

Chair's Bulletin
April 2009

News and Notables

Julie Greene's book, *THE CANAL BUILDERS: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal* (Penquin, 2008) continues to be widely reviewed and well received. It was selected by the New York Times editors for their April 3, 2009 [Editors' Choice](#) list. David Oshinsky [reviewed the book](#) in the New York Times Book Review section on March 27, 2009, and it was also reviewed in Bookforum's [April/May issue](#). Julie also contributed an op-ed piece to the Baltimore Sun of Monday, April 6 titled "[Stimulus from the bottom up.](#)"

Having won the University's Distinguished Scholar-Teacher Award in December, **Art Eckstein**, has now been awarded the 2009 Regents' Faculty Award for Excellence in Mentoring. This is a special honor, since the Regents give a total of only three of these particular awards for the entire University of Maryland System.

Sonya Michel has been appointed as Director of the United States Studies program at the Wilson Center. She will be on a two year leave of absence from the University. Congratulations to Sonya and to the Wilson Center!

Paul Landau, after peer review and various transatlantic delays, has secured a contract from Cambridge University Press, New York, to publish his manuscript, now titled *Popular Politics in the History of South Africa, 1400 - 1948*. Also, Vol. 61, issue 1 of the South African Historical Journal has published his review essay, "[Jack the Ripper in South Africa? Charles van Onselen's Fox and the Flies.](#)"

Bernard Cooperman chaired a session and presented a paper at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America in March. His paper, "Searching for Lost Time. Memory and the Medieval for Renaissance Jews," explored the self-invention of Portuguese Jews in their historical works composed in sixteenth-century Italy. Monday, March 30, Berny also organized and led a workshop on the uses of film in the teaching of Jewish history, culture, and language for area secondary-school teachers.

Berny and **Saverio Giovacchini** organized a one-day workshop on "Italian Fascism and Cinematic Memory: The Anti-Jewish Race Laws of 1938" held at the university on Sunday, March 29. Saverio's paper was entitled "*Ai margini e fuori tema: John Kitzmiller and the Discontinuities and Continuities of Italian Cinema after World War II.*" Other participants

included Alessandro Visani of Rome's Università La Sapienza and Millicent Marcus, chair of the Italian Studies department at Yale. The program, which included two films, was very well attended by students, faculty, and the general public.

Saverio Giovacchini was offered a book contract for the collection *Global Neorealism. The Transnational History of a Film Style* by The University of Mississippi Press., which he is editing with Robert Sklar. The collection will feature 15 essays. Among them, is an essay by one of our current graduate students, **Paula Halperin**.

In addition to his term at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, **Michael David-Fox** has also been named a professeur invité at the École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) for one month during the year 2009-2010. His appointment will be at the Centre russe (Centre d'études des mondes russe, caucasien, et centre-européen). The visiting professorship is to deliver a series of lectures co-sponsored by the Centre russe and the Ecole normale supérieure on the following topics: "The Myth of the Soviet Potemkin Village"; "A Non-Causal Nexus: Fascist Intellectual Admirers of the Stalin Revolution"; "Stalinist Westernizers and Transnational Patronage: The Fellow-Travelers Revisited"; and "Three Conjunctures in Soviet Cultural Diplomacy: From Origins to Popular Front".

James Gilbert is spending March and April in Berlin taking an intensive German language course. Although German academics speak perfect English during conferences and in the classes he has taught there, once he retires to the Bierstube, it's all German so he is learning to be included.

Jeffrey Herf gave the following presentations: "Nazi Germany's Propaganda Aimed at Arabs and Muslims during World War II and the Holocaust: Old Themes and New Archival Findings," February 27, 2009 at the Georgetown University International History Seminar; "Germany's Response to Defeat in 1945," March 10, 2009 at the National Defense University in Washington; and "Reflections on the Battle of the Euromissiles," comments on concluding panel at the conference, "Zweiter Kalter Krieg und Friedensbewegung: Der NATO-Doppelbeschluss in deutsch-deutscher und internationaler Perspektive," [The Second Cold War and the Peace Movement: The NATO Double-Decision in German-German and International Perspective," sponsored by the Hertie School of Governance, The Institute of Contemporary History (Berlin), and the German Historical Institute, Washington, D.C., March 26-28, 2009, Berlin, Germany. He was also the guest speaker at **Sheldon Goldberg's** Jewish War Veterans Post 692 in Rockville MD on 1 March. He spoke on the subject of his forthcoming book about German Propaganda and the Arabs during WW II. Although the audience was small - about 26 people total - mostly veterans of that war and the European theater, he held their rapt attention throughout his talk, which

generated several interesting questions from the membership and some comprehensive answers from Dr. Herf. He was a big hit and his talk was really appreciated by all.

Robyn Muncy has been appointed a Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars for the summer 2009.

Marsha Rozenblit has been nominated to be the President of the Association for Jewish Studies, the major organization for scholars in all branches of Jewish Studies. The term is two years, 2010 and 2011. I am still completing my term as Vice President for Program of the AJS.

Julie Taddeo is Program Chair for this month's annual meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Conference on British Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University, and she also is chairing and commenting on a panel, "Class and Gender at Work and Play, 1860-1945."

Janna Wasilewski is presenting a paper titled "On the Side of the Angels: The Alliance of Queens and Bishops in León-Castile" at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies, on April 4. She is also the co-organizer of a panel for the same conference, on Women, Faith, and Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain.

Distinguished Emeritus Professor **Stephen Brush** was selected by the American Physical Society and the American Institute of Physics to receive the very prestigious 2009 Abraham Pais Prize for the History of Physics. He was chosen "for his pioneering, in-depth studies in the history of nineteenth and twentieth century physics."

Michael Petersen's (PhD 2005, Herf) revised doctoral dissertation has just been published by Cambridge University Press. The title of the book is [Missiles for the Fatherland: Peenemunde, National Socialism and the V-2 Missile](#).

Ingo Tauschweizer's new book, *The Cold War U.S. Army: Building Deterrence for Limited War* (Kansas, 2008), received a very favorable review in a recent *Journal of Military History*. The reviewer states, "Tauschweizer's excellent research and sound analysis produce a very valuable study that fills an important gap in the historical knowledge of the Army's doctrinal development during the Cold War. Also, Ingo has accepted a position as assistant professor in the department of history at Ohio University Athens.

Erik Christiansen successfully defended his dissertation, "History Limited: The Hidden Politics of Postwar Popular Histories," in February. He is also presenting a paper on the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of American History at a conference called "Public History in Germany

and the United States: Fields, Developments and Debates in Praxis and Theory " at the Free University Berlin in Berlin, Germany, June 25-27, 2009.

Heidi Hemming (MA) is the co-author, along with her sister, Julie Hemming Savage, of *Women Making America* (Clotho Press, 2009) a wonderful textbook with lots of pictures, of U.S. women's history written for 9th graders.

On March 27, **Katarina Keane** (Ph.D., US; advisor, Leslie Rowland) presented a paper in Seattle at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians. The title of her paper was "'Let Your Sisterhood Be Your Sustenance': Southern Women's Organizations and the Fight for Economic Justice in the 1970s."

Evelyn Khoo will be presenting a paper at the 2009 Association for Asian American Studies Annual Meeting in Honolulu, Hawai'i on April 24, 2009. The theme of the panel is "Chinese American Identity and Community Transformation." And I will be presenting a paper titled: "Under the Arch of Friendship: City Development and Community Resistance in Late 20th Century Washington, D.C. Chinatown." A link for the conference website (with the panel listed in the PDF link to the program) is [here](#).

Mary-Elizabeth Murphy (Ph.D., US; advisor, Elsa Barkley Brown) received a Joseph A. Skinner Dissertation Completion Fellowship from the History Department at Mount Holyoke College.

European Ph.D candidate, **Stephen Scala's** proposal has been accepted for participation in the "summer school" of the German Historical Institute London entitled, "New Approaches to Political History. Writing British and German Contemporary History."

The Journal of Peasant Studies has devoted an article-length review to *Land and Labor, 1865*, the most recent volume of *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation*. Describing *Freedom* as "one of the great editorial achievements of modern scholarship," the review essay praises the range and richness of the new volume's documents and its "painstaking attention to editorial detail." The review also commends the "sweep" of the volume's interpretive essays and their "attentiveness to the voices of the newly emancipated." The general introduction, the reviewer writes, "does a masterful job of integrating the evolving political history of Presidential Reconstruction with the daily social struggle unfolding on the ground." *Land and Labor, 1865*, was edited by **Leslie Rowland** and **Steven Miller**, together with three former members of the Freedmen and Southern Society Project, Steven Hahn, Susan O'Donovan, and John Rodrigue. For the review essay, see Alex Lichtenstein, "From Personalism to

Contractualism: A Review of the Freedmen and Southern Society Project's Latest Documentary History of Emancipation," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 35 (2008): 636-52.

Upcoming

On April 20, 2009 beginning at 4PM, the APT will meet in 2110TLF for the 3rd year reviews. A second meeting will be April 22, 2009 in the Merrill Room at 4PM if needed.

April 21 - Dr. Jeffrey Herf will speak: "From Europe to the Middle East: Nazi Germany's Arabic Propaganda during WWII and the Holocaust," beginning at 4PM in 0142 Holzapfel.

April 23 – MCHTSE presents Gabrielle Hecht, "African Bodies and Nuclear Things: Scenes from the Transnational Production of Uranium." 4PM, 2110TLF

April 24 – Executive Committee Meeting, 1PM, 2120KEY

April 24 – Book Release Party – Julie Greene, 4PM 2110TLF

April 27 – Augusto Varas, 4:30PM,

May 1 & 2 - [Workshop: Issues in Nahua Identity and Language: Past and Present](#), St. Mary's Hall, all day

May 2 – [Memories of Iraq](#), Maryland Room, all day