



# History Newsletter

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## *Chair's Corner*

Teresa Meade

This is my first term as chair of the history department and I must admit I have developed a great deal of admiration for Professors Berk, Wells and Sargent, all of whom have served in this job during my time here at Union College. Professor Sargent in particular has been very helpful in guiding me through the ins and outs of my new job. Since the position as chair of the department passes from one to another of us as we reach a certain time (and age!), I will try to hold things together until I pass the torch to another of my colleagues in a few years.

I thought that I might use this opportunity to let some of you know what a department chair does (and believe me, I'm still finding this out!) As far as I can tell, I am the person who oversees the curriculum, making sure that we have an adequate number of courses spread out over the 100, 200, 300 and above levels, that there are sufficient professors to teach those classes (requesting that the College hire visiting and part-time faculty to fill in gaps when faculty members go on leave, on sabbatical, or have course releases to carry out other jobs at the College).

The chair signs up every new major and minor, all of whom are then sent to see Jane Earley, our very able department secretary, who adds the student's name to the list so that you can receive this newsletter and all other notices from the department. As chair, I make sure that everyone has an advisor, is on track to complete the

requirements for graduation, sign off on requests for money to sponsor events on campus and to pay for faculty travel to conferences, manage the budget, and tie up whatever loose ends crop up in day-to-day life. Therefore, come by to see me if I can answer questions or be of assistance.

This is a particularly interesting year in the history department because of the changes in the General Education curriculum. No longer is every entering student required to take a history survey course, as had been the case for the last 18 years, matching the particular survey track with civilization and literature courses. Instead students take a required Sophomore Research Seminar or SRS (half of which are taught by history department faculty), in addition to the First Year Preceptorial. Introductory history classes are now offered in a wide range of topics, including courses on Africa, the Middle East, East Asia, and different periods of European, US and Latin American history. We have noted that those introductory courses, while no longer required, have remained very popular with the incoming classes. We are very busy this fall, which suits us fine!

Last Spring the department saw the retirement of Erik Hansen, who taught many, many students over his 40-plus years as an anchor in the European and world history programs. He is enjoying his well-earned retirement immensely.



We have welcomed Brian Peterson in an Africanist position. It has been nearly 20 years since the department had a full time historian of African history and we are extremely happy to have Professor Peterson join our department.

In addition to now offering courses in African history, we have initiated a mini-term (Nov. 24-Dec. 16) to Cape Town, South Africa. Twenty-two students, predominantly history majors, and I will be studying South African history from the pre-colonial and colonial periods, the apartheid and the post-apartheid eras, at the University of Cape Town. We hope to have photos for the next newsletter and a report on our adventures when we return in the winter.



Also we are delighted to have Patrick Singy teaching two new courses in the department this year: History of Sexuality this fall and History of Psychology in the winter.

Finally, the history department is very fortunate to have added David Baum as a full time member of the department for the next few years, and hopefully beyond. Professor Baum who many of you know as an exceedingly skilled teacher of European history will be adding management of the history department web page and oversight of the new SRS's to his teaching responsibilities. He has begun work updating the web page, adding colorful graphics, more information on the goings on of the department, and will hopefully be posting photos from the mini-terms in Cape Town and Jamaica when he returns in the winter term.

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## *Up Coming Event*

On January 11, 2007 the history department will be showing the Irish film, "The Wind that Shakes the Barley" in the Reamer Campus Center auditorium.



The film, which stars Killian Murphy and is directed by Ken Loach, won the Palme D'Or (Best Picture) at the 2006 Cannes Film Festival. Introducing the film at Union College will be Donal O'Driscoll, Professor of History from University College, Cork, Ireland. Professor O'Driscoll was the chief historical consultant on the film.

The movie, "The Wind that Shakes the Barley," takes place in Ireland in 1920. It tells the story of workers from the country and towns who unite to form a volunteer guerrilla army to face the ruthless "Black and Tan" squads who were shipped from Britain to block Ireland's bid for independence. The Irish patriots formed the backbone of the Irish Republican Army, a force that overturned British colonialism and founded the Irish Free State.

Watch for flyers and information on this exciting event!

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## *Faculty News*

**Andrea Foroughi:** This is the inaugural term of the new Sophomore Research Seminar. In my "Was the Civil War civil?: Race, Gender, and Sexuality", the SRS'ers have begun selecting topics related to these themes and digging into primary and secondary sources. I am also engaged in a project related to the American Civil War and gender. In November, I'll be presenting my paper "Father Abraham & Mammy Lincoln; Auntie Abe & Uncle Abe: Gender Embodied in Civil War Cartoons of Abraham Lincoln" at a symposium on the Civil War press in Chattanooga, TN (and we'll be touring battlefields!). This winter I'll be teaching the History of Women's Rights in the United States (HST 312), in which we explore women's citizenship and legal status from colonial era adultery and property disputes, to labor activism and suffrage, to rights to one's body and military service.

**Melinda Lawson:** I spent this past summer working on a new research project on slavery. I was assisted in this by my research assistant, Erumi

Honda. This fall I am teaching African-American History 1 and a Sophomore Research Seminar on African-American Protest Movements. Both are new courses for me at Union, and I am very much enjoying them. I am applying the finishing touches to an article for a book titled *Contested Democracy*, to be published in 2007 by Columbia University Press. My reading for this fall includes a book on Civil War political culture, which I am reviewing for the *American Historical Review*.

**Joyce Madancy:** I am spending a relaxing but productive fall term on sabbatical leave, working on several projects at home, in Schaffer Library, and in other libraries and archives (and advising several thesis students). Hopefully, several articles and perhaps the beginnings of a book manuscript will result. I'll be back in the classroom in the winter term, teaching The Last Dynasty, my course on the Qing Dynasty, as well as a new Sophomore Research Seminar on Drugs and Cultures.

**Andrew Morris:** I am taking my junior sabbatical over the course of this year, with a reduced load in the fall and spring. I am finishing my book manuscript, tentatively titled *The Limits of Voluntarism: Charity and Welfare from the New Deal through the Great Society*, which focuses on the role that voluntary organizations have played in the 20<sup>th</sup> century American welfare system. I hope to have it under review by a publisher by the time this newsletter is printed. I will also be working on developing my new sophomore seminar on Japanese-American internment during World War Two, which I will teach for the first time during the Winter 2007 term.

I have also been working in my spare time on reviving a project to preserve the old Erie Canal Lock 23, just west of the city in Rotterdam.



This effort was started several years ago by Union College civil engineering faculty and students, but has been dormant since the elimination of that department. I organized a clean-up day in the spring

of 2006, which brought about 30 Union students, faculty, and community volunteers to begin clearing the brush that had grown up around this splendid



**Hillary Handin and her brother Alex**

example of nineteenth century engineering. A second cleanup is planned for the fall of 2006. My hope is that we will be able to develop a longer term plan for stabilizing, preserving, and providing interpretation for this remarkable site.

**Brian Peterson:** In the winter term, I'll be teaching the second half of my Africa survey, focusing on the period since 1800, and a seminar on Islam in Africa. I'm super excited about both – about the former because the modern period is so much easier for me to teach (and students generally enjoy it more) and about the latter because it's so close to my research interests, and I haven't taught an Islam course in two years.

As for writing, I won't say that I'll submit the article I've been working on, lest my words end up jinxing me, but my goal is to make solid progress on it and hopefully it'll find a permanent home somewhere outside my computer and I can get on to other things. The subject of the article is the contested legacy of the head of a late nineteenth century Muslim warrior state, Samori Touré. The general historiography says he was a resistance hero, for his sixteen years of fighting the French during the period of colonial conquest, but my informants in southern Mali tell a different story: they say he was responsible for enslavement and massacres on a massive scale.

Once fall term has ended, my wife and I hope to return to Mali (West Africa) for the first time since 2002, *insh'allah*, as they say in Mali, or God willing (if everything goes as planned). My goal will be to simply visit old friends, keep contacts alive, and start scouting out future research projects. Maybe a trip to the desert, Timbuktu, for a week! I may do a few interviews, but probably will not work in the archives, as the research clearance

takes too much time, and I probably won't want to spend my days navigating through the Malian bureaucracy, edifying as the experience might be at times. On the return trip from Mali, we hope to spend some time in Morocco or perhaps France for a "real" vacation -- travel to Mali almost always warrants a secondary vacation of some sort.

**Mark Walker:** I have been on leave from Union and am spending the fall as a guest professor at the Institute for History of Science at the University of Göttingen, Germany. My family came with me, and my kids are experiencing the challenge of going to school in a foreign language. I am currently editing two books together with colleagues, one on the history of an important scientific institution, the Kaiser Wilhelm Society, under National Socialism, and another on the financial support of physics in the twentieth century. A third edited book will appear in November in German on the history of the German Physical Society under Hitler. However, my research in Göttingen is on a very different subject, Neanderthals and how they have been studied and interpreted since the middle of the nineteenth century.

**Robert Wells:** I spent the first two and a half weeks of the summer on board the replica of the Halfmoon, Henry Hudson's vessel that he used to explore the Hudson River in 1609. This was for a Union mini-term. We sailed down the Hudson, up Long Island Sound to the Connecticut River, up the Connecticut to East Hadham, down and out around Long Island to the Atlantic, across to the Delaware River, and up to



Wilmington, where we finished tired, dirty, and richly rewarded. You can see me and the twelve students at :



<http://www.halfmoon.mus.ny.us/livinghistory.htm>. Check out the 2006 Three Rivers Voyage and especially the daily logs.

I spent much of the rest of the summer working on my share of 150 books submitted for a prize sponsored by the American Historical Association for the best book in American history since 1492. My share was 31 books, plus the finalists selected by my four colleagues on the committee. We met in Washington, DC on September 23 to pick the winner of the Beveridge Prize. This is my second year out of three on the committee.

I am looking forward to teaching a sophomore research seminar on quantification in history in the winter.



## *Special note about signing up for petition courses.*

The College is moving toward full on-line registration for all courses. Pre-requisites and priorities that were handled in the past through the process of signing up for "card courses" are now incorporated into the on-line system. Students who wish to enroll in 300 and 400 level courses, normally reserved for history or the appropriate ID Studies program majors, will be able to enroll if they meet the requirements.

Those who are not majors, or who have not fulfilled the pre-requisites, may find access to those courses blocked by the computer when they attempt to enroll. **Please note, this does not mean that a student is in all cases barred from taking a class for which s/he has not met the pre-requisite. Just as with the old card course system, students will need to discuss their reasons for hoping to take the course with the instructor, who can then add students at her/his discretion, or keep names on a waiting list.** Undoubtedly there may be some kinks in the system as it is implemented. Please see the appropriate professor, or the history department chair, if you run up against any obstacles. We will do our best.

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## *New Courses Winter 2007*

**HST 108:** Modern Africa, 1800-present (Winter; Peterson). GenEd: CDAA. This course is a survey of the African continent from 1800 to present. In this course, we will examine the political, social, economic and cultural changes in Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Focus will be on key themes that span much of African history during this period including: slavery and the slave

trade, European conquest and African resistance, the expansion of world religions (Islam and Christianity) in Africa, colonialism, the growth of nationalism, decolonization and the emergence of independent post-colonial states, and the challenges facing contemporary African states related to political instability and economic development.

T,Th 1:55 pm – 3:40 pm

**HST 401:** Sem: Islam in Africa (Winter; Peterson). This course will examine the social, cultural and political history of Islam in Africa during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. More particularly, we will explore the relationship between Islam and colonialism, Sufism and "modernist reformers," Muslim states and slavery, political Islamism and democracy, and the intersection of local and global forces in the constitution of Muslim societies in Africa. How "African" is Islam? What are the particular itineraries and modes of entry of Islam into the region? How has Islam's political role changed over the past two centuries? How has Islam influenced or transformed social and cultural life? The geographic focus is West, North and East Africa with case studies drawn from particular countries. CDAA

T,Th 10:55 am – 12:40 pm

**HST 340B:** The History of Psychology (Winter; Singy). This course will trace the history of psychology from St Augustine, who made possible a sense of interiority that was later appropriated by psychologists, to Freud in the early twentieth century, who offered one of the most influential views on the human psyche. Among the historical questions that will be dealt with throughout the course are the following: What is the relation between mind and body (the mind-body problem)? How do we know that there exists a world outside of our mind (the solipsism problem)? How does psychology mold our experience of the self (the power-knowledge problem)? Are there different layers in the mind (the depth problem)? Prerequisite: any 100-level or 200-level history course or permission of the instructor.

MWF 8:00 am – 9:05 am

## *Winter 2007*

### *Course Offerings*

#### UNITED STATES

**HST 222:** Other Voices: Women in the History of American Ideas (Also Women's and Gender Studies 204) (Winter; Feffer). GenEd: Am-C  
T,Th 1:55pm – 3:40 pm

**HST 312:** History of Women's Rights in the United States (Winter; Foroughi) (Also Women's and Gender Studies 312). WAC  
T,Th 9:00 am – 10:45 am

**HST 132:** African-American History II (Winter; Lawson). GenEd: Am-C; CD-AA; WAC  
T,Th 10:55 am – 12:40 pm

#### EUROPE

**HST 143:** Entrepreneurship in Medieval and Renaissance Europe (Winter; Sargent).  
MWF 9:15 am – 10:20 am

**HST 149:** The Second World War Era (Winter; Berk).  
MWF 10:30 am – 11:35 am

**HST 161:** The Making of Ireland (Winter; Cramsie).  
T,Th 1:55 pm – 3:40 pm

**HST 162:** Scotland: Braveheart to Devolution (Winter; Cramsie)  
MW 3:05 pm – 4:45 pm

**HST 195:** The Early History of the Jews (Winter; Berk).  
MWF 9:15 am – 10:20 am

**HST 340B:** Special Topics in European History: The History of Psychology (Winter; Singy) (See new course listing for details).  
MWF 8:00 am – 9:05 am

**HST 431A:** Seminar: Nuclear History (Winter; Walker). WAC  
T, Th 9:00 am – 10:45 am

#### EAST ASIA

**HST 383:** The Last Dynasty: The Glory and Fall of the Qing Empire, 1644-1911 (Winter; Madancy). GenEd: CD-EA; WAC  
MWF 10:30 am – 11:35 am

#### AFRICA

**new**  
**HST 108:** Modern Africa, 1800-present (Winter; Peterson). GenEd: CDAA (See new course listing for details).  
T, Th 1:55 pm – 3:40 pm

**new**  
**HST 401:** Sem: Islam in Africa (Winter; Peterson). CDAA (See new course listing for details)  
T,Th 10:55 am – 12:40 pm

#### SPECIAL TOPICS

**HST 490-493:** Independent Study (Fall, Winter, Spring)

**HST 498-499:** Senior Project in History (Fall, Winter, Spring)

Teresa Meade, Chair [meadet@union.edu](mailto:meadet@union.edu)  
History Department, Union College  
Schenectady, NY 12308  
Phone: 518-388-6220 Fax: 518-388-6422  
Web: <http://www.union.edu/HistoryDept/>  
Newsletter prepared by Jane Earley  
[earleyj@union.edu](mailto:earleyj@union.edu)