)

Students watching solar eclipse at the Library Mall (Photo Credit: Althea Dotzour/UW-Madison)



Clockwise:

Prof. Ashley Brown receiving the Herbert Warren Wind Award for book *Serving Herself* at the United States Golf Association Annual Awards in March 2024 (Photo Credit: USGA and Chris Keane)

Professor Neil Kodesh received 2024 Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award.

Group photo after the Fall 2023 Senior Thesis Presentation

Main Office Coordinator Zach Fithian reviews student resumes in course *History at Work*, taught in Spring 2024 by Professor Gloria Whiting.



Left to right:

FIG students visited Chicago Museums led by Professor Leonora Neville

Department Administrator Todd Anderson Retirement celebration

Professor Neil Kodesh and UW-Madison Global Gateway Program in Botswana





Department of History

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