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Message from the Chair



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This second newsletter of the Department of History is devoted to the inner workings of the department, and most specifically, the perspectives of our capable office staff and two of our students. An academic department--like any other unit where people work together--is the sum of its parts, and we are very fortunate to have an exceptional office staff working along with an excellent group of teacher-scholars to teach our more than 500 majors and graduate students and thousands of students pursuing their general education goals as well as elective courses. At this time of the year, I look back in gratitude for all that our staff, faculty, and students have contributed to making our department meet its core functions of providing excellent undergraduate and graduate education as well as outreach to the greater Charlotte community, and engaging in cutting-edge historical research in fulfilling these core functions.

In fulfilling these core functions, our department--along with the entire university--has needed to contend with the effects of the most serious economic crisis since the Great

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Depression. Our enrollment growth has outpaced the university's resources, leading to larger sections and frustration among students who hunt for available space in courses required for graduation. Replacing vacant faculty positions has been a particular challenge, as the UNC system has absorbed cuts in excess of 20 percent over the past three fiscal years, including 2011-2012, even as undergraduate enrollment continues to increase. While we have been fortunate to have been authorized to hire four faculty members during that time (including an assistant professor in colonial Latin American history for whom we are conducting recruitment at the moment), we have not been able to recruit replacements for several faculty members. We also know that our students--both graduate and undergraduate--have found this time a tremendous financial challenge, as tuition has increased along with unemployment in the Charlotte area, which affects both our students looking for part-time work and our graduates looking to begin their careers.

Regardless of these challenges, we have much to celebrate as the year 2011 comes to a close. Over the past year, five faculty members in the department authored books, and three of them--Karen Cox, David Goldfield, and Cheryl Hicks--received national recognition or awards for their work. Two of our graduate students published articles in professional journals; a rare accomplishment for scholars at the very beginning of their careers. The department welcomes three new faculty members in Fall 2011: Maren Ehlers, an assistant professor and a specialist in Japanese history with a Ph.D. from Princeton University; Jill Massino, an assistant professor and an expert in gender and Eastern European history with a Ph.D. from the University of Indiana; and Louise Gammons, a lecturer and Ph.D. candidate from Emory University who teaches colonial Latin American history on a one-year appointment. We also welcome Dr. Miriam Jorge from the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, who is spending the academic year in our department on a Fulbright fellowship and who will teach a summer course for us. And we graduated a record number of undergraduate and graduate students in both History and Latin American Studies.

I wish you all a peaceful and relaxing holiday season and a happy New Year 2012.

Jurgen Buchenau

Faculty Newswire

Dr. Cheryl Hicks is the 2011 recipient of the Letta Woods Brown Award for her book *Talk With You Like A Woman: African American Women, Justice and Reform in New York, 1920-1935*. This important honor is awarded annually by the Association of Black Women Historians. Dr. Hicks' work also received honorable mention for the Darlene Clark Hines Award as well as the John Hope Franklin Publication Prize.

The National Endowment for the Humanities has announced that **Dr. Carol Higham** has been named Co-Director of the Summer Scholars Institute taking place at Calvin College from June 24 through July 14, 2011. The Institute will focus upon reconsidering the uniqueness and nature of the U.S. frontiers and closely associated ideas of American "exceptionalism."

Drs. Jurgen Buchenau, Department Chair, **James Hogue**, and **Jerry Dávila** attended The International Congress on Military History in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from August 2, through September 2, 2011. Dr. Buchenau presented a paper entitled "The Mexican Military and the Forging of the Post-revolutionary State, 1920-1932." Dr. Dávila presented a paper highlighting The "Angolan Decolonization and the Brazilian Connection." Dr. Hogue attended as Vice President of the U.S. Commission on Military History and a representative to the Bibliography on Military History.

Dr. David Goldfield was the keynote speaker at East Tennessee State's commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War. On October 23rd Dr. Goldfield gave a talk at the Texas Book Festival regarding his new book *America Aflame* and later that day was interviewed by NPR's Dave Davies.



WTVI aired two documentary films written and produced by **Dr. Dan Morrill**. The first entitled "Death at Mann Gulch: The Story of Silas Raymond Thompson, Jr." chronicles the tragic death of a Charlottean during a Western Montana Wildfire. The second, "Rural Mecklenburg: A Vanishing Way of Life" describes the important rural landmarks in Mecklenburg County as well as the nature of social life on farms in the mid-1900's. Additionally, Dr. Morrill has two films in production. "From Billy to Will: The Journey of a Bi-Polar Artist" tells the story of noted North Carolina folk artist William H. Armstrong, Jr. and will be premiered at the opening exhibit of Armstrong's work at the Hickory Museum of History in May, 2012. Another documentary illuminates the history and development potential of the Beatties Ford Rd.-West Trade St. Corridor. The film focuses upon its involvement in the Civil Rights movement.

The Recipient of the Thornton Mitchell Award from The Society of North Carolina Archivists is **Dr. John David Smith**.

At year's end **Dr. Bruce Travis** is publishing an article entitled: "Le califat mediterraneen de Denia" in *Revue des mondes musulmans de la Mediterranee*. 130 (2011): 71-84.



Dr. Mark Wilson and his work *The Business of the Civil War* was mentioned in the Sunday Edition, October 9, 2011 in *The Washington Post's* article "In Washington, Raising an Army of Bureaucrats."



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Department of History Announces the Appointment of Dr. Haynes

The UNC Charlotte Department of History is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Christine Haynes to the position of Director of Graduate Studies. Dr. Haynes grew up in small towns in Mid-West America and earned her undergraduate degree in history and French at the University of Michigan. She attended the University of Chicago where she received an M.A. (1995) and Ph.D. (2001). Subsequently, Dr. Haynes spent a year as a post-doctoral fellow at Cornell University. Joining the UNC Charlotte faculty in the fall of 2002, she published *Lost Illusions: The Politics of Publishing in Nineteenth Century France* (Harvard University Press: 2010) and has begun research for a new book highlighting the first Allied

Occupation of France, by the British, Russians, Prussians and Austrians, for three years following the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815.

As Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Haynes goal is to “build on the strengths of our master’s program, by identifying recruiting, and mentoring students in our areas of focus, especially Southern history, military history, industry and environment, Latin American history, and public history.” Ultimately, Dr. Haynes’ mission is to “find the best students possible and shepherd them through their coursework and thesis or exam, successfully and expeditiously.” Dr. Haynes is the mother of two sons, ages seven and four and in her free time she enjoys reading, cooking, running, and travel.

The Department would like to extend its sincere thanks to Dr. Gregory Mixon for three years of diligent work as Director of Graduate Studies.



60 Seconds with an Alumna

Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, MA, 1985

Hometown:

Greensboro, NC

Degrees:

Wake Forest University, BA 1970;
UNC Charlotte, MA, 1985; UNC-
Chapel Hill, PhD 1992

Current Position:

Peter V. and C. Vann Woodward
Professor of History, African American
Studies, and American Studies

What is your fondest memory at UNC Charlotte's Department?

My fondest memory is happened one evening after class when David Goldfield

came up to me in the hall and said, "you know, you should get a PhD."

What is your favorite hangout on the UNC Charlotte campus?

My favorite hangout was the office that I shared with two other grad students. We taught lecture classes during our second year, talked about our work, and generally thought about history.

What was your most important academic lesson learned at UNC Charlotte?

The most important academic lesson I learned at UNC Charlotte was that writing is a craft that one works at, not a gift that one taps. I couldn't write very well when I came to UNC Charlotte. I learned the rules, listened to my critics, and improved.

What do you find never ending inspiration in?

My graduate students inspire me. I've directed 26 dissertations and am currently directing 10 more. Each one has been an exciting intellectual journey, and I've learned so much from my students.

What are three words that describe you?

Three words that describe me are: self-description isn't my strong point. I'll describe my work in three words: narrative, passionate, and (sometimes) outraged.

What do you do when your not working?

When I'm not working I'm hanging out with my three (almost) adult children or spending time at our home on the Beara Peninsula in Ireland.

What do you still wish you could learn?

I still want to learn how to become more articulate when I write about works of art. I'm writing about the artist Romare Bearden. And I want to learn to dance the Connemara Set, one of the most complicated Irish set dances.

What are five random facts about you?

Five random facts about me:

- I love Irish dancing.
- I'm never happier than when I'm in the archives.
- I consume mystery novels like popcorn and read poetry each morning.
- My family is international and interracial.
- Since my Australian husband is an historian of Southeast Asia, we travel to those far away places.

We would like to get to know our alumni better! In each edition of the Newsletter we will spend a minute (or so) with an alum from a random area of the world.

Will you be next?



L. Robbins (L), L. Smith (C), S. Beckhart (R)

The Beating Heart of the Department of History

It is difficult to establish what attributes merge to assemble a top-notch administrative team. Experts have discovered that a team which is results oriented, self managed, goal oriented, personally accountable, flexible, resilient, and self starting are the most successful. The Department of History is fortunate because our administrative team, led by Office Manager Linda Smith, symbolizes all of these qualities. They are the veritable "beating heart of the Department."

Linda has headed the team for over two years and oversees the Department's entire administrative operation. She has an extensive accounting, business administration, and corporate office management background. Additionally, her responsibilities include financial accounting, personnel, and facilities management. Linda's objective is to create an office environment "regardless of the immense activity which faculty

and students alike enjoy being a part of." Linda is ably assisted by Leigh Robbins, a department team member for two years and a graduate of University of North Carolina at Greensboro where she majored in English.

Leigh functions as the liaison between the department's faculty and students, prepares supply requisitions as well as maintains the Department's website. In her spare time she enjoys reading, writing, and running and is a volunteer at The Relatives, a crisis housing shelter for children ages 7-17.

Another Team member is Sarah Beckhart who hails from Mexico City and is the Department's Graduate Assistant. Her overall responsibilities include assisting Linda and Leigh with administrative tasks including organizing and maintaining the Department's extensive filing system. Sarah is a first year graduate student and is a Latin American historian.

Faculty and students would like to extend a sincere thank you to our administrative team. They work quietly and efficiently behind the scenes ensuring that the Department runs smoothly. Voltaire wrote; "Appreciation is a wonderful thing. It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well."

The University Outside the University



Drs. J. Buchenau (L), Dr. J. Hogue (C), J. Dávila (R)

Dr. James Hogue conducted a class field trip to King's Mountain National Park, King's Mountain, S.C. on Saturday, October 8, 2011. More than twenty members of Dr. Hogue's "American Military History" class enjoyed a day of spectacular Carolina autumn weather touring the battlefield historians have described as one of the crucial turning points in the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution. Additionally, the students toured the museum, watched local enactors' fire period weapons and reconnoitered the battlefield. Lively discussion continued as the students feasted upon barbeque supplied by Grandma Hoyt's Country Buffet in Bessemer City, N.C. The barbeque restaurant is owned and operated by the family of Eddie Hoyt, a member of the class.

Drs. Jurgen Buchenau, James Hogue, and Jerry Dávila visited the 19th Century Imperial Palace in Petropolis, Brazil while attending the International Congress on Military History in Rio de Janeiro in August, 2011.



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An Undergraduate Student's Perspective

As the end of my undergraduate years draws to a close, I cannot help but feel apprehensive regarding my professional and personal life. The past four years have been a vast departure my early years. Throughout middle school through high school I could safely rely on the next stage of my life being static and somewhat guaranteed. However, as the unpredictability of life ebbs and flows, I find myself looking back upon my experiences, decisions and personal evolution during my tenure at UNC Charlotte.

My decision to attend UNC Charlotte was simplified because of UNC Charlotte's exemplary reputation for scholastic excellence and due to the fact that my older brother was a student in the Department of History. I began my freshman year in fall of 2007,

unsure of my course of study as well as the social aspects of university life. To my surprise, I immediately made a dozen friends due to the friendly, open atmosphere UNC Charlotte offers to the student body. During a fast paced sophomore year I decided to be a history major. I distinctly remember the sage advice of a family friend; "study something you love and enjoy." Circuitously, I chose history as my major because it is very much a scientific pursuit. Like sciences, history requires the formulation of a hypothesis and subsequently supported by empirical data. The most interesting aspect regarding the study of history is the various lenses one must utilize to interpret the past. I have discovered that as a historian, one must be cautious not to view historical data clouded by the lens of modern mores and social standards, lest to be accused of revisionism.

The beginning of my senior year witnessed the addition of German as a supplementary course of study. As I studied I discovered the intrinsic value of studying a foreign language in relation to my work as a historian. Obviously, my German studies involve practical language, but also the acculturation of German society which greatly enhances the understanding of vast accumulation of German historical data. The intersection of the two disciplines thoroughly lends itself to a better understanding of my overall studies and research. For example, my Senior Seminar focuses upon the "Blood-lands" during of World War II and how Stalin and Hitler's ideological processes impacted the region. My study of German philosophy interestingly contrasts and compares Nietzsche, Freud and Marx. These course studies highlight the rationale for Hitler's actions which he justified through the works of Nietzsche's *Will To Power*, as well as Stalin's defense of his actions through the writings of

Karl Marx. To advance my academic and research skills, I plan to attend the Goethe institute of Berlin this summer and thus gain a firmer grasp on Germanic language and culture.

For the past two years I have served as the president of UNC Charlotte's Collegiate Historical Societies'. Our mission has been to endow undergraduates an opportunity to share ideas and historical data germane to our research and studies. As an enhancement, the organization has conducted many field trips, community service projects and participated in National History Day. During my senior year, I have discovered that I have narrowed my focus upon the merging and interaction of the humanities and technology. As technology continues to expand in every aspect of humanity, all of the earth's inhabitants will be affected by social, political and economic upheavals occurring within our interconnected worldwide environment.

The approaching end of my time as an undergraduate is slightly unnerving; however the years I have spent at UNC Charlotte have prepared me to face the challenges of life during uncertain times. I find myself rather sad that my undergraduate years at UNC Charlotte are coming to an end. I now have two life altering choices; Graduate school or employment. I feel that often the study of history maligned as a viable option in securing employment. However, I find the interpretation of the past is becoming more applicable as humanities and technology combine to shape the future. Regardless of my next challenge my study of technology changes and their historical impact on mankind at UNC Charlotte has given me the knowledge and strength to enter the next phase of my life.

MATTHEW MOOSA



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A Graduate Student's Perspective

I am a first year graduate student at UNC Charlotte from Mexico City, Mexico. Although I have only been a graduate student for about two months, my tired eyes from numbers of pages of reading make me feel like I have been a graduate student forever. However, the passion and energy felt when reading about subjects I love outweighs the exhaustion of reading about it. Central to understanding the sense of zeal ignited when reading in excess hundred of pages, is the reason I chose to come to graduate school in the first place.

I should begin by saying that my focus and love for history comes from my homeland. I am studying Latin American history at UNC Charlotte, with a focus on Mexican material cultural history in the 1950-60s. Mexico and its history took on personal meaning when I moved

away from Mexico City to go to college in London. I found that the way to avoid missing home was to read, write and talk about Mexico. These activities fostered a sense of being close to home and catalyzed my interest in Mexican history. The following summer, as I sat in the Modern Mexican History Graduate Seminar at the Oaxaca Summer Institute XI (OSI) I quickly realized how little I knew about Mexican History. The OSI provided the opportunity to learn about Mexico from the perspective of academics and scholars in the U.S. Not only did I realize that I knew very little about Mexico, but I also realized that Mexican culture was as foreign as these academics were to Mexico.

Since igniting my passion for Mexican cultural history, I have dedicated my professional life to discover what it means to be Mexican. The OSI motivated me to pursue a Senior Thesis while at Franklin & Marshall College, carrying out my research in Mexico City. The purpose of the study was to explore, through architecture, how Mexicans shape their own history. I chose to study the Torre Latinoamericana in Mexico City, Mexico's tallest building until 1972, built from 1948 to 1956. I explored the ways the Torre became a symbol and conduit for a popular response to the mid-19th century modernization period termed the "Mexican Miracle." The Torre was a privately constructed architectural project. Mexicans embraced the Torre as a de facto public architectural symbol. Through the use of intensive primary and secondary research I show how the Torre helped Mexicans and foreigners re-imagine Mexico City and Mexico as a modern nation. The revealing evidence from observers allowed me to access the tensions inherent in the Mexican Miracle period: between an enthusiasm for the "new Mexico," and on the other hand, a brewing resentment

to the regime's authoritarian practices and growing disparities in development priorities. I took pleasure in the ability to conduct research that revealed a new level of complexity to mexicanidad, as represented in the Torre. My curiosity for the complexity of mexicanidad enticed me to further explore the tensions inextricably linked to Mexicans' perception of themselves that prevail. My first venture into historical research gave me the necessary skills to conduct quality research at the graduate level.

My experience at UNC Charlotte thus far has only encouraged my love for history and Mexico. Although not all professors in the department focus on Mexico, all of the professors constantly revitalize my enthusiasm for history. The friendliness and motivation kindled by the professors fosters, not only a provocative work environment, but also, and more importantly, a strong sense of community. Working in the history department has allowed me to observe the ways that the professors interact with each other. As a result, I feel comfortable knowing that the cosmos of the history faculty and staff is welcoming to all new students. This is exemplified by the students in the history department who work closely and contribute to one another's ideas for thesis and/or other research projects. The student body of the graduate history department is stimulating and receptive to ideas and others passions. The best way to describe the student body in the history department would be in one word: community.

Overall, my experience as a graduate student, albeit short, has been sweet. I am excited to pursue my thrill for Mexican history and look forward to working with more of the professors, staff and students in the history department.

SARAH BECKHART

“Us and “Them”



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My educational experience is aptly described by Eli Khamarov in America Explained! as: “I guess I’ve spent my life listening to what wasn’t said.” Being an admitted late bloomer, I recently reflected upon my many years in school and discovered that in adolescence I cloaked myself in the mantle of the rebel, a highly unskilled educational renegade. Being highly

impressionable to the messages of mid-century cinema, during the sixth grade I swept my hair back in a pompadour to channel my idol James Dean, much to the dismay of my parents. This immediately guaranteed my membership into an exclusive alliance of boys who I will call “us.” Like our idol Dean, we were dedicated to initiating an insurgency against “them”...our teachers and the so-called “smart” kids. One might say we were involved in a struggle for educational supremacy, or lack thereof.

As my high school years beckoned, the Cuban Revolution hit the Western Hemisphere like a veritable political cannon ball. I and my compatriots now had genuine rebels to emulate. Fortunately for me, Randy Simon, an older kid in the neighborhood, assumed the identity of Fidel, complete with the resplendent Castro beard, as I transformed myself into Che’ Guevara of the “us and them” movement. Alas, the local Kresge Department Store did not stock berets, being pre-pubescent I could not grow a beard, and my parents would not allow

me to smoke cigars like the Cuban revolutionaries. Nevertheless, our insurgency had somehow stumbled upon an ideological basis. The problem that presented itself was that I could not forego my weekly allowance of \$1.25 to ascend to theoretical purity. Thus I became a “closet capitalist.” In my heart of hearts I knew Che’ would understand and that soon I would overcome such obstacles. The insurgency to attain mediocrity continued unabated. We slashed and burned our way through high school chanting the slogan “Homework...what’s that?” Many of us actually graduated and through some quirk of fate, I was accepted to college.

Those eight years went by like the “blink of an eye” and it was relatively easy to find idols to replace James and Che’. The Age of Aquarius ushered in the era of John Lennon and the Beatles and subsequently we became the quintessential rebels...Hippies. Lennon’s song Imagine became our anthem: “Imagine there’s no teachers, it isn’t hard to do. No tests or homework and no essays too.” Oddly enough, we/“us” did not realize that our idols were highly educated individuals. James Dean was a exceedingly skilled actor, Fidel earned a Ph.D., Che’ was a physician, and John Lennon was an accomplished author and artist. As it turned out, they were actually “them.” This epiphany did not strike me until I was a student in the Department of History Graduate Studies Program at UNC Charlotte and brilliant educators like Drs. Peter Thorsheim, Gregory Mixon, and Jim Hogue enlightened me to the premise that there is no substitution for hard work. It was like being hit by a bolt of lightning. Suddenly, through excellence in graduate education I joined the ranks of “them” where I reside to this day. I must admit that every once in a while.....

Patrick J. Pelosi, Editor

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The History Department needs your help in fulfilling our core functions of providing excellent undergraduate and graduate education as well as outreach to the greater Charlotte community, and engaging in cutting-edge historical research. You may pay by check by printing, completing, and mailing this form along with a check payable to the UNC Charlotte Foundation.

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