

Chair's Bulletin

October 2009

As you all know the death of **Emory Evans** on Sunday, 25 September has removed from us one of the most important living links to our past. Emory became Chair of the Department for the first time in 1976. He was an exemplary Chair who saw the Department through some difficult times. He established a stability where before there had been instability. He practiced a style of leadership that emphasized consultation and democratic governance. He stood for civility. In his day, he was a prominent campus citizen widely respected and trusted for his fairness, integrity and honesty. He was a courtly, slightly old fashioned man who possessed a deep reverence for the profession of College teaching—which is how he thought of our work, even though he fully understood and supported the research mission of the faculty.

This month the Department of History will launch the first phase of a four-year Teaching American History grant which has been secured from the Department of Education. **David Sicilia** is to be thanked for his devoted and hard work on this project which involved collaboration with the College of Education and Prince Georges County Schools. Thirty county history teachers are enrolled in the project which will bring them to campus to participate in a program titled Frameworks for Understanding Modern America which is designed to reinforce and strengthen the History curriculum in the PG County High Schools. Thanks go also to our Professors **David Freund, Robyn Muncy, David Sicilia, and Thomas Zeller** who had kicked the program off with an initial seminar program that was enthusiastically received by the teachers. This is important work; it demonstrates our public service commitment and it has (from my point of view) the distinct advantage of producing another revenue stream to help tide us over this difficult period.

Speaking still of revenue, congratulations also to the **The Samuel Gompers Project** (coeditors **Peter Albert** and **Grace Palladino**) who received a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission in the amount of \$97,258.

Congratulations also go to **Richard Bell** who was awarded a short-term fellowship from Yale's Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition. He will spend February 2010 at the center at work upon the chapter of his book manuscript that concerns abolitionist depictions of slave suicide.

On October 13, **Antoine Borrut** will give a guest lecture entitled "The Umayyads from Arabia to Empire" at Georgetown University at the invitation of Prof. Emma Gannagé (visiting professor, department of Arabic and Islamic Studies)

Art Eckstein published a chapter, "Rome Dominates the Mediterranean," in the edited volume of A. S. Erickson, L. J. Goldstein, and C. Lords, *China Goes to Sea: Maritime Transformation in Comparative Historical Perspective* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2009), pp. 63-92.

David Freund travels to Oakland, California on October 16 to chair and comment on a panel—"Race, Class, and Ethnicity in Postwar Housing"—at the Thirteenth National Conference on Planning History, the biennial meeting of the Society for American City and Regional Planning History. Then on October 23 he heads north, to the University of Buffalo Law School, where he has been invited to speak about *Colored Property* on a panel at the annual NEPOC (Northeast People of Color) Legal Scholarship Conference. This year's conference theme: "America's New Class Warfare?"

James Gao's new book, *Historical Dictionary of Modern China, 1800-1949*, (531 pages) was published by Scarecrow Press in June 2009. He is the only author of all 600 entries, introduction, appendixes, etc. The book is distributed simultaneously in France, Germany, Great Britain, Canada and the United States. He also attended the International Conference on State Building of the People's Republic of China, co-organized by The East Chian Normal University, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the French Academy of Social Sciences in Hong Kong from June 23-25, 2009, and presented a paper on "The Crisis of the State-Planning Economy: The 1959-1961 Great Famine Revisited." After the conference, he did three weeks of archival work in Hong Kong.

Jim Gilbert was a panel commentator at a conference held at the New York Academy of Medicine to mark the 100th Anniversary of Sigmund Freud's only trip to the United States. The Conference explored the subject: "After Freud Left." He also served as Conference summarizer.

On October 6 **Julie Greene** spoke about the Panama Canal's construction at the Martin Luther King Memorial Library in Washington DC. On October 16 the Smithsonian will co-host, as part of its year-long focus on Panama, a roundtable titled "Interpreting 500 Years of Panamanian History," with presentations by Alfredo Castillero Calvo, Aims McGuinness, and **Julie Greene**. This will take place at the Historical Society of Washington D.C., 801 K. St., NW, 4-7 pm, and is co-hosted by the University of Maryland. She also contributed an essay to the AFL-CIO's website. It's called "[Lessons from the Panama Canal](#),"

From October 1-3, **Sonya Michel** participated in a conference she co-organized at the University of Southern Denmark in Odense entitled "An American Dilemma? Race, Ethnicity, and Welfare States in the U.S., Europe, and the Nordic Countries." The conference was sponsored by the Nordic Centres of Excellence Nordwel project, and included an international and interdisciplinary roster of speakers. Michel commented on and chaired several panels. A publication is planned.

Robyn Muncy published her essay, "Women, Gender and Politics in the New Deal Government: Josephine Roche and the Federal Security Agency," in the Fall 2009 issue of the *Journal of Women's History*.

Michael Ross presented a paper entitled "The Supreme Court and the 'Retreat from Reconstruction': An Assessment of Twenty Years of Scholarship," at the San Francisco State Rights Conference, September 17-18, 2009.

On October 2, **David Sartorius** delivered commentaries on two papers presented at the Latin American Labor History Conference at Duke University. The topic of the conference was "In First Person: Biography and History in Latin America."

Also on October 2, **Richard Price** led a discussion of recent work including his own in the "new imperial history" at the George Washington University's Department of English Nineteenth-Century Studies Seminar.

Thomas Zeller gave a paper on his current book project "Consuming Landscapes" at the First World Congress of Environmental History in Copenhagen, Denmark, in August and is still excited to have been part of this milestone conference which attests to the global growth of environmental history. In September, he presented papers at a conference in Dresden, Germany, entitled "Landschaft quer denken: Theorien, Bilder Formationen (Thinking Landscape outside the Box: Theories, Images, Formations)" and one at the Oslo School of Architecture and Design, University of Oslo, called "Routes, Roads and Landscapes: aesthetic practices en route." Zeller has begun his fellowship at Dumbarton Oaks and will reemerge in the fall of 2010.

Stephen Brush is the winner of the John Frederick Lewis Award for 2009 for his book: *Choosing Selection: The Revival of Natural Selection in Anglo-American Evolutionary Biology, 1930-1970* (American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, 2009)

George Majeska has published the chapter "Rus' and the Byzantine Empire" in the new Blackwell Companion to Russian History, ed. Abbott Gleason.

On October 3, **Thanayi Jackson** (PhD; advisor, Leslie Rowland) presented a paper at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. Part of a panel on "Constructing Democracy, Claiming Citizenship," her paper was titled "Defining Citizen/Defining Statesman: From the Reconstruction Acts to the Election of Black Men in Wilmington, North Carolina, 1867-1869."

Ryan Misler (PhD; Middle East) will spend the academic year 2009-2010 engaged in Arabic study and research at the Institut Français du Proche-Orient (IFPO) in Damascus, Syria. IFPO accepts no more than 45 students worldwide to participate in its yearlong intensive Arabic program. IFPO serves the dual role of an internationally recognized Arabic language program and a premier research institute on Arab and Islamic studies. With centers in Damascus, Beirut, and Amman, IFPO hosts leading scholars in such fields as history, political science, and modern and classical Arabic literature. IFPO's unique Arabic program requires students to submit a research proposal as part of its admission process. The student is expected to complete the project as part of the advanced Arabic language program. Ryan's project is on "Elite Slavery, the Mamluks, and the Syrian National Narrative." In addition to expert language instructors, Ryan will have access to historians, anthropologists, and other scholars at IFPO for guidance in his research endeavors.

Charles Reed (PhD; British, advisor Richard Price) and **Michael Soracoe** (PhD; British, advisor Richard Price) are attending the Fall 2009 Folger Institute seminar on "India in British Political Thought, c. 1600-1800" at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C. The seminar is led by Prof. Robert Travers.

Stephen Scala (PhD; European, advisor Jeffrey Herf) participated in the Summer School of the German Historical Institute London "New Approaches to Political History: Writing Contemporary British and Germany History" Sep 7-12 and delivered a paper entitled "East German New Thinking? The Impact of Transnationalization on Foreign Policy Expertise in the GDR."

Darren Speece's article, "[From Corporatism to Citizen Oversight: The Legal Fight over California Redwoods, 1970-1996.](#)" Is now available in *Environmental History* Vol. 14, No.4 (October 2009).

Stephen Johnson (PhD 2009, advisor, Gilbert) now holds a position as a research fellow with the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE). ORISE has a contract to do historical research for the [Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office DPMO](#). The research is accomplished at NARA-College Park, the National Records Center-Suitland, and military service history offices in the DC-area and around the country. His focus will be investigating what happened to some of the 78,000 US military personnel missing from World War II.

Jacqueline M. Moore (PhD 1994, advisor Louis Harlan) would like to announce the upcoming publication of her latest book: [Cow Boys and Cattle Men: Class and Masculinities on the Texas Frontier, 1865-1900](#), (Dec. 1, 2009, NYU Press).