UC BERKELEY DEPARTMENT of HISTORY
FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

STUDENT RESEARCH, FACULTY AWARDS, AND MORE
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FROM
the
CHAIR

Fall is here, and inside and outside the halls of Dwinelle there’s the familiar buzz of activity. Every year at this time, we welcoming enthusiastic new cohorts of undergraduate majors and doctoral students on their paths to becoming historians. It’s wonderful to see them plunging into the subject in key gateways to the program. These include our brand-new revision of History 104, “The Craft of History,” which will ultimately grow to serve every undergraduate in the History major.

The spotlight is on our students in this newsletter, and it’s a true pleasure to recognize the amazing accomplishments they bring forward. At our Spring Commencement we celebrated our newest graduates with inspiring remarks from keynote speaker Dania Matos and inventive reflections on history and life from graduate speaker Nicole Viglini and undergraduate speaker Shant Wisner. Families, friends, and faculty welcomed our new graduates in an lovely evening ceremony. In the class of 2023 we feted 107 new History B.A. graduates. In this newsletter you can follow along on their senior thesis research trips and see pictures from the famous “History 101 Circus.” Many of our students made excellent use of travel fellowships that were made possible by generous gifts to the Department. We congratulate all our graduates for completing the rigorous senior thesis! Among our prize winners are Aaron Perry Hill, who received the Matilda Morrison Miller Award for the history of the Western United States; Tiger Schenkman, awarded the first Leon Litwack Prize for outstanding work in African-American history; and Xinyi (Amy) Chen, recipient of the Department’s highest undergraduate award, the Friends of Cal History Thesis Prize and Department Citation.

At the doctoral level, we have been honored to witness, to contribute to, and to celebrate the completion of Ph.D. degrees by 14 new historians at the cusp of starting their careers. Each year the History Department brings forth an outstanding cohort of intellectuals, educators, and doers who are reshaping our discipline with their original scholarship. Each of our Ph.D. graduates has achieved the milestone of this culminating degree through intensive coursework, years of self-directed research, and completion of a book-length manuscript. It’s a thrill to see them come into their own. A list of the prizes they have earned can be found later in this newsletter. We especially celebrate Kimberly Killion, the winner of the Friends of Cal History Dissertation Prize for the most outstanding dissertation, for her study “The Agricultural Chemist at the Table: Land Grant Colleges, Experiment Stations, and the Birth of Nutrition Science in the United States, 1887-1930.”

In this newsletter you can learn more about the research, accomplishments, and prizes of our current
students. We’re especially lucky to share with you a report from two of our graduate students, Aparajita Das and Sourav Ghosh, who share a report on a remarkable workshop they developed on Mughal history for high school students in India. Their work of public history does us proud. You can read personal reflections from undergraduates conducting research and get introduced to the activities of the History Social Science Project. And you can of course learn about History Department events and awards to our wonderful staff and brilliant faculty, as well as celebrate the awarding of the Pulitzer Prize in History to Jefferson Cowie (History, B.A., 1987) for his book Freedom’s Dominion: A Saga of White Resistance to Federal Power.

Lastly, we’re excited to have two new faculty members (re!) joining the History Department this year. Professor Trevor Jackson is an economic historian who studies inequality and crisis. The author of Impunity and Capitalism: The Afterlives of European Financial Crises, 1690-1830, he works on early modern and modern Europe and simultaneously keeps an eye on the present. He comes to us with a very fine pedigree, as he received his Ph.D. in our department! We are thrilled to welcome him back jointly with the Program in Political Economy. Professor Hannah Zeavin is a historian of the human sciences and of media and media technologies. Her first book is the multiply prize-winning study The Distance Cure: A History of Teletherapy. An exceptionally inventive scholar, she helps us build out our department’s strength at the intersection of the discipline of history and the interdisciplinary field of science, technology, and society. We share Professor Zeavin with the Berkeley Center for New Media, and we’re delighted to have her in our midst.

— Cathryn Carson, Department Chair
History Happenings

History Alumni Awards & Prizes

2023 Pulitzer Prize for History: Jefferson Cowie

UC Berkeley History Alumnus Jefferson Cowie was awarded the 2023 Pulitzer Prize for history for his book *Freedom’s Dominion: A Saga of White Resistance to Federal Power*. The Pulitzer Prize Board described Freedom’s Dominion as “a resonant account of an Alabama county in the 19th and 20th centuries shaped by settler colonialism and slavery, a portrait that illustrates the evolution of white supremacy by drawing powerful connections between anti-government and racist ideologies.” Read the full announcement [here](#).

History Faculty Awards & Prizes

2023 Dan David Prize: Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers

Associate Professor Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers was one of 9 scholars to receive the 2023 Dan David Prize, the largest history prize in the world. The Dan David Prize awards up to nine prizes of $300,000 each year to outstanding early and mid-career scholars and practitioners in the historical disciplines. The selection committee praised Jones-Rogers for “using slave narratives in new and sophisticated ways, which not only serve to challenge existing historical views, but also to open up a new set of questions for all fields in which oral histories are used.”

Faculty Award for Outstanding Mentorship of GSIs: Ronit Stahl

Associate Professor Ronit Stahl was selected as a recipient of the Faculty Award for Outstanding Mentorship of Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs). The award recognizes faculty who have provided GSIs outstanding mentorship in teaching at Berkeley and in preparing for teaching in future careers. Faculty receive this award based on nominations from their GSIs and letters of support from departmental chairs.
Distinguished Teaching Award: James Vernon

Professor James Vernon was selected to receive Social Sciences Distinguished Teaching Award for 2023. The award, bestowed by the Division of Social Sciences, the largest teaching unit on Berkeley campus, recognizes teaching that incites intellectual curiosity in students, engages them thoroughly in the enterprise of learning, and has a lifelong impact.

Professor Vernon on receiving this award:
“It is an award for all of those colleagues - graduate students and faculty alike - who have taught me how to teach. And, lastly, of course it is an award for our wonderful students who never cease to amaze me and from whom I never cease to learn from.”

Distinguished Service Award: Marianne Bartholomew-Couts

In April the Division of Social Sciences honored History manager Marianne Bartholomew-Couts with the prestigious Distinguished Service Award for the Social Sciences, recognizing her extraordinary service contributions to our department and to the campus. Marianne became department manager in 2010, after several years handling course scheduling and other duties, and has guided our department through many changes in the years since. Congratulations!

Past History Events

History Homecoming: History and Digital Society or What Can Berkeley Teach Palo Alto?

This year’s History Homecoming took place on February 15th. The theme was History and Digital Society. Human societies are today awash in digital information. By one estimate, it takes human beings in 2023 just two days to generate as much information as human history generated through to the year 2000. But ours is not the first society to deal with information overload. Three Berkeley historians reflected, in the light of past experiences, on the future of information society. The presenters were Maria Mavroudi, who specializes in the deep history of intellectual and cultural encounters between West and East; Jonathan Sheehan, who specializes in the cultural and intellectual history of the European Reformation and its consequences; and Caitlin Rosenthal, who specializes in the modern history of American capitalism and the technologies that have created it. Department Chair Cathryn Carson, a specialist in the histories of science and technology, chaired the panel.
THE 101 CIRCUS is the great annual gathering at which history majors have the opportunity to share their original thesis research. Covering a broad spectrum of geographic and chronological fields, students make 10-minute free-form presentations about their research and writing processes, surprising discoveries, and all the ups and downs of doing the work of a historian.
Sarah Lee will be traveling to Fresno, California and throughout California’s Central Valley for her research on the history of policing and racial apartheid in the state’s largest agricultural region. Taking oral histories, digging through local archives, and visiting the NARA in Seattle, she’ll write a critical history of policing in a mixed rural and urban environment during the 20th Century to understand why the Central Valley remains one of the most racially segregated places in California.

Matthew Kovac researches how Irish republicans forged alliances with Palestinian and South African liberation movements in the 1970s-1980s. This fall, building on his work at Irish and British archives, Kovac will examine solidarity activist collections in Belgium, France, Germany, and Scandinavia. Next year he will consult liberation movement archives in Beirut and Johannesburg.

Calvin Paulson plans to visit archives in London, Oxford, Nairobi, and Mombasa. This project seeks to explore the many abortive settlement schemes and infrastructure projects which characterized Kenya’s early colonial history, as well as the stories of the many South Asian and East African laborers they relied upon.

Annabel LaBrecque will be travelling to Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and France to complete research on how salt resources shaped French, Spanish, and U.S. colonization in the western Mississippi River Valley through the mid nineteenth century.

Our graduate students will be traveling far and wide this coming year as part of their dissertation research. Some will work in a single city while others will criss-cross the globe. Here are some spots on the map where you might be able to find them in an archive or library.
In December 1992, right-wing extremists climbed atop a sixteenth-century triple-domed mosque in northern India’s town of Ayodhya and razed it to the ground. This Hindutva brigade along with various religious and populist organizations alleged that the mosque was built by the first Mughal emperor Babur after demolishing a Hindu temple, and that destroying it was an act of moral retribution. Thirty years later, under the BJP government’s majoritarian Hindutva rule, targeted attacks on Muslims, regular renaming of roads, cities, and gardens associated with Mughal rulers, and labeling the entire medieval and early modern periods in South Asian history as a Dark Ages of ‘Muslim misrule’ and foreign invasions, continue unabated. The latest version of this is the Central Board of Secondary Education’s decision to purge entire chapters dedicated to the Mughal Empire (1526-1857) from Indian school textbooks, with no consideration for chronology, context, or continuity in historical pedagogy. In essence, the Mughal period has become a battleground for defining the idea of India as a state and a civilization.

Against this backdrop of rampant vilification and the expunging of Mughal history from school textbooks, as Mughal historians, we have turned to public pedagogy to create another avenue for learning and engaging with the past. We build on scholarship that has questioned “communal” misrepresentations of the early modern period (Thapar, et. al 1969, Truschke 2020) to work as public historians and community activists who understand Mughal India as an integral part of South Asia’s complex and contested past, not an aberration. For our pilot initiative, we began by asking: how do people make sense of Mughal monuments in their vicinity? How do Mughal monuments become sites for public visions of the past? What can we bring from our classroom teaching experience to public fora and in what ways can such knowledge add nuance to histories of sharing spaces, neighborhoods, and communities?
As our first project, we decided to raise awareness and engagement among high school students about a little-known seventeenth-century monument and garden. Shalimar Bagh (“Garden of the Abode of Joy”) is today a residential neighborhood in north Delhi whose name derives from the garden surrounding the Sheesh Mahal (literally meaning “Glass Palace”). It served as the coronation site for the sixth Mughal emperor Aurangzeb ‘Alamgir in July 1658. The area was originally designed in 1653 by the fifth emperor Shah Jahan’s wife, Akbarabadi Begum, as a premier Mughal garden modeled on the other two, more famous and better-preserved, Shalimar Baghs in Kashmir and Lahore. Today, however, it lies fenced off within a district park managed by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) where most locals are unaware of the monument. The contested legacy of the Mughal emperor as a Muslim fanatic and his association with the monument is certainly one of the reasons for this neglect. Hindu majoritarian groups have threatened to tear down the monument as part of their larger anti-Muslim propaganda. The monument is now a derelict ruin – nothing of the garden remains except an empty brick water channel and overgrown weeds, while the structure itself is barely a shadow of its former glory.

In Summer 2022, a Graduate Student Community Building Award from the Medieval Academy of America helped us collaborate with the nearby Mt. Abu Public School in Rohini, Delhi, which is a heritage stakeholder in the upkeep of the Sheesh Mahal. We conducted a full-day workshop with forty-nine students and three teachers from grades IX, X, and XI at the school. The first part of the workshop included a field visit to the monument, using visual aids to explain its basic architectural features like its façade, elevation, and building layout. The students participated in a group activity, created videos of the Sheesh Mahal, and measured the monument’s dimensions. In the second session, we gave a presentation explaining Shalimar Bagh’s Mughal history and its afterlives. We also provided the students with a worksheet containing excerpts from textual and visual primary sources, which they analyzed and interpreted based on our prompts. In the last segment, the students were divided into groups where they made videos, wrote raps about the monument, and rehearsed a play enacting the accession of Aurangzeb at Sheesh Mahal. We ended with a post-workshop debriefing with the principal and teachers to discuss future collaborations.

Based on the enthusiastic response and participation of students and teachers, over the next academic year (2023-24), thanks to the Bhattacharya Graduate Fellowship and Maharaj Kaul Travel Grant granted by the Institute for South Asia Studies, UC Berkeley, we aim to continue developing a model for public history in India. We will also expand our project to another Mughal monument in Meerut, a hundred miles from Delhi. The Shah Pir Dargah is a Sufi shrine attributed to yet another Mughal queen’s patronage: Nur Jahan (d. 1645). Building on feminist models of “herstories” that foreground women’s lives and experiences to narrate the past as a corrective to male-centric histories, especially in Islamicate contexts, we wish to highlight the economic and political power wielded by elite Muslim women in commissioning architecture across South Asia.

We thank Abhishek Kaicker for endorsing our project to MAA. We also took inspiration from Ronit Y Stahl’s History 7B Primary Source Worksheet for conducting the workshop.
undergraduate RESEARCH GRANTS

Lucia Alvarez
National Archives, London

This research opportunity was an amazing experience for myself, as this was the first time I had ever conducted onsite research and visited an archive to do so. The National Archives was where I had collected most of the information I would be using for the research of my thesis on the 1951 Festival of Britain, more specifically on how these promoted notions of family in housing advertisements, under the guise of modernization, still held hegemonic ideals from the Conservatives.

The archives were located in a suburban neighborhood of London named Kew. During my visit, at first, it was quite daunting but exciting. I was given an identification card with my picture on it in order to scan in and out of the reading rooms. I was able to take back with a fantastic amount of information with the primary sources I encountered, and many of them supplemented the arguments in my thesis. One of the documents (not intended for public release) was a ‘live architecture exhibition’ pamphlet, where the scripts show the daily lives of different people including mothers and young people, which was relevant in my research as I argued on the conceived notions of gender roles and class consciousness in 1950s UK.

I was also able to visit the original site of the Festival of Britain, where one building is still preserved, called the Royal Festival Hall on the Thames. There I found a little installation on the Festival called ‘Story of ‘51’ with descriptions and stories of festival goers and memorabilia from the event. This research opportunity presented and introduced me with different aspects of this Festival, I would not have been able to find in just Berkeley.

This wonderful experience has also given me the confidence to continue conducting research for the future in further education. While sifting through the many boxes of files and papers, I was simultaneously thinking about what a history graduate student friend of mine said about holding literal history in your hands, and holding the responsibility of telling that history. After this opportunity, I am confident enough to continue my efforts of studying history and becoming a historian.
Taylor Valci
Springfield, Missouri

The opportunity to spend a week in the archives of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center in Springfield, Missouri was not only integral and monumental to my research as an undergraduate History student in the honors thesis program, but it was also transformational in my personal life as a child with deep ancestral roots in the white, American Pentecostal movement. My aspiration to study the boys and girls scouts known as Royal Rangers and Missionettes that were developed by the Assemblies of God church in the 1950s stemmed from my own familial experience with my grandmother, mother, siblings, and myself all participating in these programs over the nearly seven decades of their existence. Throughout these years, the Assemblies of God church developed these children’s programs with the hope of converting as many young people to their particular doctrine of conservative Christianity through an overlay of fun activities and community growth. During my research, I was surprised to see the grassroots origins of these programs, as young people and their churches across the country began developing their own curriculum independently. It was these groups that came to the Assemblies of God national headquarters looking to be codified into existence and supported by the national branch. During my time in Springfield, it became apparent that the Assemblies of God church vacillated between the pillars of isolation, indoctrination, and integration through the many decades these programs have existed. Isolation is preached with fervor as not only are the children strictly told to refrain from any close connections with anyone outside of the church, but the very development of these programs themselves speaks to the isolationist endeavors to remove children from larger, secular society. Indoctrination is deeply embedded into the curriculum of these programs as, repeatedly, children are taught to venerate the Sixteen Fundamental Truths that were codified into Assemblies of God doctrine in 1916. The four predominant truths emphasized in the curriculum are: Salvation, Divine Healing, Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and Rapture. Finally, while isolationist and fundamentalist, the Assemblies of God church still engages with the larger world and struggles to decide which elements of culture and society are meant to be integrated into their programs. Over the decades of these programs’ existence, the church is found to make decisions on how heavily to emphasize their goals of isolationism, indoctrination, and integration, specifically on topics related to race, gender, and ability.

When combing through the thousands of pages of documents I requested the archivist to put aside for me during the trip, I found myself looking directly at the curricula I was given as a child, along with that of my mother and grandmother. This project has allowed me to understand my generational history in a way I never would have imagined. I can say with complete confidence that my thesis would never have come to fruition without the UC Berkeley History Department’s generous support in allowing me to go on this research trip. The information I collected from my time in the archives is at the core of everything my thesis will be about, and on both a personal and academic level, I will forever be grateful for this incredible opportunity.
History Social Science Project: 2022-2023 Initiatives

By Rachel Reinhard
HSSP Director

The UC Berkeley History-Social Science Project, located in the Department of History, supports history instruction in elementary and secondary classrooms across the Bay Area.

Teaching the World: Centering the Climate Crisis in 10th Grade Global History

UCBHSSP staff, supported by funding from the campus’ International and Area Studies Centers, spent 4 years collaborating with world history teachers on the re-envisioning of world history courses – 6th (ancient), 7th (medieval), and 10th grade (modern) – in order to take seriously the State’s 2016 instructional recommendations, connect topics in history to contemporary issues, and reinforce relevance to student lives.

UCBHSSP’s Rachel Reinhard and Devin Hess collaborated with Kaedan Peters, a 10th grade teacher at Arroyo High School in San Lorenzo, on envisioning a world history course that centered the climate crisis, exploring the significance of the industrial revolution and its short and long term consequences on the natural world. This curricular work emphasizes three key shifts: 1) reinforcing the human relationship to other elements of the natural world prior to colonization, 2) centering specific case studies that highlight changes between humans and other elements of the natural world following the industrial revolution 3) and discussing the climate crisis within this historical context.

The newly designed course map was first shared with teachers at our Teaching the World symposium last June, and Peters spent the 2022-2023 school year piloting the course with their colleagues. This spring and summer, Peters shared their work with teachers at the California Council for the Social Studies and World History Association conferences. This year UCBHSSP will sponsor a teacher inquiry with a core group of interested 10th grade teachers and Peters’ work will be included in a special issue of the World History Bulletin.

Kaedan Peters presenting at the meeting of the World History Association

Implementing Ethnic Studies: Leveraging University Resources for K12 Classrooms

Associate Director Jason Muñiz has led UCBHSSP’s participation as a core member of the UC Berkeley High School Ethnic Studies Initiative, in partnership with the American Cultures Center, Department of Ethnic Studies, and Ethnic Studies Library. This initiative emerged from a campus understanding of the daunting task districts face in implementing the new high school graduation requirement in Ethnic Studies.
Leaders of the initiative are working to identify and make accessible UC Berkeley resources. HSESI has funded a UCBHSSP GSR, and the four lead partners collectively launched a summer learning institute for Bay Area Ethnic Studies teachers this June.

**Big City Social Studies: Civic Education Connections**

UCBHSSP is a founding member of the Big City Social Studies Professional Learning Community and now serves as the fiscal sponsor of a Hewlett Grant to support the PLC’s ongoing work. This national cohort of university-based researchers and district-level partners was convened in order to share current directions in social studies instruction. Collectively BCSS participants are reinforcing an alternative narrative to history instruction that contrasts with the threats and limits to instruction that are emerging across the country.

Through BCSS participation, new collaborations are emerging. In one example, Harvard’s Eric Soto-Shed has begun incorporating into his methods courses concepts and strategies of civic action that have been developed by the Integrated Action Civics Project, which emerged from a collaboration among UCBHSSP and two Bay Area county offices of education. This summer, Soto-Shed’s pre-service teachers have been introduced to IACP strategies that foster understanding of the concepts of justice and the analysis of power and stakeholders through the examination of historical and contemporary events.

Ethnic Studies librarian Lillian Castillo shares resources from the library’s collection with teacher participants.

BCSS participants during their spring mini-conference, co-hosted by UCBHSSP and San Francisco Unified.
## Graduate Students

- **Friends of Cal History Dissertation Prize**
  - for the most outstanding dissertation
  - Kimberly Killion

- **Best Graduate Seminar Paper Prize**
  - for outstanding scholarship in a graduate course
  - Julie Frankenbach

- **Michael I. Gurevich Prize**
  - for outstanding work in Russian History
  - Jacob Smiley

- **George T. Guttridge Prize**
  - for outstanding work in British or American colonial history
  - Russell L. Weber
  - Claire Wrigley

- **David Hollinger Prize**
  - for graduate student achievement in intellectual history
  - Jonathan Andrew Lear

- **Leon Litwack Graduate Essay Prize**
  - for the most outstanding essay in African-American History
  - Mario Burrus

- **Leon Litwack Dissertation Prize**
  - for the most outstanding dissertation in African-American history
  - Nicole Viglini

- **Leo Lowenthal Memorial Prize**
  - for outstanding work in the history of culture and politics
  - Sean Cronan

## Undergraduate Students

- **Matilda Morrison Miller Award**
  - for achievement in the history of the Western United States
  - Aaron Perry Hill

- **Friends of Cal History Thesis Prize & Department Citation**
  - for the best written undergraduate thesis
  - Xinyi (Amy) Chen

- **Leon Litwack Prize**
  - for outstanding work in African-American history
  - Tiger Schenkman

### Highest Honors *
- Katherine Booksa
- Amy Chen
- Tiger Schenkman

### High Honors *
- Aaron Perry Hill
- Yongkang Li
- Tessa Mouw

* proposed list
## DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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*Phi Beta Kappa Member
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Jona Sandy Wool-Baum*
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Donors play a critical role in sustaining and enhancing the teaching and research mission of Berkeley History. The Department uses Friends of Cal History funds to support the following items:

- Travel grants for undergraduates conducting research for their senior thesis projects
- Summer grants for graduate student research travel or language study
- Conference grants for graduate students who are presenting papers or interviewing for jobs
- Equipment for the graduate computer lab
- Work-study positions for instructional support
- A graduate facilities coordinator position

Most importantly, Friends of Cal History funds may support students in any field of study, so the Department can direct funding where it is most needed. This unrestricted funding enhances our multi-year financial package for students, allowing the Department to maintain a level of quality that has long been a hallmark of a Berkeley degree.

To support the Department of History, please donate online at give.berkeley.edu or mail checks (payable to UC Berkeley Foundation) to the address listed on the inside cover of this newsletter. Thank you for your continued support!