

History at Lehigh University

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Welcome to the Spring 2016 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

Spring has come rather early to South Mountain this year reminding me that another school year is coming to close and that next year there will be some significant changes in the History Department. On July 1, I will step down as chair and will be succeeded by Professor John Pettegrew, who joined the department in 1996. John has many years of experience as director of Lehigh's American Studies Program and South Side Initiative. Last year he published *Light It Up: The Marine Eye for Battle in the War for Iraq* with Johns Hopkins University Press. He is also a leader in Lehigh's engagement with digital humanities, which includes a new minor in Documentary Film Studies. I guess the old adage that if you want to get something done ask a busy person to do it really applies here.

While the department is gaining a new chair, it is also losing an "institution" as Professor Steve Cutcliffe will retire at the end of this year. Since coming to Lehigh as a graduate student in 1971, Steve has amassed an incredible record of teaching, advising, scholarship and service for the university, not the least preceding me as chair from 2008 to 2013. In recognition of his efforts he was awarded the Hillman Award in 2010. Beyond Lehigh's borders, Steve has served in many capacities for the Society for the History of Technology and the International Association of Science, Technology, and Society. As a colleague, I, along with everyone else, will miss Steve's thoughtfulness, patience, and overall good nature. It is difficult to imagine the department without him. I just hope that he will still be available to portray his uncanny likeness of Asa Packer on Founder's Day.

Janet Walters, our department coordinator for the past thirty-two years, has decided to retire this year. It is difficult for me to imagine the History Department without her. She has faithfully served six chairs and looked after the welfare of generations of students. Over the years, she has gracefully endured the sometimes challenging aspects of her job, often demonstrating considerable forbearance. Through it all she has remained incredibly loyal to the History Department. We will all miss her very much.

As Chair, I have enjoyed hearing from alumni and learning about your activities. Please stay in touch.



Accolades

Faculty

William Bulman was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society in Fall 2015, and gave invited talks at Vanderbilt University, the University of Warwick, and the North American Conference on British Studies.

Nitzan Lebovic's recent book, *On Zionism and Melancholy: The Short Life of Israel Zarchi* [Hebrew: Fall, 2015], was described as "one of the most innovative and richly intellectual contributions to the history of Hebrew Literature during the past decade" (HaOhel Reviews) and "a splendid essay, learned and diligent, but not without resourcefulness of language. It's a scholarly work that is written like a melancholic novella" (Haaretz, Literature and Culture). Nitzan published a peer review article titled "Neutral Angles: Mamlachtiut (Etatism) and Law in the Israeli Court, 1947-1961," in a special issue of the *New German Critique* dedicated to the Cold War (Fall, 2015). Also, during the spring Nitzan was invited to speak about his research at the University of Pennsylvania, the American Comparative Literature Association (Harvard University), a brown-bag lunch for historians and German studies scholars at Princeton University, and as a keynote lecturer to the theory cluster of Vienna University and the Academy of Fine Arts. Lastly, Nitzan is also the scientific editor of Volume 177 of the "Poetry Criticism" series, dedicated to the work of the German-Jewish poet Paul Celan (Gale: Farmington Hills, 2016).

María Bárbara Zepeda Cortés published her first book: *Cambios y adaptaciones del nacionalismo puertorriqueño: Del Grito de Lares al Estado Libre Asociado* (Morelia, Mexico: Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo-Fundación Vueltabajo-Editorial Morevalladolid, 2015). The book reconstructs the history of nationalist movements in Puerto Rico

from 1868 to 1952. Zepeda Cortés utilizes the three-phase model for nationalist movements of Czech historian Miroslav Hroch to explain why the struggle for independence failed to attract the loyalty of the Puerto Rican masses. She argues that an "intermediate nationalism" managed to win the political allegiances of the people because it proposed economic development through the colonial link with the United States combined with political autonomy and a strong emphasis on the retention of national identity traits.

Also, in November 2015, Zepeda Cortés presented a Tinker Foundation lecture at William Paterson University in New Jersey. "Latin American *Narcos*: A Comparative History of the Colombian and Mexican War on Drugs" was mainly a product of the discussions she has had with her students in two consecutive fall semesters in the popular College of Arts and Sciences first-year seminar: HIST 090 – Latin American Breaking Bad: A History of the Global Drug Wars.

Lastly, Zepeda Cortés was awarded a prestigious Huntington Library long-term fellowship. She will spend the 2016-2017 academic year as a scholar-in-residence at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. According to the Huntington Library's webpage: "Readers (as scholars at The Huntington are known) have included Nobel Laureates (Richard Feynman), Oscar winners (Katharine Hepburn), and Grammy winners (Ian Whitcomb). Some twenty Pulitzer Prize-winning historians and other major prize winners have used the collections. Their work has cut across many fields: literature (Wallace Stegner), history (James McPherson, Irving Stone, and Gordon Wood), film and television (George Cukor and Ken Burns), and astronomy (Edwin Hubble), among others." Congratulations Dr. Zepeda Cortés!



Class in *Gangs of New York* at Columbus Park, site of infamous Mulberry Bend.

On April 3 Professor **Roger Simon** took his class, *Gangs of New York*, on a field trip to New York. The course uses the eponymous film (Martin Scorsese, dir., 2002) as a starting point to study life in nineteenth century New York. The course alternates between an examination of life in the Five Points neighborhood (now Chinatown) depicted in the film and in the city generally. The field trip included a stop at the Tenement House Museum (97 Orchard St.) where a tour focused on an Irish family who lived in the building in 1870. Following lunch in Little Italy, Dr. Simon conducted a walking tour through Chinatown and the buildings around City Hall. Despite high winds and a surprisingly chilly April day, it was a successful trip. The trip was supported by an anonymous donation from an alumnus.



Graduate Students

Rachel Engl presented the paper, “As strict a band of brotherhood as Masons’: Revolutionary Network within the Continental Army,” at the annual meeting of the East-Central American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies in West Chester, PA this past November. She also will be presenting a paper titled, “Keeping the Revolution Alive: The Post-Revolutionary Experience of American Veterans” at the City University of New York Early American Republic Seminar’s (CUNY EARS) Graduate Conference, held in New York City, in May.

Andrew Dyrli Hermeling has begun producing and co-hosting the historical podcast, *The Way of*

Improvement Leads Home, hosted by historian John Fea.

Gwendolyn Hofmann co-wrote, with Professor Dawn Keetley (English Department), “Thirteen Women (1932): An Unacknowledged Horror Classic,” which was published in the Spring 2016 issue of the *Journal of Film and Video*. Also, Gwen, fellow Lehigh student Elizabeth Erwin, and Professor Keetley started “Horror Homeroom” (www.horrorhomeroom.com), a website featuring both academic and non-academic pieces about the horror genre. The website has been featured in both *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Hopes & Fears*.



Alumni

Robert F. Smith (PhD, 2009) published *Manufacturing Independence, Industrial Innovation and the American Revolution* (Westholme Publishers, Spring 2016).



History Department Showcases

This year the History Department hosted two alumni who returned to campus to discuss how their History major had prepared them for their respective careers. In the Fall, Kathryn Erb Punke (2006) talked about her experience working for J.P. Morgan, and in the Spring, Gina Guzzon (2009) discussed her job as a research assistant at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Both agreed that majoring in history had allowed them to develop skills in research, analysis, and communication that were to their later success. We hope that the students who attended these sessions were impressed by the diversity of careers that are available for History majors.

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Lehigh University Department of History

If you have any information for future newsletters, please contact the department.

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Gifts

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Gifts since January 2016:

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Neil Hanlon '56
Mr. and Mrs. David ('65) Hoeveler
Dominik Zurakowski '01

(Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of this list, but if you notice an error or omission, please contact the Department of History, College of Arts and Sciences, Lehigh University, 9 West Packer Avenue, Bethlehem, PA 18015. Our phone number is 610-758-3360.)