



Footnotes

VOL. 6, NO.1 FALL 2011

An Annual News Update for Friends of the WMU Department of History

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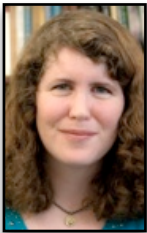
History Lecture Series

The department's annual lecture series enters its third year. This year's theme is "History Across Borders, Boundaries and Disciplines"



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Department Welcomes New Colleagues



Dr. Anise Strong and Dr. James Cousins Join the Faculty
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Mourning and the Loss and Honoring the Memory of Friends and Colleagues



Memorial funds set up to honor the legacies of the late Dr. Julien and Dr. Faires, as well as other emeriti
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Dr. Michael Parsons Receives Alumni Achievement Award

Dr. Michael H. Parsons has spent a life in education—first obtaining no fewer than five higher education degrees, then the rest of his life in continuing his education, researching and teaching. To this resumé he has added a life-long commitment to community service.

Dr. Parsons earned an Associates degree from Muskegon Community College in 1962, and a B.A. in English and History from WMU in 1964. This was followed by an M.A. in History in 1971 and Ed.D. in Interdisciplinary Educational Leadership from WMU in 1971. The subsequent decades saw him involved in numerous grant funded enrichment studies at the U. of Texas (1979), Carnegie-Mellon University (1981), Harvard (1994), Columbia University (2002-05) and, most recently, at Oxford (2009). In the meantime he published numerous books about teaching and how to teach, and on community development. He has taught most of his life at Hagerstown Community College from which he retired as Dean and Professor Emeritus. He is, clearly unable to rest on his laurels, now Adjunct Professor at Morgan State University.

He has been recognized for his contribution to teaching (National Council on Learning Person of the Year, 1980) and community service (Governor's Citations for Service to the



Dr. Michael Parsons

Community). The Department of History is very pleased to recognize, in our own limited way, Dr. Michael Parsons.

This year, the Department named Dr. Parsons as the recipient of its Distinguished Alumni Award. During WMU's Homecoming weekend, Dr. Parsons visited campus to meet with students and faculty, and to accept his award. The Department hosted a reception for Dr. Parsons and his family on Friday, October 7, during which he met with department faculty, graduate students, and several undergraduate members of Phi Alpha Theta.



Chair's Letter

Dear Friends,

"Transitions" was a theme of last year's newsletter, and it continues to be an appropriate one for this year's as well. **Dr. Marion Gray** has left the chair's office and I have moved in—indeed, we merely swapped offices and switched books on the shelves! The department is grateful for his ten years of leadership and we look forward to his continuing contributions to department and student welfare as a teacher and researcher. Another change in the department office is the retirement of **Mrs. Brenda**

Brewer after 23 years of service to Western Michigan University (10 in the department) and the arrival of **Mrs. Dorilee Schieble** to take up the role of Office Coordinator. More about them can be found in the "Transitions" section of the newsletter, but let me just say here that we miss Brenda and are pleased to find in Dorilee someone so up to filling a complicated post in the department.

Dr. Bruce Haight, with whom many of you studied, is retiring after 41 years at Western Michigan University. You can read more about him and our plans to celebrate his contributions in the "Transitions" section of the newsletter. Dr. Haight's enthusiasm for teaching, and concern for students, will be missed. You will also find stories about **Dr. James Cousins** and **Dr. Anise Strong** who joined our faculty this past summer. They will take up the positions formerly occupied by **Drs. Cheryl Lyon-Jenness** and **Paul Maier** who retired this spring. We are delighted to welcome them and glad to see Drs. Maier and Lyon-Jenness thriving in retirement and not too far away from department life. **Drs. Michael Chiarappa** and **Kristin Szylvian** left to take up positions elsewhere and **Dr. Amanda Sikarskie**, also featured in our new colleagues section, has stepped in to teach a number of important Public History courses for us.

Other departures, unfortunately, are sadder still. **Drs. Nora Faires** and **Catherine Julien**, both of whom retired due to illness since the last newsletter, have passed away. Nora Faires and Catherine Julien were important contributors to our department in terms of their service and teaching, and to the discipline of history via their research. Stories summarizing their professional lives and contributions to WMU and the historical profession are to be found in the newsletter and serve to highlight the significance of their loss at too early an age.

Saddened as we are by the passing of our friends and colleagues, we must continue with the work of teaching students, recognizing their contributions, and planning our own work. Indeed, that was a message both Catherine Julien and Nora Faires insisted we hear and act upon. Thus, you'll also find our regular features on student and faculty activities and achievements and an introduction to this year's Alumni Achievement Award recipient. I hope, nonetheless, that we are done with transitions for the foreseeable future, and wish you a peaceful and healthy holiday season and new year.



José António (Joe) Brandão
Professor and Chair

Do you have news you'd like to share?

Send it to the editor of our newsletter, Associate Chair Ed Martini

at edwin.martini@wmich.edu.

2011-12 History Lecture Series

History Across Borders, Boundaries, and Disciplines

Dr. J.E. Lendon, Professor of History, University of Virginia,

“Rhetorical Education and the Boundaries of the Roman Empire” (6 October 2011)

Dr. Suzanne Sinke, Associate Professor of History, Florida State University

“To Wander and/or To Wed: Relating Marriage and International Migration Across U.S. History” (31 October 2011)

Dr. Fred Anderson, Professor of History, University of Colorado

“Empire and Liberty in Eighteenth-Century North America” Monday, 6 February, 2012, 3:30 pm, Meader Rare Book Room, Waldo Library



Dr. Felipe Fernandez-Armesto

The 2012 H. Nicholas Hamner Lecturer

“Change: Why It Happens, Why it Accelerates, and How Change Itself May Change”

Monday, 12 March, 2012 6:00 P.M.

Fetzer Center Auditorium, WMU

The Department of History at Western Michigan University annually invites an esteemed senior scholar to give a public lecture, named for, and generously endowed by, **Professor Emeritus H. Nicholas Hamner**. The event is an opportunity to make visible the discipline of history within the campus and the larger community by having a distinguished scholar address a theme of broad interest.

Dr. Felipe Fernandez-Armesto is the William P. Reynolds Professor of History at Notre Dame University. Prior to joining the faculty at Notre Dame, he held positions at Tufts University and Oxford University, from which he received his undergraduate and graduate degrees.

The author of numerous, award winning works, his books include *Millennium: A History of Our Last Thousand Years* (1995), *Truth: A History and a Guide for the Perplexed* (1997), *Civilizations* (2000), *Food: A History* (2001), *The Americas: A Hemispheric History* (2003), *Ideas That Changed the World* (2003), *Humankind: A Brief History* (2004), and *Pathfinders: A Global History of Exploration* (2006). His works have been translated into twenty-six languages. Among several recent awards, he received the World History Association Book Prize and Tercentenary Medal of the Society of Antiquaries in 2007. Dr. Fernandez-Armesto has been appointed the 2011 Cátedra Hispano-Británica Reina Victoria Eugenia at the Complutense University of Madrid.

Dr. Paul Maier Fund for Ancient History



As first announced in last year’s newsletter, the department established a fund to honor **Professor Emeritus Paul Maier’s** 50-year career with the department. The purpose of the fund is to perpetuate and strengthen the study, teaching, and research of ancient history at Western Michigan University. The fund can be used to support activities such as faculty and graduate student travel or research in ancient history, recruitment of graduate students to pursue the study of ancient history at WMU, undergraduate student projects in ancient history, enhancing the teaching of ancient history, or bringing to campus visiting scholars and guest lecturers in ancient history. If contributions reach the amount required to establish an endowment, the department will create the Paul L. Maier Endowment in Ancient History, thus making the support of ancient history permanent at WMU.

The Paul Maier Fund is one of several new funds and endowments created by, and for, department emeriti. For more information about these funds, and to learn how to contribute, see page ten of this newsletter.

Transitions - Retirements

Dr. Bruce Haight Retires After 41 Years at WMU

Dr. Bruce Haight, Professor of African History, is retiring this year after forty-one years of service to WMU. A Michigan native, Haight graduated from Kalamazoo College before receiving his Ph.D. from Northwestern University.



As an undergraduate, Haight traveled twice to Sierra Leone, which inspired his passion for African History. "I aspired to write a different kind of history," he says. "A history in which Africans spoke with their own voice." This approach can be seen in Haight's publications, which include *Chronicles from Gonja* (1986) and, especially, in *Lamidi Oloade Fakeye* (1996), a biography of the artist Fakeye, who in 2006 was named a "Living Treasure" by UNESCO.

Haight came to Western in 1970, teaching a range of courses in the General Studies program. Although he was often team teaching classes that were far outside of

his area of specialization, he continued to travel to Africa for research.

Amazingly, it wasn't until 1989 that Haight finally had the opportunity to teach African History. In that year, WMU disbanded the General Studies program and Haight, along with seven other historians in the program, joined the Department of History.

Although thrilled to be teaching in his own field, Haight immediately began to look for other opportunities, which he found in the area of history education. In the early 1990s, when Haight was reviewing Fulbright proposals, he was struck by the quality of the K-12 proposals, which he found to be just as strong (and in many cases stronger) than the higher education proposals. Sensing an

opportunity, Haight began teaching History 494, the capstone course for History Education majors in the department. Haight sought out connections between local schools and the department, bringing in current teachers and administrators to offer practical lessons and advice to students. Haight still hears regularly from students who took 494 with him. "They often recall very specific activities and lessons," he says. The same is true for Haight's courses in African history. "I employ an improvisational approach, almost like jazz," Haight notes, "and that really connects with a lot of students who don't necessarily respond to a more structured approach." While Haight's students have no doubt learned a great deal from him over the years, however, he feels just as fortunate to have worked with them. Haight is particularly grateful for all of the history education students who have helped him to rethink his own classroom approaches. "I learned a lot from them, and I brought a lot of their tricks into my own classes," he says.

To help honor Dr. Haight's long and distinguished career, the department has set up a fund to which alumni and others can contribute. Given his long and storied involvement with history education, it is fitting that the fund is designed to assist local teachers who are working on their graduate degrees. The idea for this fund came from one created by **Dr. John Houdek**, who also wanted to support returning teachers. Rather than create a fund in his own name, Haight, modest as always, asked that money go to the Houdek fund. With their permission, the fund will be called the Houdek/Haight Fund to Support Returning Teachers. Those interested in contributing to that fund, or to several others recently developed to honor emeriti faculty, can visit the department's website, or go directly to www.wmich.edu/history/giving, and click on the name of the fund or endowment to which they wish to contribute,

The department is hosting a retirement celebration for Dr. Haight on February 2, 2012, at the Oaklands Residence on the WMU campus. The reception is open to the public and runs from 4:00-6:00 pm. Whether you can be there or not, please take a moment to visit the department's home page, www.wmich.edu/history and click on the "share your memories" link. From there, you can share your favorite story or memory. Remembrances submitted through the site will be collected and shared with Dr. Haight at the retirement celebration. Those wishing to contact Dr. Haight directly may do so at bruce.haight@wmich.edu.

Department Welcomes New Office Coordinator Dorilee Schieble



Brenda Brewer

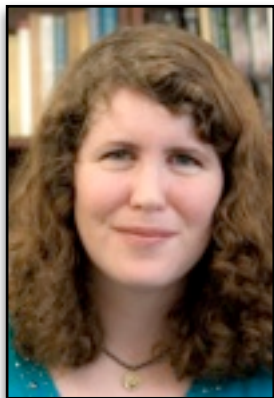
Brenda Brewer, the longtime office coordinator for the Department, retired in August after more than 23 years of service to Western Michigan University. Brewer came to Western in the fall of 1988, working in the Provost's office for two years before moving to the Dean's office in the College of Arts and Sciences. She joined the Department of History in August 2001. Members of all of these offices were on hand August 31, when the department hosted a reception for Brenda. In retirement, Brenda will be working with her husband, James, on a number of projects related to the church in South Haven where James serves as Pastor.

While we are sad to see Brenda go, the Department is very pleased to welcome our new office coordinator, **Dorilee Schieble**. Dorilee served in a fundraising capacity at WMU for the past three years. She has also worked in charitable giving and donor relations at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation and with Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company in various sales and management capacities. She earned her BBA from UW-Oshkosh and CLU, ChFC certifications from The American College at Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. Given that background, she has already helped the department make enormous strides in its development efforts. "I am excited to be part of the department, working with faculty, staff and alumni," she says, "and to help move the department forward in its mission."



Dorilee Schieble

Transitions - New Colleagues



Dr. Anise Strong

Anise K. Strong studies Roman social history, gender and sexuality in the ancient world, and the reception of classical culture in modern mass media. She received her Ph.D. in Classical Studies from Columbia University and her B.A. (*cum laude*) from Yale University in Classical Civilization. She has taught a wide variety of history and classics courses at both Stanford and Northwestern University. Professor Strong is currently revising her book manuscript, which is entitled "Roman Women and the Construction of Virtue: Wicked Wives and Good Whores."

Recent articles include Roman toleration of ancient incest, sexuality in the HBO series "Rome," the treatment of ethnic intermarriage in Herodotus's *Histories*, and a comparison of mothers who prostitute their daughters in ancient legal and literary texts. She has also presented at numerous major conferences, including five times at the American Philological Association annual meeting.

Professor Strong focuses on the intricacies of Roman social structure and the roles played by marginal figures and social outcasts in the Roman world. Her source material has ranged from Roman bedroom paintings to graffiti fragments, love poetry, and pedagogical handbooks, as well as more traditional works of literature.

Professor Strong was born in Amherst, Massachusetts, and is a member of the seventh generation of college-educated women in her family. She grew up in San Diego, California, and still misses good fish tacos. She has traveled to 34 nations so far and hopes to double that number in the next few decades; highlights have included being trapped in a blizzard in the Nepali Himalayas at 12,000 feet and hiking up Mount Olympus in Turkey in pitch darkness. In her spare time, Professor Strong enjoys baking, European strategy games, hiking, throwing balls for her golden retriever, and reading alternate history novels.

Dr. James Cousins

Dr. James Cousins joins the department as its new Director of Undergraduate Studies and Advising. Raised outside of Philadelphia, Cousins earned his undergraduate degree from The Ohio State University and his MA and PhD from the University of Kentucky. His graduate work focused on the history of education in early America; his dissertation, "Children of the Western World: The Illusion of Religious Control and the Making of Higher Education in Kentucky, 1780-1818," explored long-held assumptions regarding America's earliest trans-Appalachian educational institutions.

While completing his Ph.D, Cousins worked as an adjunct faculty member for Eastern Kentucky University's Department of History and was also the full-time academic advisor for the University of Kentucky's College of Arts and Sciences. At Eastern Kentucky, he taught an array of on-campus courses and was instrumental in the development of online curriculum. At the University of Kentucky, he advised hundreds of liberal-arts



majors, assisted in on and off-campus recruiting efforts, participated in departmental assessment initiatives, facilitated programs of faculty mentorship, and worked with student organizations in the development of community service projects.

Cousins' most recent publications concern the socio-cultural evolution of education in the early American west. In an article titled "Lexington's 'Established Order' and the Creation of Transylvania University" he seeks to establish a new concept of pedagogy that sees education as both a social mirror and rhetorical center of communal identity. In "Kentucky's 'Free and Easy Generation' and the War of 1812" he examines the causal connections between patriotic rhetoric, capitalism, and mythologized frontier aggression. Cousins is a former recipient of the Filson Historical Society Fellowship, the Kentucky Historical Society Summer Fellowship, and was recently named the 2012 "Scholar-in-Residence" of Transylvania University (Lexington, Kentucky). This award is in support of archival research for his first book, a biography of Horace Holley who served as president of that institution from 1818 to 1827.

At WMU, Cousins will be teaching courses in the history of education and historical research methods. As DUS, he is overseeing the advising of students with majors and minors in History, Public History, and Secondary History Education. This fall he is also serving as faculty facilitator in Western's First Year Experience Program and as co-principal investigator for a grant received through Western's Office of Assessment.

Dr. Amanda Sikarskie

Also joining the department this year is **Dr.**

Amanda Sikarskie, a recent graduate of Michigan State's doctoral program in American Studies. A Public Historian specializing in museum studies, digital public history, and textile history, her research focuses on the practice of quilt history in the digital age and the nature of digital material culture studies. From 2008-11, Sikarskie worked as the social media manager and project developer for the Quilt Index, an online database providing preservation and access to images and metadata for over 50,000 historic and contemporary quilts. Sikarskie recently served as guest editor for a special issue of *New Directions in Folklore* on "Quiltmakers in the Digital Age." She also has forthcoming essays in *Wintherthur Portfolio* and in an anthology entitled *Women's Cultural Experiences in Second Life*. Her current research focuses on curation and other historical practices in online spaces and social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Wikipedia.



During her one-year appointment at Western, Sikarskie is assisting with the public history internship program and teaching undergraduate and graduate level courses including Introduction to Public History, Museum Studies, and Popular Art and Architecture. She is incorporating her skills in new media into these courses, including the creation of a community blog for use by students in the Public History program.

When she is not teaching, researching, and writing, Sikarskie enjoys frequent trips to Northern Michigan and loves gardening, genealogy, hunting for antiques and listening to a wide variety of music, along with her husband, Matt, and their three cats, Prada, Gucci, and Boondocks.

Engaging Communities

Coryell and Faires Reinterpret Women's History in New Book

An eight-year project came to a bittersweet end in March 2011 with the publication of *A History of Women in America* by **Dr. Janet L. Coryell** and **Dr. Nora Faires**. The survey textbook of U.S. women's history, published by McGraw-Hill, began after a former student of Dr. Coryell's solicited her to write a textbook for the press she represented. One conversation led to another, and Dr. Faires joined the project as neither professor was happy with the textbooks available to use in their large survey-level women's history classes.

"Women's history textbooks by the early 2000s tended to be regionally centered on the east coast, often highly theoretical, and not terribly easy to read," Dr. Coryell said. "We both regarded them as difficult to use in our classrooms. Many of them reflected an interpretive framework that portrayed women as victims of patriarchal societies, or followed an arc that presumed the most important event was the achievement of suffrage.

Our research and teaching has always revolved around trying to understand not only what women did in the past, but also how women managed to accomplish so much despite the obstacles in their way."



"By integrating women into the existing national narrative we help students to understand women's roles not as little blue boxes at the side or bottom of the page, but as players in the main event. Part of what we wanted to do was make sure that students saw them within that context so that they could answer that old question: what were the women doing when the men were doing

what the textbook says was 'important'? Most of the time, women were doing the same things as men—exploring new lands, creating an American culture, moving west, surviving encroachments on their lands and culture, fighting in wars, participating in politics."

Faires became seriously ill during the project, which limited her participation in its final stages. "A few weeks before she died, she called to find out when the book would be out. The press was able to send her a mock-up of the book, which she could share with her friend Linda Pritchard, who cared for her during her illness, and to whom Nora dedicated the book. It came on Friday; she passed away on Sunday. It meant a lot to me to know that she had seen at least a version of it."

"The interpretative framework that Nora and I discussed so often in writing the textbook—to find out how women did what they did despite the obstacles society put in their way—I will carry on in my own work. I think that's a pretty good legacy for her."

Berkhofer Elected Vice-President of Haskins Society

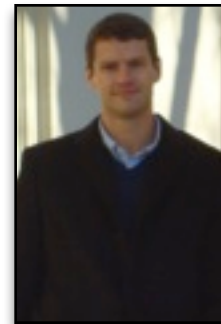
Medieval historian **Dr. Robert Berkhofer** has been elected Vice-President for North America of the Charles Homer Haskins Society. The Society, named for one of the United States' most eminent medieval historians, is dedicated to promoting the study of Dr. Haskins' interests, "including Anglo-Saxon, viking, Anglo-Norman, and early Angevin history and the study of neighboring areas and peoples." The Society hosts an annual conference in Boston, publishes the *Haskins Society Journal*, and regularly sponsors sessions and events at the annual Medieval Congress held at WMU each summer.



Dr. Berkhofer's own research focuses on the high middle ages in Britain and France. He is currently working a book manuscript examining forgeries and historical writing in England, France, and Flanders. Some preliminary findings from this project appeared as "The Canterbury Forgeries Revisited" published by the *Haskins Society Journal* 18 (2006): 36-50. Berkhofer recently completed bibliographies on Medieval France for *Oxford Bibliographies Online*.

Cousins Named Scholar in Residence

Dr. James Cousins was recently named Transylvania University's 2012 scholar in residence. Cousins' research focuses on the socio-cultural history of education in the early American West; Transylvania University, one of the country's oldest institutions of higher education, is a central repository for documents and artifacts related to his scholarship. Cousins will spend the early part of next summer working in Transylvania's archives and completing the research for his first book, a biography of former university president Horace Holley (1781-1827). "Holley is a transformational figure in American history," Cousins argues. "He politicized pedagogical reform and helped remake classical institutional models. Holley's contributions to the intellectual history of early America are profound but remain unexplored." Included among Transylvania's archives are the Holley Papers, a collection of letters, sermons, speeches and other documents related to Holley's administration. Cousins hopes the collection will shed light on the motivations behind some of Holley's most innovative reforms. "Holley created the West's first law school, its first medical college, and laid plans for a 'traveling academy,' an idea that might be best described as a 19th-century study abroad program." Cousins also believes Holley's personal reflections could help us to better understand the complex social and cultural changes occurring in the antebellum West. "Holley was a Bostonian transplant, he took nothing for granted and, as such, offers a unique interpretation of the region, its customs, habits, and mores."



Stay in Touch with Us!

There are a number of ways to stay current on Department of History news and events:

Visit the Department Website: www.wmich.edu/history

Facebook Page: [WMU Department of History](#)

Or call or email the department anytime, to find out about upcoming events, or to share your news! We would love to hear from you.

New "Spotlight Features"

As part of our new website design, we will regularly feature "spotlight" segments on current students, faculty, and alumni. If you are interested in being featured or know someone whom you would like to see in the spotlight, drop us a line through email, the web, or Facebook.



Faculty Recognition

The department's unparalleled record of success in University-wide award continues in 2011, with a record third recipient of the WMU Emerging Scholar Award and an unprecedented fourth straight Arts and Sciences Award for Research.

Rubin Named Emerging Scholar

Dr. Eli Rubin, a specialist in modern European history and Germany has been called a rising star in academia and named the 2011 winner of Western Michigan University's Emerging Scholar Award.

Dr. Rubin, associate professor of history, was honored, along with other major campuswide award winners, at WMU's annual Academic Convocation on Friday, Sept. 16. The Emerging Scholar Award program was launched late in 2006 to acknowledge the accomplishments of WMU faculty members who are



among the rising stars in U.S. higher education. It celebrates the contributions of faculty who are in the first decade of their careers at WMU and who, by virtue of their contributions to scholarship or creative activity, have achieved national recognition and demonstrated outstanding promise to achieve renown in their continuing work. The award goes to scholars nominated for consideration through a campuswide selection process and carries with it a \$2,000 cash prize. Rubin is the third winner of this award from the Department of History, along with previous awardees **Dr. Mitch Kachun** and **Dr. Takashi Yoshida**. No other department at WMU has won more than two awards.

Rubin, who has been a WMU faculty member since 2004, spent two years in Berlin on a postdoctoral fellowship supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. He has already published widely in his field, with six major research-based journal articles and book chapters to his credit, and his work has been presented in more than 25 professional papers. Rubin used his research to write the internationally hailed 2008 book, *Synthetic Socialism: Plastics and Dictatorship in the German Democratic Republic*. He is working on two related book projects on the GDR, and his work is already being used to train students internationally.

"Dr. Rubin's publications on the German Democratic Republic—better known as East Germany—constitute a significant, influential and highly original contribution to the study of modern Europe and, indeed, our understanding of the 20th-century world," said a historian at another North American university in support of Rubin's nomination for the award. "Rubin is known and admired by the most acclaimed scholars of modern European history at work today."

Rubin's writings, one European scholar says, have earned him an important identity in scholarship on the GDR and other socialist states: "He has developed an original approach that interprets the crossroads of political history, economics and consumption," that scholar observed. "This work makes an important contribution to the scholarship of history."

In addition to teaching modern world history, European history and German history to undergraduates at WMU, Rubin has led the First-Year Experience freshman skills seminar, and he has served on dissertation and doctoral examination committees for graduate history students. Rubin will be on sabbatical leave during the 2012-13 academic year, completing several research projects.

Xiong Wins Department's Fourth Straight CAS Research Award

Dr. Victor Xiong, recipient of the Department's 2011 award for Achievement in Research and Creative Activity, was also given the Faculty Achievement Award in Research and Creative Activity by the College of Arts and Sciences. Xiong became the fourth straight department recipient of the award, following **Drs. Wilson Warren, Nora Faires, and Joe Brandão**.

Xiong is the author of multiple publications, including three major books, *Sui-Tang Chang'an: A Study in the Urban History of Medieval China* (2000), *Emperor Yang of the Sui Dynasty: His Life, Times, and Legacy* (2006), and, most recently, *Historical Dictionary of Medieval China* (2009). All these works have been extremely well received. Professor Charles Hartman, an eminent scholar of medieval China, describes *Emperor Yang of the Sui Dynasty* as "a detailed study of a vital, yet (in English) virtually unknown, period of medieval Chinese history." He adds: "Traditional Chinese historians usually castigate Emperor Yang, and [Xiong] has successfully cut through this invective to reveal much about the man, his policies, and his achievements. The result is a work that will change the way both Chinese and Western historians regard the Sui dynasty and its importance to overall Chinese history."

Widely respected as one of the world's leading experts on Medieval China, Professor Xiong is recognized as one of the leading scholars of medieval China in the United States today. He is frequently invited to give lectures and keynote addresses at prestigious institutions, including, recently: Chicago, Harvard, Peking, UCLA, and Stanford. In 2008, the Department of History at Sun Yat-sen University in China held a conference in honor of Xiong. The conference, entitled "The Society and Religion of Sui-Tang and Five Dynasties China," was held in Guangzhou, China. Professor Xiong presented the keynote address. The meeting was attended by leading scholars of Sui-Tang China from Sun Yat-sen, Wuhan, and Peking Universities, and other institutions of higher learning in People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

Professor Xiong also lends his scholarly expertise to projects that bring the history of medieval China to non-scholarly audiences. He has worked with museums and has served as a reviewer of museum exhibits on medieval China. During the summer 2009, he was in China as a consultant for the Discovery Channel Asia, which is producing on a documentary about Chang'an, the subject of Xiong's extensive study.



He has completed a draft of a new book manuscript entitled "A Thorough Exploration in Historiography," which is an annotated translation of the *Shitong* by Liu Zhiji. Written during the seventh or eighth century in Classical Chinese, this annotated translation of the *Shitong* will make available to scholars in many parts of the world for the first time this ancient, erudite work, which is key to understanding much of China's past.

Graduate Students in the News

Much like the department faculty, WMU graduate students in history continue to excel in winning prestigious awards. This past year, history students won additional honors in All-University categories, along with several other research and travel grants from the Graduate College. The Department is particularly proud of the graduate students' record in winning Fulbright research awards, the only department on campus with multiple Fulbright recipients over the past decade.

Grad Students Continue Record of Excellence in External Awards



Goodman

Jack Goodman, Ph.D. candidate in Medieval History, became the Department's third doctoral student in as many years to receive a Fulbright research award. Previous awards went to **Irene Geisler** and **Stephen Staggs**. Goodman. Goodman is working in Palermo, Sicily, at the Archivio di Stato di Palermo, where he is, in his words, "exploring two populations seldom addressed in modern medieval scholarship: slaves and wage laborers."

Goodman is working under the supervision of **Dr. Larry Simon**, who notes that the Fulbright awards to Italy have become increasingly competitive in recent years. "Jack

has been to Palermo twice previously for research, has given a paper in Cagliari (Sardinia), and he is superbly trained in reading Latin charters, and the art of transcribing heavily abbreviated registered copies of charters," Simon added. "I think all of these impressed the Fulbright Committee."

This research is instrumental to Goodman's dissertation, which "examines the overlap and interaction between these two laboring populations (one free, one enslaved) and the conditions in which they lived and worked for their employers/masters."

Doctoral candidate **Jamie McCandless** is also completing dissertation research in Europe, after winning a grant from the German Academic Exchange Foundation to conduct research on late medieval religious reform efforts in southwestern Germany, especially the city of Ulm. McCandless' thesis, according to his supervisor, **Dr. Robert Berkhofer**, "concerns the multifaceted connections between the laity and Dominican convents in late medieval Germany. Exploiting previously understudied local records in and around Ulm, the project will explore the social networks underpinning reform in the city." McCandless has also received a Graduate College Travel and Research Grant that will also be used for research this fall in the German southwest.

Graduate Award Winners for 2010-11

Jamie McCandless

All-University Award and Departmental Award for Research and Creative Activity at the Doctoral Level



McCandless

Stephen Staggs

Departmental Award for Teaching Effectiveness at the Doctoral Level



Staggs

Sara Bijani

Departmental Award for Teaching Effectiveness at the Master's Level

Francis Bonenfant

Departmental Award for Research and Creative Activity at the Master's Level

William Watson

Departmental Award for Outstanding Research Assistant

Samantha Steele

Departmental Award for Outstanding Teaching Assistant

Jesse Hysell

The Robert Russel Writing Award

Katherine Ellison

2010-11 Gwen Frostic Dissertation Fellowship



Ellison

Upton Fellow Caitlyn Dial Connects Communities At Heritage Museum



For the past year, Public History doctoral candidate **Caitlyn Dial** has held a fellowship at the Heritage Museum and Cultural Center in St. Joseph's, Michigan, where she has been able to work with several collections and on a number of exhibits. Last summer, Dial was instrumental in installing the "Ice Age Imperials" exhibit, which explores the prehistory of Berrien County. In April, Dial served as the creator and sole curator of a new exhibit on the St. Joseph's Fire Department. Dial has also added social media to her repertoire, helping the center develop a presence on Facebook and promoting the Ice Age exhibit with a Twitter account in the persona of a sabertooth tiger.

Dial is in her last year as the **Stephen S. Upton Fellow** in Public History. Starting next year, Dial will begin teaching U.S. History courses while she

works on her dissertation. That project will bring together Dial's public history experience with her passion for Maritime History. The dissertation examines the cultural history and memory of shipwrecks on the Great Lakes, particularly why some, like the infamous *Edmund Fitzgerald*, become part of local history and culture, while other more disastrous wrecks seems to be forgotten altogether. After completing her dissertation, Dial hopes to continue working in a public history setting, ideally as the director of a museum.

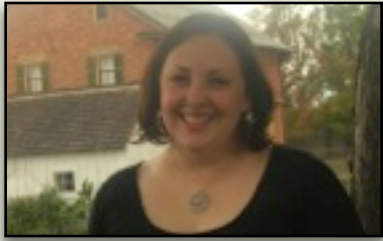


Public History Doctoral Student Caitlyn Dial, along with Michigan Governor Rick Snyder, in front of the *Working Waterfront* exhibit designed and installed by WMU Public History Faculty and students

Undergraduates Excelling In and Out of the Classroom

During 2011, undergraduate history majors at WMU won numerous awards, presented their research at conferences, and won various grants that allowed them to pursue academic and professional projects across the state, the region, and the country.

2011 Undergraduate Awards



Presidential Scholar
April Bryan

Margaret Macmillan Writing Award:

Scott Cressey

Phi Beta Kappa:

Andrew Archey	Tara Bell
April Bryan	Scott Cressey
Scott DeRyke	James Goodacre
Sam McLaren	Jacob Thomas
Eric Ware	Shawn Weiss

Honors in History:

April Bryan
Sam McClaren
Shawn Weiss

History Undergraduate Fellows:

April Bryan
Rebecca Switala
Maxwell Koopsen

Smith-Burnham Outstanding Intern Awards

Adam Shockley
Joshua Garcia

Inducted into Phi Alpha Theta, National History Honorary Society:

John Brandon	Ian Brown
Scott Cressey	Jennifer Daugherty
Joshua Garcia	Ian Gordon
Jennifer Gregor	Ryan Hannah
Matthew Hillman	Tiffany Hubbard
Emilee Johnson	Emilee Johnson
Kiri Johnson	Katie Jones
Malorie Kern	Christopher Kind
Carl Koopmans	Brent Krohn
Jesse Kynaston	Lance Mesiter
Joel Nuechterlein	Ryan Nykamp
Michael Powell	Joseph Prater
Michael Schmock	Peter Thompson
Renee Vanermaas	Eric Ware
Megan Wenzl	Megan Wenzl
Emily Williamson	Anita Wuoti

Public History Major Tara Bell Brings History to Life in Internships

Senior Public History major **Tara Bell** came to Western Michigan because it is one of the few universities in the country to offer an undergraduate major in Public History. Although she has enjoyed her classes, Tara has especially loved her internship experiences. During the summers following her first two years at Western, Tara worked for Mackinaw State Parks as a guide and interpreter. "It gave me a great opportunity to work directly with the public," she says. Last summer, Tara expanded her skill set even further, working as part of the historic preservation team for the Moses Cone historic mansion in Blowing Rock, North Carolina. "It was great because it was so outside my comfort zone," says Bell. "I had never worked with power tools in my whole life! But I would recommend that to all students - to try something completely different from what they've ever done." This year, Tara is working at the WMU Archives, housed on historic East Campus, where she is assisting **Dr. Sharon Carlson** with a number of projects and researching a recently donated batch of letters written by local Vietnam War veterans. After graduation, Bell hopes to begin graduate work in public history, either in historic preservation or in museum studies. "I love preservation, and I love museums, she says, "so I just need to find the program with the right fit and the right opportunities."



Tara Bell

History Major Vermetten Selected for Prestigious Internship

Junior Liberal Education major **Kristen Vermetten** was recently awarded an internship with the office of Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. Kristen spent most of last year in the mayor's press office where she gained first-hand experience in policy research, community outreach, and media relations. It was an opportunity for Kristen to work with all levels of government in the development of mayoral initiatives. It was also an opportunity for Kristen to exercise the skills that have helped her succeed as a History major. "My ability to research, comprehend, and communicate public policy set me apart and helped me excel." Kristen is interested in recent American history and the history of American foreign policy. Her experiences in the mayor's office allowed her to make meaningful connections between past and present. "Getting a look at how domestic issues effect political platforms gave me new insights into historical problems that I've studied." After graduation, Kristen intends to pursue a career as a Foreign Service Officer. "Working for the State Department requires a broad range of skills and abilities. I'm confident that my experiences at Western will help me to succeed."



Kristen Vermetten

Phi Alpha Theta Students Continue Active Schedule

The Alpha Beta Delta Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the national history honors society, had another active year that began with last year's hosting of the regional PAT conference. This year, the students held several movie nights that included commentary from department faculty, and the chapter organized a number of workshops for undergraduate students. The topics of the workshops included "Applying to Graduate School," and "Presenting Research at Academic Conferences." The students seem to have taken to the latter theme particularly well. Three PAT students from Western presented papers at the Southwest Social Studies Association Meeting in Las Vegas, and just a week later, eight members presented their work at the Regional PAT Conference at Oakland University. This year the chapter continues its full schedule of activities. Along with added workshops and conferences, the chapter has been leading tours of historic East Campus.



PAT Students Lead a Tour of Historic East Campus

Honoring and Remembering Colleagues

In the past year, the department lost two dear colleagues, Dr. Nora Faires and Dr. Catherine Julien. While we mourn the loss of these dedicated teachers, world-class scholars, and close friends, we are pleased to announce that development funds have been established in their names. Developed in close consultation with their families and friends, these endowments will serve as fitting tributes to their lives and legacies.

Dr. Catherine Julien Memorial Fund for History



Dr. Catherine Julien passed away in Turlock, California, on May 27, 2011. Julien was a working archaeologist and ethnohistorian capable of extracting meaning from material culture (everything from textiles to Inca cups), Spanish and Inca written sources, and Inca linguistics. An amiable and generous colleague, dedicated teacher, and a true interdisciplinary scholar, of national and international repute, she devoted her professional life to recovering the "voice" and history of indigenous peoples who lived in South America in the period before 1700.

To honor the memory and legacy of our dear friend and colleague, the department has established the Dr. Catherine Julien Memorial Fund for History. The fund will be used to "support students, either undergraduate or graduate, to advance their research in history with a preference for supporting graduate students and those students whose interests are in studying Latin America history and culture broadly defined, including its archaeology and its indigenous peoples." Developed in close consultation with Dr. Julien's daughter, Clara, the plan is to grow the fund into an endowment that will serve for many years as fitting tribute to Dr. Julien, who was both a world class scholar and a passionate and dedicated teacher.

Dr. Nora Faires Endowment for Graduate Student Research and Travel

Dr. Nora Faires died February 6, 2011. Nora was an accomplished historian of migration studies, most recently Canadian migration. Among her many honors, she was a two-time Fulbright Distinguished Chair and the winner of the Albert B. Corey Prize (for the best book on Canadian-American relations) She was also the co-author of *Women and America: An Integrated History* (with Janet Coryell) and a forthcoming collection of essays, *Migrants and Migration in Modern North America* (with Dirk Hoerder). Among Nora's many contributions to the Department was her dedication as a graduate instructor and advisor, which inspired the creation of the Nora Faires Fund.



The Faires Fund began as an initiative of the History Graduate Student Organization (HGSO), which named its self-funded research and travel award in honor of Dr. Faires. Selling soup, books, and t-shirts, the graduate students raised enough money to award its first grant in 2011. Touched by the gesture of the students to name the award after Nora, Dr. Faires' estate created a generous endowment that will continue to fund graduate research and travel. HGSO will continue to play an active role in choosing the awardee.

Dr. Peter Schmitt Fund for Experiential Learning

As a faculty member in the Department of History of Western Michigan University from 1965 to 2008, **Dr. Peter Schmitt** promoted connections between experience, surroundings and understanding. Peter Schmitt's legacy as a historian rests on diverse foundations, including environmental history, public history, local history, and the history of material culture. He is recognized as a pioneer in environmental history for his book, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America*, (1969, second edition 1990). His wide popularity as a teacher rested in part on his helping students see the connections between history, nature, and everyday life.

The Endowment, created by a gift from two donors who wish to remain anonymous, seeks to encourage students and scholars to follow Peter Schmitt's example by going beyond the classroom, library, and archives in their study of society's change over time. It is hoped that recipients of the award will find history in forests, glens, fields, historic buildings, and city streets. To that end, The Peter J. Schmitt Endowment for Experiential Learning covers costs associated with varied learning experiences that enhance awareness, understanding, and knowledge of the interconnectedness of history with the arts and the natural world. Grant recipients might participate in short courses in art or architectural history, in field biology learning experiences, in workshops in historic preservation or traditional crafts, in retreat experiences that emphasize an understanding of the natural world, or in other experiential learning activities that promote personal insight into the interrelationships between people and their environments, especially in historical contexts.



To read the full obituaries for
Drs. Faires and Dr. Julien,
please visit us online at

www.wmich.edu/history

To donate to these or other
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Dr. Joe Brandão

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*Recent donors will be included in the next edition of the newsletter

Department of History Funding Priorities

The Department of History at Western Michigan University has a long tradition of undergraduate education. As Western has grown and become more diverse, so have we. In 1957 we began offering M.A. degrees, and in 1992 we established our very successful Ph.D. program. Today we have nearly 7,000 alumni of the department, of which some 40% work in the field of education. Even in the face of significant cutbacks in state funding, we have managed to grow in size and complexity. History continues to offer excellent educational opportunities to graduate and undergraduate students. Thanks to your generosity, faculty and graduate students have financial support for travel to carry out research and present their scholarship at conferences. Undergraduates, at long last, have support to do this as well. We also have funds to attract new history majors and reward them, via scholarships and grants, for their outstanding achievements while in our programs. We have donors, as the chart below indicates, at all levels of lifetime giving:

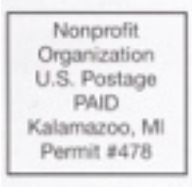
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For More Information:

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We are thankful for your generosity and hope that you'll be able to continue to support our work with a new generation of historians. Our highest priority needs are for *undergraduate history student scholarships to provide scholarships for entering undergraduates to assist with tuition costs and help us attract ever-more qualified history majors and for graduate student research scholarship to provide financial support for graduate students by releasing them from their teaching duties so that they can complete writing their theses or dissertations.* A contribution, at whatever level you feel comfortable, is deeply appreciated. If you have any questions about giving to the department, how your gift will be used, or to discuss giving options, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Brandão.

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WMU HISTORY NEWSLETTER

VOL. 5, NO.1 FALL 2011

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