

Department of History

Washburn University



Spring 2013

Message from Dr. Tom Prasch, chair

So as department chair, with an annual report looming, around this season I always pull my head up over the piles of to-be-graded bluebooks and papers and look around to see what we've got to brag about in the Department of History this year. The annual report is, after all, usually a judicious combination of bragging about our accomplishments and complaining about our still-unfulfilled needs. And this year, as usual, we've got plenty to be proud of.

We have, after all, a pretty amazing faculty, if I do say so myself. Just have a look at the quick summaries below and notice how active this group is in scholarship, with a wide range of publications and numerous conference presentations. Beyond that, consider the wide range of innovative courses we've been offering these last few years: brand new courses like Kelly Erby's survey of masculinity in US history, Rachel Goossen's broad-ranging survey of Anabaptists, or Kerry Wynn's cultural history of sexuality in America (with Erby's new

course of that most emblematic of Kansans, John Brown, slated for next semester); new pedagogical approaches, like the Medieval Experience course Tony Silvestri provided, partially replicating the medieval experience while learning about it (students in robes every Tuesday and Thursday; the course's single book chained to a table in the library); more team-taught offerings, like the courses in Latino Experience and in History and Literature of Latin America that team Kim Morse with Miguel González-Abellás of Modern Languages, or the "Dickens and the City" course I did with English's Erin Chamberlain (and watch for more to come: Erby and Tom Averill of the English Department teaming up on foodways, me planning with Chamberlain to tackle Sherlock Holmes); and ever more of us developing on-line versions of courses as well. Meanwhile, Alan Bearman, while keeping his fingers in our teaching mix, continues his work revitalizing the library, making it into a real center for student life (while making sure history books get added to those stacks). Add into that what

students and alumni seldom notice, the wide range of service activities which engage our faculty (tons of committee work, work on Washburn's diversity issues and Apeiron, speaking gigs in Topeka and in towns across Kansas, History Day, hosting this year's Kansas Association of Historians conference), and you are led to one basic conclusion: this is a pretty amazing faculty. And we have a pretty solid supporting staff as well, with Robin Shrimplin at the secretary's desk, keeping us together, doing a world of work for History Day (and for KAH this year as well).

But student accomplishments give us plenty to brag about as well. Washburn once again dominated the annual meeting of the Kansas Association of Historians, and students (see below) had much to do with that. We also made our presence felt at Apeiron, where Christian Gilbert spoke on the impact of colonialism on gender roles among East Africa's Maasai, Cassandra White talked about Thomas More's career in law and martyrdom for a point of law, Michael Kitowski

analyzed how Calvinist colonial Americans used the biblical text of Romans to justify rebellion, and Adam Payne discussed syncretized indigenous and Catholic religion in the Spanish colonial and Jesuit missionary territory of Rio de la Plata, while Deborah Newby showcased on a posterboard the Abolitionist activism of Kansas women in the territorial era. Newby was selected to take that same posterboard to the state capital as well, and we rather wish more legislators had stopped to talk to her about this state's legacies. Meanwhile, Angelia Crawford was recognized as outstanding student teacher, and Kyle Porter and Kelby Brown have landed teaching jobs for the coming year.

And our alumni keep doing things that make us proud, as even a very non-comprehensive survey shows (and all our alums should keep us posted on what they're up to, so we can keep bragging Darrin Tuck at Missouri, Cara Burnidge at Florida State, or Theresa Young, who just defended her master's thesis and is continuing on at Kansas State), museum studies (Hannah Thompson at Texas Tech, Kristina Gaylord at Western Illinois), seminary (Brenda Kostner at Garrett Evangelical), law (like Kyle Edelman at Nebraska and Matthew Peterson at Washburn), library science (Danielle De Motte at Emporia), and public administration (Curtis Leeth at Texas State). Teachers who came through our program continue to garner awards: Maria Arnold as Outstanding Teacher of the Year and Clark Boatright as New Teacher of the Year, both teaching in Topeka district 501. Our alumni are actively publishing (Hannah Thompson, writing on mummies and Elvis in a chapter of *Undead in the West*), working as editorial assistants

(Cara Burnidge for the American Society for Church History, Theresa Young for *Kansas History*), and blogging (Heather Stone, as part of her job in the photographic archives of Filson Historical Society, and before that as folklore archivist for the Kentucky State Historical Society). They have traveled and taught abroad, like Amy Billinger in Russia. They work at museums (Jess Rezac at the American Jazz Museum in KC), national parks (aside from Clayton Calder, about whom see below, Nick Murray serves as ranger at Topeka's Brown v. Board National Historic Site), and political offices (Chelsea Chaney in Senator Pat Roberts's office, Whitney Casement at the Kansas Attorney General's office). And I'm doubtless leaving out many, but clearly, our alumni make us proud.

As can be seen, the bragging part is pretty easy. Our students, our alumni, and our faculty have been doing lots of amazing things. And the complaining part of that annual report is pretty easy, too. We always have needs. They have for some time been pretty much the same needs: more tenure lines, more travel funds, more support, better library... above all else more money. We fund all the student travel and fees for those conferences we brag about, after all, and kick in some cash to bolster our scholarship offerings, and pay guest speakers, and keep our copier copying. And for those of you out in the world already, that is one way you can help: giving to Washburn, and specifying the Department of History for your donation. It won't get us that Chinese historian we still need, or the new library wing, but it will help with everything else.



Deborah Newby Presents at the Inaugural Undergraduate Research Day at the Kansas State House

History Licensure Student Deborah Newby ('13) was one of ten Washburn students from across the University selected to participate in the inaugural Kansas Undergraduate Research Day. This event showcased the independent research projects of undergraduates from each of the state's four-year public institutions. Newby's project "The Abolitionist Women of Kansas: Their Moral and Righteous Fight to Make Kansas a Free State" examines the critical involvement of women in the struggle to prohibit slavery in Kansas. Newby, along with her fellow students, set up her poster in the Capital Rotunda and answered questions from members of the public as well as legislators. About her experience, Newby says, "I appreciated seeing all the diverse research my fellow Kansas college students worked on. I really felt honored to represent my college, and to show those who attended the outstanding work that is being done at the undergraduate level." Nice job, Deborah!

2013-2014 Scholarship

Winners:

Bright-Bader Scholarship

Alejandro Solomon Rivarola

Donald F. Danker Scholarship

Austin Main

C. Robert Haywood Scholarship

Kwam Nelson

Robert W. and James E. Mackey Scholarship

Adam Payne

Linda Wahl-Stoltenberg Scholarship

Mary-Lucia Darst

Deren Onursal

Christian Gilbert

Robert E. Davis Scholarship

Stephen Potter

William Odell "Bill" Wagnon Scholarship

Mark Fancher

Gilbert E. Galle History Scholarship

Cassandra White

Professor Gunnar Alksnis History Scholarship

Jessica Elliott

History Department Scholarship

John Kirkpatrick

Where Are they Now? Career Updates From Department Graduates Clayton Calder, '10 National Park Service



Calder in Wind Cave, 2012

For as long as I can remember, I have loved history. Talking about battles, political events and social movements made my blood pump. From an early age I always wanted to read mythologies, or learn about the Roman Empire or the Egyptians. These interests, combined with my desire to inspire others to want to learn more about history, made me decide to major in history at Washburn.

Initially, I thought I wanted to teach high school, but as I went through my courses, I realized that formal teaching was not for me. I started searching for a job

that would allow me to talk to people about history, but would not confine me to a classroom. The National Park Service offered me a perfect solution. With about 400 sites nationwide, there is never a chance with the park service that I will talk about the same section of history for the rest of my professional life! While I am still trying to find a permanent position in the National Park Service, I apply to each job opening, seasonal and permanent, with confidence.

This confidence comes from the skills that I learned while at Washburn. I have been able to

put these skills into effect during my first two seasonal jobs at Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site and Wind Cave National Park. At both sites, I relied on the strong critical thinking skills I developed in my history classes to learn facts pertinent to each site from both secondary and primary sources. I effectively interpret this information to park visitors, helping them make a connection to the park.

The opportunities at these parks have been amazing. Thanks to working at Wind Cave, I can now say I have crawled in places that no human in history has ever been before; and at Brown, I have been able to find insight from social

movements of the past to connect with current events today. For anyone wanting to join the National Park Service, I have two words of advice: Persistence and Internships! Seek them out and start working seasonal jobs with the Park Service before you graduate so that you are able hit the ground running.

The National Park Service is a wonderful organization if you are willing to put in the hard work and perseverance needed. I have the amazing professors in the Washburn history department to thank for helping prepare me for these amazing jobs... and of course Robin for always being in the office with a with a smile and a laugh.



Interview with Willie Williams, Washburn Football Player & history major

Willie Williams has been playing football since he was a freshman in high school at McClure South Berkeley in St. Louis. He was recruited to play as a safety for the Ichabods in 2009. Williams declared as a history major after taking Dr. Wynn's History 112 class. Williams explains he had never been so interested in a class before. "I was all in it," he says. Since then, he credits his history courses with helping him improve his writing skills. Williams admits that it is often difficult to balance the demands of playing football with his coursework. As a football player, "you have to make sacrifices," Williams says. But he adds that this struggle has taught him important time management skills. After college, Williams hopes to play for the NFL. He is also considering a career in the military so that he can continue to learn about the world—a journey he feels he began in his history courses.

Phi Alpha Theta 2012-2013 Inductees

This year, Phi Alpha Theta, the History Honorary Society, was pleased to induct the following students: Jessica Elliott Brenna Hofelt, Elizabeth Nech, Janet Savage, Austin Main, Jared Lauber, Drew Egnoške, Tori Carter, Cassandra White Sierra Kresin, Adam Snook, Scott, Brackey, Lauren Doherty, Daniele Osterhaus, and Deren Onursal. Students are inducted into Phi Alpha Theta after completing a minimum of 12 semester hours in History and earning at least a 3.1 GPA.

Course Spotlight: Washburn Characters, Spring 2013

This semester, Professor Kerry Wynn, along with professors Tom Averill of the Department of English and Penny Weiner of the Department of Theater, taught a new special topics course called Washburn Characters. In this course, students conducted original research in primary sources to uncover fascinating details about the lives of Washburn graduates, individuals who include both the famed and the relatively unknown. According to Wynn, the format of the course, combined with students' final projects—a 15-minute live performance—“have made this class a very active endeavor.” Wynn says, “We have worked together in Washburn University’s Special Collections and the Kansas State Archives” to reconstruct the life stories of people like Arthur Fletcher, Jeanetta Lyle Menniger, Peter McVicar, and Arthur Champenny. To produce their performance, students “must find

a way to understand the meaning of the individual’s life and convey it to the audience,” Wynn explains. Teaching with faculty members from the English and Theater Departments has been a powerful experience for Wynn as an instructor, who says it has helped her to sharpen her own attention to storytelling. “It is this aspect of history that so many students love, Wynn says, “and working with master storytellers and dramatists has helped students embrace that part of their role as historians.” The course was offered as part of Washburn’s 150th anniversary celebration.



Ken Cott, Emeritus Professor of history, Wins Peace Award

Former longtime history professor Ken Cott was awarded the Individual Peace Builder Award by the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice in April 2013. Dr. Cott has spent twenty-two years working with various coalitions to help the city of Los Talpetates, El Salvador. His work has addressed such critical needs as education, safe water, and health care. Congratulations, Professor Cott!

Students & Faculty Present at the Annual Meeting of the Kansas Association of Historians

Washburn hosted this year’s annual meeting of the Kansas Association of Historians (KAH). Tom Prasch, KAH president, said, “The event provided an occasion to showcase Washburn's campus, to showcase the scholarship of our students and faculty, to highlight historical resources in the Topeka area (with a prequel visit to the Brown v. Board National Historic Site and a sequel backstage tour of the archives at the Kansas State Historical Society), and to bring some good speakers to campus (opening the conference with a diverse range of readings from Washburn's own Tom Averill, and closing it with a plenary lecture on recent antievolution debates by KU's Jeff Moran).” Washburn faculty and students featured prominently on the conference schedule. Among students, Deborah Newby illuminated Kansas women’s involvement in abolitionist struggles. Cassandra Blackwell discussed the early women’s suffrage movement in Kansas, Sarah Powell examined the image of women in early Christian gothic texts, and Stephen Potter analyzed legislative debates over early twentieth-century eugenics laws. Faculty presenters included Kerry Wynn, Kim Morse, and Kelly Erby.

Faculty Updates

Tom Prasch published the following essays and articles this year: “Clashing Greeks and Victorian Culture Wars: Euripides v. Aristophanes in Late-Victorian Discourse,” *Victorian Studies* 54:3(Spring 2013), 464-473; “Between What is and What If: Kevin Willmott’s CSA,” in Cynthia J. Miller, ed. *Too Bold for the Box Office* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2013), 167-180; “Blood on the Border: The Mexican Frontier in *Vampires* (1998) and *Vampires: Los Muertos* (2002) in Cynthia J. Miller and A. Bowdoin Van Riper, eds., *Undead in the West: Vampires, Zombies, Mummies and Ghosts on the Cinematic Frontier* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012), 113-132; “A strange Incongruity’: The Imaginary India of the International Exhibitions,” *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 34:5 (December 2012), 477-491; Essays on *Alexander, Born on the Fourth of July*, and “Appendix A: JFK and the Critics,” in James M. Welsh and Donald M. Whaley, eds., *The Oliver Stone Encyclopedia* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012), 3-8, 24-28, 289-298. He also presented papers at several academic conferences. Dr. Prasch continues to be active with the Kansas Humanities Council and looks forward to an upcoming Sweet Sabbatical trip to the Azores, Marburg, Germany, and Wales this summer.

Rachel Goossen recently developed a new course in religious history “Anabaptism: The Radical Reformation and Beyond.” The course will be offered again in Fall 2013. Her article “Disarming the Toy Store and Reloading the Shopping Cart: Resistance to Violent Consumer Culture” will appear in the July 2013 issue of *Peace & Change: A Journal of Peace Research*. Dr. Goossen serves as president of the Washburn chapter of the honor society Phi Kappa Phi, coordinates regional History Day, and contributes to the Topeka Center for

Peace & Justice’s “International Remedies” forums.

Kim Morse continues to teach world history surveys and courses on Latin America. She remains active in the Diversity Initiative Committee at Washburn, and offers fairly regular public talks about immigration and immigration history. This spring, Dr. Morse will present papers at three academic conferences, including one on eighteenth-century Venezuelan history at the Rocky Mountain Conference of Latin American Studies in April; another on Mexican immigration, eugenics, and congressional debates in 1920s America at the Kansas Association of Historians in April; and one on nineteenth-century Venezuela at the Ill Jornadas de la Seccion de Estudios Venezolanos de LASA in June in Caracas, Venezuela.

Alan Bearman continues to teach courses in early American and religious history. He also serves as the Dean of the Libraries at Washburn.

Bruce MacTavish Bruce is currently the director of the Bachelor's of Integrated Studies Degree and Master's of Liberal Studies Degree while he continues to serve as Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. For the past three years he has been a content expert for “A Century of Progress.” This federal grant project is a part of the Teaching American History program involving forty Kansas middle school history teachers. His current research project involves analyzing the ideals and actions of the Seventh Kansas Cavalry as they carried their abolitionist motives into the Confederate South in 1862.

Kerry Wynn is beginning a new research project focusing on twentieth-century undergraduate festivals. She presented a paper entitled “Playing at Poverty in the Great Depression: The Ubiquity of Midwestern ‘Hobo Days’ in the 1930s” at a labor history symposium in Youngstown, Ohio in fall 2012. In addition, Dr. Wynn is the chair of the Diversity Initiative at Washburn.

Tony Silvestri spoke at a pedagogy panel at the 2012 conference of the Midwest Medieval History Conference about the “Medieval Experience” course he taught in Spring 2012. He continues to teach a wide variety of courses, including one on Traditional Japan in Fall 2012 and a new course in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia this spring. In his career as a lyricist, Dr. Silvestri recently enjoyed the premiere of his new work in Latin with composer Eric Whitacre called “Sainte-Chapelle” by the legendary Tallis Scholars, as well as the publication of another new work entitled “Virgo, Mater, Regina” with composer Costas Dafnis. His children’s book *Sleep* will be published this summer.

Kelly Erby joined the history faculty in 2011. Her current research project examines early national American culture and society through the lens of commercial foodways. This spring, Dr. Erby taught a special topics course examining the history of American masculinity. She looks forward to teaching a course on abolitionist John Brown in Fall 2013.

Congratulations to Our spring 2013 graduates!

Bartholomew Beiker, Calvin Bolt (with Honors), Eric Harding (With Honors), Michael Kitowski (With Honors), Ryan Long, Daniel Moore, Kyle Porter (With Honors), Kyle Shanks, Peyton Sloan, Caitlin Sturgeon (With Honors), Brittany Swan (With Honors), Brandon Wenger, Cassandra Blackwell (With Honors), and Kandyce Horn.



Two Washburn graduates were recently awarded for their excellence in teaching! Angela Crawford won Washburn University's Outstanding Student Teacher Award for Secondary Education for 2013. And Clark Boatwright has been named Topeka USD 501's Outstanding Teacher of the Year!

Attention Alumni & Friends!

Keep us current on your activities and contact information! Complete this form and send it to Dr. Kelly Erby, Department of History, Washburn University, 1700 SW College Ave, Topeka, KS 66621

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

News: _____

General donations to the Department of History are always welcome to further the activities of students, faculty, and general program needs.

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