

# History at Lehigh University

Volume 11, Issue 1

Fall 2010

Welcome to the Fall 2010 issue of *History at Lehigh*, the official newsletter of the Department of History at Lehigh University. *History at Lehigh* is published twice per year in an effort to maintain contact and share information with students, alumni, and faculty.

## *Message from the Chair*

As the semester winds down, Bethlehem's glow of seasonal fall colors has passed, replaced with an invigorating nip in the morning air, leaving everyone to wonder how long before the first snowfall. This season is also always busy with students signing up for major and minors, registering for next semester's courses, requesting transfer approvals for study abroad programs, and scheduling graduate oral exams and dissertation defenses. The flow of people in and out of the office is invigorating, just as the late fall air.

This fall we welcomed a new full-time faculty member to the department—Dr. Nitzan Lebovic. Dr. Lebovic is the holder of the Helene and Allen Apter Chair of Holocaust Studies and Ethical Values. He received his PhD from UCLA in 2006, and since then he has held a series of prestigious post-doctoral positions in Israel, Germany, and the UK. His research is focused on German Jewish history, history and theory of Fascism, and the history and theory of film. In just a few short months he has already become a significant contributor to the department in terms of teaching, research, and his enthusiasm for all things historical. We also welcomed Dr. Pedram Partovi as a visiting assistant professor in conjunction with the Center for Global Islamic Studies. His courses on the history of Islam, the Middle East, and Iran have been extremely well received. Finally, we are pleased that Dr. Melissa Graffe, a historian of medicine, has joined the Lehigh Libraries staff as the new humanities librarian, and she has agreed to teach the history of medicine for the department on an ongoing basis.

Once again the department has been busy with numerous public lectures and events in addition to our regular classroom teaching and scholarly research efforts. In October the department sponsored its annual George Harmon lecture, featuring military historian Steven Woodworth, author of over two dozen books on military and civilian aspects of the Civil War era. We also co-sponsored lectures with the Gipson Institute for 18<sup>th</sup> Century Studies, the American Studies Program, the Africana Studies Program, and the Friends of the Lehigh Libraries. Several graduate students gave Brown Bag seminar presentations of work that they subsequently presented at regional and national professional association conferences. Details of these talks are contained within this issue.

On the publication front, Associate Professor John Savage recently published the English language version of his co-edited anthology, *Napoleon's Atlantic: The Impact of Napoleonic Empire in the Atlantic World*. Other faculty members, students, and alums have published books and articles of interest as noted within this issue.

As always, we continue to appreciate the many alumni and friends who support the department. We are particularly pleased to note the contribution of the Kritzer Family Foundation whose donation will be used to support graduate dissertation research. A complete list of supporters for the year will be included in the spring issue of the newsletter. With thanks to Professor Gail Cooper, please be sure to visit our new department website at: <http://cas.lehigh.edu/casweb/default.aspx?id=764> If any friends, alumni, or past colleagues are travelling through the area, please feel free to stop by the department. As always you'll find the coffee pot is on.

Steve Cutcliffe, Chair

## Accolades

### Faculty

**Michael Baylor** completed an invited essay this past summer on Hans Denck, a sixteenth-century religious radical and Anabaptist. The invitation came from an art history group at the University of Dresden in Germany, which is putting together an exhibition entitled "The Subversive Image." The essay will be published in the exhibition catalog next year. On October 16 he presented a paper on "Hans Denck's Refugee Politics" at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference in Montreal. On October 23, he gave an invited presentation on "Popular Reformation and Popular Rebellion: The German Peasants' War" at a symposium entitled "The World in Schwenckfeld's Day" at the Schwenckfelder Library and Heritage Center at Pennsburg, PA.

**Gail Cooper** presented a paper at the Society for the History of Technology annual meeting in Tacoma, Washington, September 30-October 2, titled "A Trade in What?: Japanese Manufacturers, American Consumers, and Economic Reconstruction, 1945-52." The paper examines the trope that Japanese manufacturers made poor quality goods and analyzes the way that reputations are established and its impact on postwar trade with the U.S. The entertaining part of the presentation was the virtual parade of Japanese knickknacks, stamped "Made in Occupied Japan," which have become collectibles.

**Nitzan Lebovic** published two articles: "Near the End: Celan between Scholem and Heidegger," in *German Quarterly* (Fall, 2010); and "The History of Life in Political Thought," in *Maftekh*: a peer review Lexical Journal of Political Thought, (Summer-Fall, 2010). His article "The State of Israel and the Biometric Law: A Post-Democratic Power" (with Avner Pinchuk, the Civil Rights Organization) can be found on the opening page of the Israel Democracy Institute website, Summer-Fall 2010. At the German Studies Association in Oakland October 7-9, he served on a panel about the history and theory of *Exceptions*.

**Michelle LeMaster** served as a co-organizer for a symposium, "Crisis and Conflict in the Early Carolinas," hosted by the Carolina Lowcountry and Atlantic World Program in Charleston. She

also presented a paper at the October symposium, entitled " 'A Sufficient Number of Warlike Indians': War, Masculinity, and Alliances on the Carolina Frontiers."

**John Savage's** "Napoleon's Atlantic: The Impact of Napoleonic Empire in the Atlantic World" was recently published, coedited with Christophe Belaubre of Universite de Toulouse Le Mirail and Jordana Dym of Skidmore College. It is a volume of 14 essays, published in Brill's series on "Atlantic World: Europe, Africa and the Americas, 1500-1830". This volume offers an introduction to recent scholarship on an understudied dimension of Napoleonic and Atlantic history, bringing together scholars working from Latin American cultural history to European diplomatic history. It provides a framework for Atlantic World scholars who have tended to view the many strands of Napoleonic influence as unrelated fragments rather than elements of a complex mosaic of complex, diverse interrelations.

**Roger Simon** served on the Council of the Pennsylvania Historical Association. He recently completed an encyclopedia article with Brian Alnut, (Ph.D '04) on Philadelphia from 1989 to 2010 for an encyclopedia on America's Ten Largest Cities.

**Stephen Cutcliffe and Kimberly Fabbri** published an essay, "Robert Fulton's Torpedoes," in *Technology and Culture* 51 (October 2010): 879-88. Robert Fulton, usually remembered for his steamboats, also developed underwater mines that he called "torpedoes" as part of a naval weapons system that he hoped would keep the seas safe for travel and commerce. Two of Fulton's original drawings of these "torpedoes" are held by the Lehigh University Libraries Special Collections Department. The essay describes the 1804 drawings and analyzes the context in which they were developed, tracing Fulton's ideas about naval weapons, which included submarine warfare as well as his "torpedo" mines.

## Graduate Students

**Adam Bentz** presented his paper "Rep. Francis E. Walter and Pennsylvania Pork" at the 2010 Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association, on October 14-16, at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove.

**Joshua Britton** presented at the Urban History Association's biennial conference in Las Vegas on October 23. His paper was titled " 'For the Destitute Widows and Orphaned Children:' The Brooklyn Theatre Fire Relief Association and the Rise of Private Charity in Brooklyn, 1876-1879." Josh also had an essay accepted for inclusion in an edited volume titled "Brooklyn and Development" to be published by the SUNY Press in 2011.

**Silas Chamberlin** presented his paper "A Question of Character: Earl Shaffer and Conditions on the Appalachian Trail" at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association. In September, he made a presentation at the Lehigh Valley Trails Summit. Chamberlin also recently joined the Lehigh Environmental Advisory Group as the graduate student representative.

**Matthew Schandler** presented his paper at the annual meeting of the Society for the History of Technology conference on October 2. His paper is entitled, "Recycling Innovation: Nintendo's Conservative Approach to Research and Development."

**William Whyte's** article "Full Speed Ahead: Yankee Ironclads Unleashed into the Volunteer State" appeared in the Spring 2010 issue of the *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*. He also served as the Assistant Editor for the Two Volume Naval Civil War Encyclopedia, edited by Dr. Spencer Tucker, ABC-CLIO Publishers, due out December 2010

## Alumni

**J. N. Hays**, a major from the Class of 1960, returned to campus for his 50<sup>th</sup> reunion in June. He stopped by the History Department office and dropped off a signed copy of the recently published second edition of his book, *The Burdens of Disease: Epidemics and Human Response in Western History* (Rutgers University Press, 2009). In his book, the author chronicles perceptions and responses to plague and pestilence, including the recent evolution of drug resistant diseases and HIV/AIDS, over two thousand years of western history. Dr. Hays is professor emeritus of history at Loyola University of Chicago.

## Gibson Events

In the fall, the Gipson Institute for Eighteenth Century Studies was delighted to host Bancroft Prize Winner, Woody Holton from the Dept. of History, University of Richmond. His talk, "Unruly Founders, Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution" was in honor of Constitution Day.

It was equally honored to host Katherine Carté Engel, Dept. of History, Texas A & M University who spoke on "Atlantic Bethlehem: International Religion in the Age of the American Revolution."

Next semester, we look forward to hearing Eran Shalev, who will speak about his work on "political astronomy" and the ideological origins of the stars and stripes. He is professor at Haifa University, and his recent book is titled *Rome Reborn on Western Shores: Historical Imagination and the Creation of the American Republic*. He will be speaking on campus on March 1, 2011 at 4:00 (room tba).

Lehigh University  
History Department  
Maginnes Hall  
Bethlehem, PA 18015

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 230  
Bethlehem, PA

### **History 334 – American City in the Twentieth Century – Field Trip**

On a sunny fall day in November Professor Roger Simon escorted some two dozen students from his course American City in the Twentieth Century on a field trip to Philadelphia. After a two hour bus tour through a wide range of neighborhoods, the students enjoyed a walking tour through Independence Mall, Old City, and Society Hill. Professor Simon then turned them loose for lunch at the Reading Terminal Market, following which there was another walk through the famous Wanamaker's department store (now ignominiously a Macy's branch), around to Penn Center, and finishing at Rittenhouse Square.

Professor Simon is not sure exactly how many times he has taken the field trip, since the course has not always been offered every year, but the first trip was in 1973. In assessing how the city has changed, he noted that the worst sections still look grim, but that in many ways the city looks stronger and healthier. A glittering new skyline arose in the 1980s and 1990s, and gentrification took hold all around the edges of Center City. Many derelict buildings were demolished and abandoned cars towed. The first generation public housing projects have mostly been razed and replaced by two-family town houses in a suburban-like setting. Perhaps the most surprising indicator was a relative absence of for-sale signs in the neighborhoods. Philadelphia, except perhaps in some gentrifying areas, was largely by-passed by the housing bubble, so there was less of a bust. Less obvious to the naked eye was the high rate of unemployment and economic distress.

Professor Simon is looking forward to publication of the 2010 census data so that he can update changes in the neighborhoods for his next trip.

### **Lehigh University Department of History**

***Department Chair***

Stephen Cutcliffe

Email: [shc0@lehigh.edu](mailto:shc0@lehigh.edu)

Phone: (610)758-3369

***Coordinator***

Janet Walters

[jtw0@lehigh.edu](mailto:jtw0@lehigh.edu)

(610)758-3360

***Graduate Assistant***

Kate Harmer

[kah207@lehigh.edu](mailto:kah207@lehigh.edu)

(610)758-5984