AU’s Peter Kuznick Teams Up With Filmmaker Oliver Stone

When Academy Award-winning filmmaker Oliver Stone was in Washington in fall 2007, scouting locations for a film about the My Lai massacre, he asked AU history professor Peter Kuznick to join him, his cinematographer, and his producer for dinner. As often happens when Kuznick and Stone get together, their conversation turned to analyzing key events in history. In the midst of an animated conversation, Stone suggested that the two of them do a documentary film together. Kuznick was then spending his sabbatical year working on a book on how knowing that nuclear war could end all life on the planet had influenced public opinion and policy decisions since the start of the atomic bomb project in 1939. Still, he agreed that working on a documentary with Stone would be an intriguing possibility for the future.

Kuznick should have known Stone better than that. They had been friends since 1996 when Stone made the first of many visits to Kuznick’s class which uses Stone’s films as a window into recent U.S. history, comparing Stone’s interpretations with those of scholars and participants in key events. The class is so popular with AU students that one year Kuznick let 150 students enroll instead of the customary 80. The class has brought an outstanding roster of guest speakers to the AU campus, including Robert McNamara, Daniel Ellsberg, Bob Woodward, Seymour Hersh, John Dean, Ambassador Robert White, Senator Max Cleland, Vietnam vets Bobby Muller, Ron Kovic, and Wayne Smith as well as Pham Duy Thanh, who fought for North Vietnam, Cambodian child soldier and author Loung Ung, Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba, JFK screenwriter Zach Sklar and leading JFK critic Max Holland, and many others.

By the time Stone returned to California a couple days later, his idea for a documentary had evolved into something far grander. Stone phoned Kuznick proposing that they collaborate on a 10- part documentary series exploring lesser known aspects of U.S. history – the parts that are generally left out of high school history texts and those so often presented in a sanitized version conforming to what Kuznick and Stone consider a triumphalist and very partial view of America’s past. Their series instead plans to focus on the development of a peculiarly American form of empire and the national security state that undergirds it.

Kuznick explained, “We had initially intended to begin by debunking the mythology surrounding the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and then, in the second episode, go back to the roots of empire in the late 19th century. We now plan to begin with World War II and work our way to the present in a more linear fashion.” They will likely include the earlier material as an 11th episode in the box sets that are released next year.

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Kuznick and Stone

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Showtime has announced that the series, “The Secret History of the United States,” will be aired in 2010. Kuznick warns that, despite the title, people who are looking for conspiracies will be disappointed. “This is solid history, based on cutting edge scholarship. The broad public, which has not been exposed to this kind of information and analysis, may be shocked by what we present, but it will come as less of a surprise to historians who have stayed on top of the latest research findings.”

Stone, a decorated Vietnam vet who dropped out of Yale to serve, has won numerous Academy Awards, including two for best director. Despite an illustrious Hollywood career that includes the films Platoon, Born on the 4th of July, JFK, Nixon, Salvador, Natural Born Killers, Wall Street, The Door, and W, he sees this documentary series as his crowning achievement. He recently proclaimed, “this epic 10-hour series is the deepest contribution I could ever make in film to my children and the next generation.” He added, “I can only hope a change in our thinking will come about upon what we've done right. Our story is solid history, based on cutting edge scholarship. The broad public, which has not been exposed to this kind of information and analysis, may be shocked by what we present, but it will come as less of a surprise to historians who have stayed on top of the latest research findings.”

The Department of History at American University continues to thrive, in spite of the turmoil caused in so much of higher education by the “Great Recession.” With over 180 undergraduate majors and nearly 100 graduate majors, our Department is one of the largest on the AU campus. It’s also one of the most active. Last year, we added three new faculty to the Department – Lisa Leff in modern French History, Laura Beers in modern British History, and Dahphon Ho in Chinese History. You can read more about all three in the faculty News and Notes section.

Alan Kraut was named University Professor, one of AU’s highest recognitions. Allan Lichtman was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award for his new book, White Protestant Nation; Mustafa Aksakal won a coveted Library of Congress Kluge Fellowship; and Kathy Franz and Eric Lohr earned tenure. Both our current students and our alumni were very active, as (again) you can read in News and Notes. Please let us know if you have news you would like to see incorporated in next year’s newsletter!

Please also consider supporting the Department by contributing to one of our Department’s Endowments – the Valerie French Endowment for History Education, the Roger Brown Endowment for graduate students completing their dissertations, or the Department’s Quasi Endowments – the Valerie French Endowment for History Education, the Roger Brown Endowment for graduate students completing their dissertations, or the Department’s Quasi Endowments, which supports a wide range activities by both students and faculty.

- Bob Griffith

Allan Lichtman’s Book Nominated For National Book Critics Circle Award

Allan Lichtman’s new book, White Protestant Nation: The Rise of the American Conservative Movement (Atlantic, Grove Press) was one of only five books nominated for the 2008 National Book Critics Circle Award in nonfiction. Among the other books nominated for the nonfiction award were: Harvard president and Civil War historian Drew Gilpin Faust’s much-publicized This Republic of Suffering: Death and the Civil War; Jane Mayer’s The Dark Side; George C. Herring’s From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1776; and the eventual winner, Dexter Filkins’ The Forever War.

Traditionally both academics and political analysts have traced the roots of the American conservative movement to the 1950s or ’60s. American University history professor Allan Lichtman takes a different view in his book White Protestant Nation, and in part it is this longer, more complicated view that has earned his work critical acclaim. “He locates the rise of the American conservative movement not in the McCarthyite paranoias of the ’50s; not in the counter-counter-cultural thrust of those disgusted with hippies, liberals, and radicals in the late ’60s and early ’70s; but rather in the 1920s—that infamous decade more usually taken up as ‘the Jazz Age,’ but which a long cold look might also render ‘The Klan Age,’” writes Maureen McLane in the National Book Critics Circle review. “Lichtman’s history is deeply researched yet lucidly and even spiritedly written.”
American University history faculty and students are deeply committed to the study of the Holocaust, one of the horribly pivotal events of the 20th century. Richard Breitman, whose path-breaking scholarship includes the National Jewish Book Award-nominated Architect of Genocide: Himmler and the Final Solution, has, with his latest book, reignited the charged debate over whether FDR could have done more to rescue European Jewry. Refugees and Rescue: The Diaries and Papers of James G. McDonald, 1935-1945, which Breitman co-edited, reveals that the diplomat, who was the U.N. high commissioner for refugees, knew, in 1938, that Roosevelt hatched a scheme to rally the world’s democracies to relocate millions of European Jews. He and his colleague Allan Lichtman are now at work on a study of Roosevelt and the Jews, under contract with Harvard University Press. Breitman also continues to edit the journal Holocaust and Genocide Studies.

The Holocaust also figures in the work of Max Paul Friedman, whose book Nazis and Good Neighbors: The United States Campaign against the Germans of Latin America in World War II won both the Herbert Hoover Prize in U.S. History and the A.B. Thomas Prize in Latin American Studies. Friedman shows among other things that when the U.S. insisted on interning German émigrés as Nazis, it sent to internment camps Jewish refugees who had fled Nazism. Although Pamela Nadell, AU’s Inaugural Patrick Clendenen Professor of History, specializes in the history of American Jewry, her Women Who Would Be Rabbis: A History of Women’s Ordination, 1889-1985, which was also nominated for a National Jewish Book Award, includes Regina Jonas, the first woman ever ordained a rabbi who shared the fate of her people in Auschwitz. And AU’s newly appointed French historian Lisa Leff is currently researching a project on Jewish archives after the Holocaust.

AU History faculty are not only deeply enmeshed in Holocaust scholarship but also in its teaching. This past summer, thanks to a Mellon grant from the College of Arts and Sciences, Nadell, who regularly teaches the Department’s course on the Holocaust, traveled to Poland, Prague, and Berlin with the Holocaust Education Foundation’s East European Seminar for Faculty. The Department’s Holocaust Studies Forum, co-sponsored with the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, brings outstanding scholars in residence at the Center to our campus.

Many of our students share our passion for this research. Alise Smith, who graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from AU in May 2009 with a double degree in History and International Studies and minors in French Language and Jewish Studies, interned at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. She is currently in France, on a Fulbright Advanced Student Grant, where she is researching French Holocaust memory and memorial museums before beginning her doctoral studies at the University of Minnesota next year. Julie Oswald, also an intern at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, was inspired by Richard Breitman’s course “Aftermath of the Holocaust” to apply for a competitive Honors Program summer research award. She spent last summer studying the creation and reception of Miami Beach’s Holocaust memorial.
History and Civic Engagement

The AU History Department, like the university itself, has long been deeply engaged in the civic life of the nation’s capital and the local, national and international communities that radiate out from its hub. Today, this legacy of civic engagement is reflected in the work of many AU faculty, in the department’s thriving Public History program, and in a host of renewed collaborations with many of the nation’s major historical institutions. Indeed, many if not most current AU history faculty are engaged in bringing their knowledge of the past into the nation’s civic life, blurring the porous boundaries between the “ivory tower” and the “real world.”

Thus, Richard Breitman, one of the nation’s leading historians of the Holocaust, recently served as Director of Historical Research for the Nazi War Criminals Records and Imperial Japanese Records Interagency Working Group. He now leads a team of historians locating additional documents to be declassified under the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act and preparing a report to Congress. Among Alan Kraut’s many civic roles are his chairmanship of the History Advisory Committee of the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation and his role as the primary history adviser on two documentary films which aired early in 2009, “Forgotten Ellis Island, The Untold Story of the Ellis Island Hospital,” and “Cinema’s Exiles: From Hitler to Hollywood.” An expert on congressional redistricting, Allan Lichtman has testified as an expert witness in more than 75 civil rights and voting cases. A frequent television commentator, during the 2008 election Lichtman participated in a State Department sponsored mock debate, arguing the case for Democratic candidate Barack Obama before a series of Russian audiences. Pamela Nadell works extensively with Jewish historical and community organizations and is a consultant to the permanent exhibition of the National Museum of American Jewish History. In 2008, Eric Lohr served on the advisory committee on Russian and European affairs for the

Hillary Clinton campaign for president, and was recently invited to join the prestigious Dartmouth Conference, which since 1960 has served as a bridge for scholars and prominent leaders from both the United States and the Soviet Union (now Russia) working to create better relations between the two nations. Anna Nelson, who has served as a member of the Department of State Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation and received a presidential appointment to the John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Review Board, testifies frequently on the Freedom of Information Act and access to federal records. Peter Kuznick, who directs the Department’s Nuclear Studies Institute and is frequently quoted in U.S. and Japanese media on issues relating to nuclear war, has just completed a collaboration with acclaimed film director Oliver Stone (see related article).

The same pattern of civic engagement is reflected in the presence of the department’s distinguished historians in residence: Arnita Jones is the Executive Director of the American Historical Association; Pamela Henson is director...
History and Civic Engagement
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of the Institutional History Division of the Smithsonian Institution Archives; Paul Reber is Executive Director of Stratford Hall, the home (now historic site) of the Lee Family; Albert Beveridge, the founder of one of the nation’s leading environmental law firms, is President of the George C. Marshall Foundation and serves as general counsel to the American Historical Association.

Civic engagement, the practice of scholarship in public, often collaborative settings lies at the heart of American University’s thriving Public History Program. Led by historian and curator Kathy Franz, the program admits 12-14 new students each year, students who – in addition to the Department’s regular curriculum – enroll in a series of seminars and internships at museums and historic sites. Graduates of the program find jobs in the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and at historic sites such as Mount Vernon and the Lincoln Cottage.

During the past year, Franz and other AU faculty have worked to strengthen and renew relationships with many of these important institutions. Led by Richard Breitman, the department negotiated, on behalf of the University, a Memorandum of Agreement with the National Archives and Records Administration. Through Alan Kraut’s leadership, we negotiated – again, on behalf of the University - a Memorandum of Agreement with the new National Museum of African American History, led by AU alum Lonnie G. Bunch. Under Kathy Franz’s leadership we are pursuing a series of projects with the National Park Service. (In the past, both Franz and Alan Kraut have worked closely with the National Parks, who hire more historians than any organization outside of colleges and universities.) In spring 2010, public history students will participate in a national research project on visitor experiences in the National Parks under the direction of the distinguished historian and former editor of the Journal of American History David P. Thelen. Discussions are underway with a number of other institutions, including the Museum of American History, the Smithsonian’s Lemelson Center on Invention and Innovation, the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation and Ellis Island Institute/Save Ellis Island, Inc.
Department of History News and Notes

FACULTY

Mustafa Aksakal has been awarded a John W. Kluge Fellowship for the 2009-2010 academic year. The Kluge Fellowship, administered by the Library of Congress’ John W. Kluge Center, annually recognizes scholars in the humanities and social sciences whose research makes use of the library’s large and varied collections. His research focuses on near Eastern studies, with an emphasis on the Ottoman Empire. His book, The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and the First World War, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2008. His new project is entitled, “The Ottomans in the Age of European Empire.”

Laura Beers, who joined the AU faculty this fall, earned her M.A. and PhD degrees at Harvard University. Her first book, Your Britain: Media and the Making of the Labour Party, will be published by Harvard University Press next spring. She is currently at work on a new, book-length study of the impact of the enfranchisement of women on the conduct and content of party politics in twentieth century Britain. She is also editing a volume of essays with Geraint Thomas of Emmanuel College Cambridge on the history of Britain between the Wars, provisionally titled A Brave New World: Imperial and Democratic Nation-Building in Britain Between the Wars. She has published on the role of public opinion in politics, and is working on a study of attitudes towards democracy in British politics.


Visiting Assistant Professor Anton Fedyashin has published five book reviews and two articles—one on the liberal reaction to modernization in late imperial Russia (The Historian) and one on the evolution of Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s political views (Revista de Ideas, Instituciones y Mercados). He also has a review essay coming out in the journal Kritika on contemporary Russian conservatism. Professor Fedyashin has also contributed two articles on contemporary Russia to the Newsweek/Washington Post website Postglobal and worked as an historical consultant for the Smithsonian Institution on two programs—Mystery Files: Rasputin and Mystery Files: Romanovs. This past year he presented papers at the conferences of the American Historical Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, and the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies. He has just completed his first book manuscript, entitled Liberals under Autocracy: Civil Society and Modernization in Late Imperial Russia.

Eileen Findlay is working on a book manuscript, “We Are Left Without a Father Here”; Transnational Domesticity and the Politics of Puerto Rican Labor Migration, based in mid-20th century Puerto Rico, Michigan, and New York City. She also recently finished three articles analyzing the life histories of women return migrants in Puerto Rico.

Kathleen Franz is currently co-editing Major Problems in American Popular Culture, a new volume in the Major Problems in American History series (forthcoming, 2010). She chairs the Organization of American History’s Committee on Public History, is the National Council on Public History’s delegate to the American Council of Learned Societies, and serves on a task force on tenure and promotion policies for public historians co-sponsored by the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians and the National Council of Public History. In spring 2009, she gave a presentation on public history at an international conference at the Freie University in Berlin, part of the Department’s effort to internationalize its public history program.

Robert Griffith continued as chair of the Department. He also completed his first year as Treasurer of the Organization of American Historians (OAH), and served as a member of the Middle States Accreditation Team that visited Hofstra University. He has begun work on the fourth edition of *Major Problems in American History since 1945*, co-edited with Paula Baker, with an expected publication date in 2012.

Kate Haulman’s book manuscript, “Political Modes: Fashion and Power in Eighteenth-Century America,” is currently under consideration by the University of North Carolina Press for inclusion in its Gender and American Culture series. She contributed an essay titled “Clothing and Fashion” to the eighteenth century volume of *American Centuries*. As the department’s current Patrick Clendenen Assistant Professor in Women and Gender History she has been working with colleague Pamela Nadell to secure contributors to an anthology they are co-editing, with support from the department’s Patrick Clendenen fund, on the intellectual production of women’s/gender history from the perspective of various geographically-defined fields. She is on family leave during the fall of 2009, and will spend her spring 2010 research leave completing revisions to her book and working on a new project examining the creation of a national elite in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century U.S.

Dahpon David Ho, who joined the department in Fall, 2009, describes himself as a “third-culture kid, Chinese-American, bookworm, video gamer, and amateur astronomer, boxer, and Go player.” Dahpon graduated Magna Cum Laude from Rice University with a triple major in History, Asian Studies and Economics, and is completing his doctoral degree at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD). He has held numerous fellowships while at UCSD, and won his department’s H. Stuart Hughes Prize for the Best Graduate Paper in History. In 2007-2008, he was a Fulbright Scholar in China. He has published two articles in the prestigious journals, *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* and *Modern China*, as well as a chapter in Joseph Esherick, Paul Pickowicz, and Andrew Walter, eds., *The Chinese Cultural Revolution as History* (Stanford, 2006). His dissertation is entitled, “Sealords Live in Vain: Greater Fujian and the War for a New Maritime Order in the Seventeenth Century.”

Ira Klein has submitted two essays on Indian history (“Humane Failings: Famine, Development and State Relief in Colonial India”; and “Lie Down to Die; Famine in Mysore and India 1876-78”) and has completed a third tentatively entitled “Before Global Warming and Beyond: Development and its Consequences for Environment and Health in India.” He also continues to be one of the department’s (and university’s) most active faculty leaders, chairing the Faculty Committee on Student Learning and Academic Engagement and serving on the University Undergraduate Fellowship Committee, a member of the Provost’s Round Table with Deans and Senate Committee Chairs, and on the Board of Trustees Campus Life Committee.

Alan Kraut has been named University Professor, one of the highest recognitions American University bestows upon its faculty in recognition of their achievement of distinction in research and/or teaching and/or public service, and which must come from two or more schools or colleges. Kraut was recommended by both the College of Arts and Sciences and by the School of International Service. During summer, 2009, Kraut co-directed an NEH Institute on “American Immigration Revisited” for college teachers at the Library of Congress Kluge Center. And for the 14th consecutive year, he co-directed the Civil War Institute, which included many D.C. high school history teachers. The Chair of the History Advisory Committee of the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, he was the primary history adviser on two documentary films which aired early in 2009, “Forgotten Ellis Island, The Untold Story of the Ellis Island Hospital,” and “Cinema’s Exiles: From Hitler to Hollywood.” Among his recent awards: he was elected a fellow of the Society of American Historians; he was named a Distinguished Lecturer by the Organization of American Historians (one of five AU history faculty so honored); and he was appointed a Non-Resident Fellow of the Migration Policy Institute. His book, *Covenant of Care: Newark Beth Israel and the Jewish Hospital in America* (co-authored with Deborah Kraut) was awarded the Author’s Award in Non-fiction from the New Jersey Studies Academic Alliance.

Peter Kuznick continued to lead the Department’s Nuclear Studies Institute and to be widely quoted in the U.S. and Japanese Press on issues relating to nuclear warfare. (See the related article on his collaboration with filmmaker Oliver Stone.)

Lisa Leff joins the Department from Southwestern University in Texas and Harvard University, where she was Visiting Scholar at the University’s Center for European Studies in 2008-9. Lisa
earned her B.A. at Oberlin College (1991) and her M.A. and Ph.D. at the University of Chicago (1993, 2000). She is the author of *Sacred Bonds of Solidarity: the Rise of Jewish Internationalism in Nineteenth-Century France* (Stanford University Press, 2006), and of a series of scholarly articles, including two in her field’s leading journals – *The Journal of Modern History and Jewish History*. Her new project, “Who Owns Jewish History – Archives in Transit after World War II,” promises to be an exciting work that at once encompasses Jewish, European and American history, as well as the politics of public memory. In 2007 she was awarded Southwestern University’s award for outstanding teaching.

**Andrew Lewis**’s new book, *A Democracy of Facts: Natural History in the Early American Republic* (University of Pennsylvania Press) will be published in 2010, when he will also address a conference on antiquities in 19th century America at the Huntington Library. He recently served as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Humanities judging proposals for new documentaries on early America.

In addition to working on a book on citizenship in Russian history, **Eric Lohr** served on the advisory committee on Russian and European affairs for the Hillary Clinton campaign for president, and was recently invited to join the Dartmouth Conference, a long-standing dialog working to negotiate better relations between the United States and Russia. He is also on the editorial board of a multivolume study of Russia in World War I, lead editor of a volume in the series on nationality issues, and is working on a monograph on World War I and the End of the Russian Empire, to be published by the Arnold division of Oxford University Press. He enjoys playing basketball in the noon AU faculty/staff game.

**Allan Lichtman** (see the article on the nomination of his book for the National Book Critics Circle Award) has lectured for the U.S. State Department in Russia, Slovenia, Romania, and Greece, and appears frequently on radio and television commenting on topics that include presidential politics, the Kennedy legacy, and the health care debate. He also brought out a new edition of *The Keys to the White House* (2008), in which he once again accurately predicted the outcome of the presidential election. He is currently on sabbatical leave and working on his latest book, a collaborative effort with Richard Breitman on FDR and the Jews, which is under contract with Harvard University Press.

**Pamela S. Nadell**, the Department’s Inaugural Patrick Clendenen Fellow in Women and Gender History and AU’s Director of Jewish Studies, is consulting to the permanent exhibition of the National Museum of American Jewish History. In summer 2009 she participated in the Holocaust Education Foundation’s Summer Seminar for Faculty in Eastern Europe. Her most recent book, *New Essays in American Jewish History*, which she co-edited, will appear in 2010.

**Anna Nelson** delivered a paper at the June conference of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations titled, “What Did Nixon Learn from Eisenhower.” She also contributed to a roundtable discussion of the 50 year anniversary of William Appleman Williams’ 1959 classic, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* which appeared in “Passport,” the newsletter of that organization.

**Nina S. Spiegel**, the Schusterman Teaching Fellow in Jewish Studies, holds a Ph.D. in history from Stanford University. She is currently completing a book, *The Creation of Israeli Culture: Hebrew Dance, Sports, and Beauty in the British Mandate*, which examines the evolution of Israeli culture while uncovering its connection to the country’s social and political dynamics. Her research explores topics such as Jewish public culture in the United States and Israel, the construction of memory in Jewish museums, and Jewish dance. She is teaching courses this year on the history of Israel, modern Jewish civilization, American Jewish popular culture, and the construction of memory in Jewish museums.

**Andrew Yarrow**, who in addition to teaching at AU directs the Washington office of Public Agenda, published a monograph on “The History of Federal Child Policy in the 20th Century” (First Focus), continued writing his semi-regular op-ed column for the *Baltimore Sun*, and published or has articles pending in a number of publications, including *Education Week*, *Generations, Child Development Perspectives (SRCD)*, *Perspectives in History* (AHA), the *Journal of Cold War Studies*, and the *American Political Science Review*. He continues to give talks regarding federal finances for Public Agenda and in connection with his recent book, *Forgive Us Our Debts* (Yale, 2008).

**April Shelford** is spending fall 2009 on sabbatical as a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. She is working on her new project, “A Caribbean Enlightenment.” With co-editor Donna F. Ryan of Gallaudet University, she has completed the thirty-sixth volume of the *Proceedings of the Western Society*
for French History. The Proceedings is a refereed selection of papers from last year’s conference held in Quebec; it includes twenty articles on a wide span of French history from medieval Templars and eighteenth-century merchants and artisans to Vichy collaborators and African immigrants from former French colonies. Her presentation to a conference last January on intellectual friendship, which was sponsored by the C.N.R.S., the Sorbonne, and the École Normale Supérieure, will be published in Vivre et penser l’amitié dans les sciences. De Descartes à Lévi-Strauss.

Graduate Alumni


Allison Boales (MA ’08) is working as a Content Developer for The Design Minds, an exhibition/design firm in Washington, DC.

Priya Chhaya (MA ’06) is at the Center for Preservation Leadership, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, DC.

Courtney Esposito (MA ’08) is a Program Assistant in the Institutional History Division, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.


We are sorry to report that Mary Ellen Henry (PhD, ’06) died this year of multiple myeloma. She received her Ph.D. in History in 2006, writing a dissertation on Southern poor houses under the direction of Alan Kraut.

Vincent Intondi (PhD, ’09) is Assistant Professor at Seminole State College, located in Central Florida.

Amy Johnson (MA ’08) is a doctoral candidate in American Civilization at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.

Stephanie Massaro (MA ’09) is an Archivist with the National Park Service, Washington, DC.

Linda Neylon is Assistant Program Director for Education at the Eastern Penitentiary Museum in Philadelphia, Pa.

Meghan Rafferty (MA ’09) is an Historic Interpreter at George Washington’s Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens, Va.

Matthew Ringelstetter (MA, 2008) is the new web education specialist at the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Ann Rush (PhD, 2004) has accepted a contract from Oxford University Press, which will publish her book, Bonds of Empire: West Indians and Britishness from Victoria to Decolonization in late 2010 or early 2011. Moving from the heights of empire in 1900 to the independence era of the 1960s, Bonds of Empire examines the daily lives of middle-class West Indians in the Caribbean, as well as in Britain, using sources that focus on education, voluntary organization, wartime participation, radio broadcasting, and British royalty. It argues that West Indians used their understanding of Britishness first to establish a place for themselves in the imperial world and then to negotiate the challenges of decolonization. They thus participated in a complex process of cultural transition – a struggle to re-define Britishness and their relationship to it – not only as Caribbean peoples but also as Britons.

Travis Shaw (MA, 2009), very narrowly missed winning on Jeopardy in summer, 2009, works as an interpreter at George Washington’s Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens.

Heath Twichell (PhD, 1971) is now living in Portsmouth, RI, and is teaching at the Naval War College. A retired army colonel and self-described “semi-retired college professor,” Heath is the author of two books, Allen: The Biography of an Army Officer; 1859-1930 (Rutgers, 1975), which won the American Historical Association’s Allan Nevins Prize; and Northwest Epic: the Building of the Alaska Highway (St. Martin’s, 1992), based on his Army Engineer father’s letters home during WWII. The latter became the basis for a 2005
episode of Ken Burns’ American Experience. “Uncle Sam sent me to AU in 1962 to get an MA so I could teach Modern European History at West Point for three years,” he reports. “What a life-changing experience that turned out to be!”

Cassie Ward (MA ’09) is a Program Assistant with Heritage Education Services, National Park Service, Washington, DC.


Undergraduate Alumni

Laura E. O’Friel was last year’s winner of the Janet Oppenheim Prize for the department’s best senior thesis, “Answering the Pretender’s Declaration: The Impact of the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion on British Identity in Colonial Maryland and Pennsylvania.” Laura, who will complete her M.A. degree in secondary-school teaching at AU this coming December, was one of the co-winners (with Alise Smith and Emily Feldstein) of this year’s Dorothy Gondos Beers Scholarship; she graduated summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, and with University Honors and plans to pursue a career as a high-school history teacher.

Francis (Frankie) Martin (BA, 2006) accompanied renowned Islamic Scholar Akbar Ahmed on a trip to explore the Muslim presence in America. A documentary film based on this trip, A Journey into America, has just been released. An excerpt from an interview with Noam Chomsky featured in the film can also be found in Martin’s recent article in The Guardian on American identity and the Fourth of July.

David Moak (CAS ’08) began his doctoral studies in history in fall 2009 at Johns Hopkins University, where he is studying eighteenth-century French history and has been awarded the George Owen Fellowship. Born in Wilmington, Delaware, David spent many vacations visiting France with his family. At AU, he double-majored in history and economics, and was twice awarded undergraduate research grants for archival work in Britain and France. His History major seminar paper, “Exciting Emulation in the Academies,” won the Department’s Janet Oppenheim Prize for best senior thesis, and David also walked off with the AU award for Outstanding Undergraduate Scholarship. At AU David was the General Education Faculty Assistant for the course “Ancient and Medieval Jewish Civilization,” and he spent the summer after graduation in Warsaw as an American Jewish Committee Goldman Fellow working for the Forum for Dialogue among Nations.

Peter Muller (BA, 2005) has been photographing and filming the dangerous work of landmine removal in northern Uganda. National Geographic Glimpse has just released a video that features his work on mine clearance and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) disposal in northern Uganda. Danish Demining Group, a subdivision of the Danish Refugee Council, has also posted two audio slide shows that he has created. Peter can be contacted at petemullerphotography.com.

Taunton Paine (BA, 2009) has been admitted to the London School of Economics – Columbia University Double Degree in International and World History, a two year M.A. program. Students split their time between London and New York City.

Dan Quinley (BA, 2009) was accepted into the Masters program on “War in the Modern World” at Kings College London.

Michelle Risinger (BA, 2007), completed her second tour as a Red Cross worker in Iraq. She was awarded the Ernest L Ransome Scholarship for a one year Master’s degree program at the University of St Andrews in Scotland.

Alise Smith (BA, 2009), won a Fulbright Fellowship to study in France for the 2009-2010 academic year, and has deferred her admission to the Ph.D program in history at University of Minnesota, where she received a university-level fellowship. While at AU Alise interned and worked on public history projects at leading D.C. institutions, including the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the National Museum of American History, President Lincoln’s Cottage, and Arlington National Cemetery. A member of Phi Beta Kappa and the recipient of the Department of History’s Dorothy Gondos Beers award for outstanding scholarship, Alise is currently spending nine months in France as a Fulbright scholar researching Holocaust memory and memorial museums. In fall 2010 she will begin doctoral studies at the University of Minnesota, focusing on American Indian history and historical memory.

Current Graduate Students

Rod Coeller was awarded the Roget Brown Fellowship for 2009-10, to support his study of radicalized evangelical missionaries in Central America in the 1970s and 1980s. In June, 2009, Rod delivered a paper, “Going Native: Radicalized Evangelical Missionaries in Central
America during the 1970s and 1980s” at the annual meeting of the Society for the History of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR).

**Amanda Harrison** received a prestigious Scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for intensive language study at the Goethe Institute in Germany. Amanda previously spent a year in Poland, pursuing studies in Polish, German and Eastern European Studies.

At the end of August **Stephanie Jacobe** completed a two-month dissertation research fellowship at the Frick Collection in New York. Stephanie will be speaking about her summer research at the Frick’s Fellow’s Forum on November 17th at 4 pm, which is open to the public. She will be back in New York doing further research during the month of November this time in residence at the New York Historical Society on a fellowship from the Gilder Lehrman Institute. Stephanie is also giving a paper at a conference entitled “The Art, Architecture, and Literature of the Gilded Age” being held at Salve Regina University in Newport, RI on October 15-17, 2009.

**Alexandra Lohse** was awarded the Richard and Carol Breitman Fellowship for 2009-10.

**Shannon Mohan** published “‘Memorandum for Mr. Bundy’: Henry Kissinger as Consultant to the Kennedy National Security Council” in *The Historian* 71 (Summer 2009): 234-257.

In Spring 2009, **Erica Munkwitz** was awarded a Robyn Rafferty Mathias International Travel Grant, which allowed her to pursue research for her dissertation at the British Library, where she consulted rare sources on equestrian sports such as riding manuals, treatises on habit-tailoring, popular broadsides, and other exceptional materials, and at the Royal Mews (stables), where she talked with staff about riding and keeping horses in urban settings as well as the history of royal participation in all types of equestrian activities. Erica has been admitted to a Fall, 2009 seminar at the prestigious Folger Institute of Washington, where she and other faculty and graduate students will study with Robert Travers on “India in British Political Thought, c. 1600-1800.”

**Bethany Power**’s paper, “Food Fight: Fighting for America through the National School Lunch Program,” was named the best paper by a Graduate Student in the Arts and Humanities at the 19th Annual Robyn Rafferty Mathias Student Research Conference.

**Holly Scott** will be presenting a paper on “The Case of the Forgotten Themes: Nancy Drew’s Lessons on Culture,” at the annual meeting of the American Studies Association, which will be held in Washington in early November.

**Sarah Thelen** won a travel grant from the Lyndon Baines Johnson Foundation for research at the LBJ Presidential Library. She delivered two papers: “Silent No Longer: Identity, the Silent Majority and Nixon’s Vietnam War,” at the War and American Identity Conference, University College, Dublin (March 2009), and “Telling it to Hanoi: The Nixon Administration and Domestic Support for the Vietnam War, 1969-1974,” at Queen Mary University, London (March 2009). She is a co-organizer of a panel accepted for the 2010 meeting of the American Historical Association, where her paper will be: “Give War a Chance: The Nixon Administration and Domestic Support for the Vietnam War, 1968-1973.”

In a very busy year, **Rob Williams** delivered papers on “Word Wars: The Postwar German Press and the Development of Cold War Rhetoric in the American and Soviet Zones of Occupation, 1945-1947,” at the Thirty-Third Annual Conference of the German Studies Association; on “Survivors and Victims in the Frankfurt Press: The Development and Re-Development of the Frankfurter Rundschau, 1945-1949” at the annual meeting of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations; on “Germanophiles and Germanophobes: Similarities and Differences in the Personnel and Messages of Soviet and American Newspapers in the Occupation of Germany,” at the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association Conference; and on “Survivors and Victims in the Postwar German Press: The Personnel and Content of the early Frankfurter Rundschau” at Millersville University’s 29th Annual Conference on the Holocaust and Genocide. In addition, he chaired two panels and wrote a 3,500-page archival finding aid to the International Tracing Service collection at United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Current Undergraduate Students

Abigail Kret received a CAS undergraduate research award to research the history of the State Department’s traveling exhibit program in the Soviet Union.

William Zeman won a highly-competitive Critical Language Scholarship for Turkish language study this summer in Istanbul, Turkey. He will also be studying abroad in Turkey during the academic year 2009–10 at Koc University.

Recent Department Events

Former A.H.A. President Delivers Hewlett Lecture: In November, the Department of History hosted the Society for History in the Federal Government’s annual Richard G. Hewlett Lecture. Last year, the Hewlett lecture was delivered by AU’s Richard Breitman. This year’s lecture was delivered by William Roger Louis, the Kerr Professor of English History and Culture at the University of Texas and one of the nation’s most distinguished scholars. A former President of the American Historical Association, Professor Louis spoke of his role as former Chairman of the Historical Advisory Committee, U.S. Department of State.

Mel Urofsky Introduces His New Biography: On October 14, the distinguished constitutional historian (and American University Historian in Residence) Melvin Urofsky gave a talk in the Battelle Tompkins Atrium on Louis D. Brandeis: A Life (Pantheon, 2009), his new biography of the Supreme Court Justice.

One of the most important figures in American legal history, Brandeis helped invent the modern law firm with its collection of specialists in different areas of the law. He pioneered, among other innovations, the idea of pro bono legal practice. An economist and expert on banking and business consolidation, he was a driving force behind such progressive era reforms as the Federal Reserve Act, the Clayton Antitrust Act, and the Federal Trade Commission. He is credited with being the first to incorporate empirical data into his arguments, rather than relying solely on precedent and legal theory, the so-called “Brandeis Brief.”

The first full-scale biography of Brandeis in twenty-five years, Urofsky’s new book has been described as “a comprehensive biography of an American legal giant [that is] likely to become the standard biography... An authoritative, impressive assessment of a man whose legal reasoning continues to influence our republic.

Urofsky, whose talk was co-sponsored by the Department of History, the Jewish Studies Program, the School of Public Affairs, and the Washington College of Law, has written, edited, or co-edited more than forty books, and is professor of law and public policy at Virginia Commonwealth, where he also directed the Center for Public Policy.

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