

INSIDE:

- Student Awards and Prizes
- Cornell Historical Society
- New Courses
- Books by Faculty

Chair's Letter

Dear Alumni and Friends,

It's a pleasure to welcome you to our second annual newsletter. As always, we'd love to hear from you, so please do send us your news.

Our faculty received great recognition this past year for their achievements. **Maria Cristina Garcia** was named to an endowed chair, the Howard A. Newman Professorship of American Studies, to honor her superb scholarship on Cuban-American history and on Central American migration to Canada, Mexico, and the US. She also won the Stephen and Margery Russell Distinguished Teaching Award. She exhibits the mix of dedicated teaching and service that Cornell expects from its finest professors.

Since our last newsletter, **Holly Case** has won three prizes for her book, *Between States: The Transylvanian Question and the European Idea during World War II* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2009), among them, the George Louis Beer Prize of the American Historical Association for best book in modern European international history. Case also won a Mellon Foundation New Directions Fellowship to pursue Ottoman/Turkish Studies and the History of Science.

Sherman Cochran was honored by the Cornell Asia-Pacific Studies (CAPS) Program, which established the "Cochran Prize," to be awarded annually to the outstanding graduating senior in the CAPS major. **Paul Hyams** was elected to the Society of Fellows, Medieval Academy of America. **Isabel Hull** was Visiting Astor Professor at Oxford University. **Dominick LaCapra** was appointed Chair of the Mellon National Selection Committee for New Directions Faculty Fellowships. **Mary Beth Norton** was appointed by David Ferriero, the Archivist of the United States, to the 3-person Founding Fathers Advisory Committee to advise on the Founding Fathers publication projects. **John Weiss** was named by Merrill Presidential Scholar Harin Song as the teacher who contributed most to her education at Cornell.

We have won fellowships both inside and outside Cornell. Cornell's Society for the Humanities named **Duane Corpis** Faculty Fellow for 2011-2012 and **Ray Craib** received a Brett de Bary/Mellon Interdisciplinary Writing Group Fellowship for 2010-2011; **Claudia Verhoeven**, **Camille Robcis**, and **Durba Ghosh** also participated in the group. **Camille Robcis** won a LAPA / Mellon Fellowship in the Program in Law and Public Affairs, Princeton University for 2011-2012 and received the Alice Cook Award from Cornell's Feminist Gender, and Sexuality Program.

As part of our continuing effort to reach a wider audience of undergraduate students, we have developed several new and innovative courses: for example, **Mary Beth Norton** co-teaches "The History of Exploration" with Steve Squyres of Astronomy; **Camille Robcis** teaches "The Death of God"; and **Holly Case** and **Claudia Verhoeven** co-teach "History of Law: Great Trials." At the initiative of **Jon Parmenter**, our director of undergraduate studies, we have added a link to our website in which we showcase our recent alumni and highlight the skills that history offers for the job market, <http://www.arts.cornell.edu/history/alumni.php>. As **Katie Engelhart '09** writes, "a degree in history is the best form of preparation for ambitious writers." **Nathaniel Weiss '09** credits his history major for teaching judgment and decision-making as well as conviction and communication. He adds, "You never know when Thucydides or Machiavelli will give you the answer you're looking for." Meanwhile, two former History majors came back to campus this year to talk to our students about their success in the business world: **Caitlin Strandberg '10** and **Elizabeth Francis '00**.

Our faculty serve Cornell outside the department. **Ed Baptist** has been named the new House Professor/Dean of Carl Becker House, beginning in fall 2011. **Oren Falk** became Director of the Medieval Studies Program. Meanwhile, several of us continued as program directors: **Derek Chang** of the Asian-American Studies Program, **Fred Logevall** as the John S. Knight Professor of International Studies in the Einaudi Center for International Studies, **Tamara Loos** as Director of the Southeast Asia Program, **Barry Strauss** as Director of the Program on Freedom and Free Societies, and **Eric Tagliacozzo** as Director of the Comparative Muslim Societies Program.

We hosted **Kathryn Milne** as Miller-Veritas Postdoctoral Fellow in Military History and Visiting Assistant Professor. Kathryn is taking up a position in the fall as assistant professor at Wofford College.

Chair's letter continued on page 4.

Cornell Historical Society



Front Row (left to right): Caitlin McHugh, Theresa Wynn, Anna Bardakh. **Middle Row:** Victoria Gao, Denis Hurley, Maya Koretzky, Elen Aghekyan, Aria Hemphill. **Back Row:** Andrew White, Robert Schur, James Wang, Justin Salman **Not Pictured:** Zachary Newkirk, Mark Collins, Jonathan Davis, Brittany Lloyd, Emily Olsen, Abby Golub

This year saw the creation of two new initiatives by undergraduate History majors. It all began when two students, Andrew White and Maya Koretzky, met in **Claudia Verhoeven's** HIST 2273: Russian Revolutionary Intelligentsia seminar, a class that Koretzky described as "a life-changing experience." White and Koretzky, with the encouragement of Verhoeven, founded the Cornell Historical Society, which brought together a group of interested History majors to design and publish the first issue of the Society's journal, *Ezra's Archives*. White said the goal was to create

a social and intellectual scene for History students to come together and share ideas. Already the Society has over thirty students on its mailing list and has organized two talks by History faculty **Durba Ghosh** and **Mary Beth Norton**, who presented on their work and experience as historians to an audience of undergraduate History majors as well as faculty and grad students. The Society's journal came out in April, and was feted at a reception on May 5. *Ezra's Archives* features contributions by six students whose work was selected from thirty-three

submissions. One of the student authors is Robert Schur, whose contribution on the history of the ballpoint pen appeared in the journal. Schur wrote the original paper for **Eric Tagliacozzo's** course HIST 2430: History of Things. He hopes the Society and the journal will "get people excited about history and attract people to the major." In speaking of the Society's future, Koretzky said they would like to publish the journal more frequently and organize more talks and events next year. If you would like a copy of *Ezra's Archives* or to be added to the Cornell Historical Society's mailing list, please contact cornell-historicalsociety@gmail.com.

Schur hopes the Society and the journal will "get people excited about history and attract people to the major."

Ezra's Archives
A Cornell Historical Society Publication

With Articles Written By:

DENIS HURLEY
VICTORIA GAO
ZACHARY NEWKIRK
CAITLIN MCHUGH
MARK COLLINS
ROBERT SCHUR

Volume 1 | Number 1 | Spring 2011

Student Awards and Prizes

Graduate News

Under **Robert Travers's** leadership as Director of Graduate Studies, we have continued to succeed in attracting, mentoring and retaining an absolutely first-rate group of Ph.D. students. Our graduate students have had a great year in landing tenure-track jobs: **Jessica Harris** is going to Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville; **Seok-Won Lee** to Fort Lewis College; **Hajimu Masuda** to the National University of Singapore; **Peter Staudenmaier** to Marquette University. **Thomas McSweeney** will be a visiting assistant professor at the Cornell University Law School. In scholarship news, **Claudine Ang** received the Hsien Wu and Daisy Yen Wu Scholarship from the Cornell Graduate School; **Catherine Biba** received the Dean's Prize for Distinguished

Teaching from the College of Arts & Sciences. **Samson Lim** received a Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship and **Yuanchong Wang** received a Japan Foundation Fellowship for 2011-12. The graduate Messenger-Chalmers Prize for the best PhD dissertation on research and thinking on human progress has been awarded to **Dianne Cappiello**.

Undergraduate News

Among our juniors, **Phoenix Paz** received the undergraduate Messenger-Chalmers prize, for the best thesis essay on research and thinking on human progress and she received the Bernard and Fannie Lang Prize, for the best honors thesis in US History or American Studies. Along with **Elizabeth Soltan**, Phoenix Paz also received the Cornelius De-

Kiewiet Prize, for outstanding junior history majors who have demonstrated unusual promise and excellence in the field. The DeKiewiet prize committee gives honorable mention to **Jorge Sarmiento** and **Faheem Fazili**. Among our seniors, **Kenneth Kowren** received the Clyde A. Duniway Prize as the best student graduating with the History Major in the Class of 2011 and will graduate *magna cum laude* for his honors thesis. **Laura Gomez-Nichols** and **Sherry Jarons** received the Anne MacIntyre Litchfield Prize which is awarded to two outstanding women graduating with a major in history. **Nick Murray** will graduate *cum laude*.

Congratulations to all our graduating seniors and their families!

History 3180: American Constitutional Development (Fall 2011)

Dick Polenberg is one of the most beloved and experienced professors in the History Department. For decades his courses have attracted large numbers of students who are drawn to his clear and engaging lecturing style and often personalized approach to US history. This recently developed

course is designed for students “who wish to know why they possess certain rights, where those rights came from, and whether or not they're likely to enjoy those same rights in the future.” It spans the period from drafting of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights to the ongoing “war on terrorism.”

Themes of the course include slavery and emancipation, freedom of speech, the New Deal, civil liberties, civil rights, right to privacy, abortion, and affirmative action.

History 2690: History of Terrorism (Fall 2011)

Claudia Verhoeven's new lecture course is already a great draw among History majors and non-majors alike. Her first book, *The Odd Man Karakazov: Imperial Russia, Modernity and the Birth of Terrorism*, speaks to how she came to the study of terrorism, namely through her interest in nineteenth-century Russian history and literature. “As the course shows,” she

notes, “there are many other paths through which one can approach the subject.” The course aims to explore a number of these, asking: How has terrorism been approached by science, history, and literature? How did terrorists represent themselves in political pamphlets, trials, autobiographies, and fiction? Readings for the course include archival materi-

als, manifestos, memoirs, novels, and classic pieces of political writing by authors such as Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, Carl Schmitt, and Hannah Arendt. Finally, the recent death of Osama bin Laden, Verhoeven says, will change the way we study and understand the history of terrorism; she intends to use the course to discuss how and why with students.

“The recent death of Osama bin Laden,” Verhoeven says, “will change the way we study and understand the history of terrorism.”

History 1402: Global Islam (Spring 2011)

This spring Eric Tagliacozzo taught a new freshman-writing seminar exploring how Islam is practiced in the world both historically and today. “I have found it very challenging but also very rewarding to teach this class,” Tagliacozzo said, “as I try to educate myself (and hopefully 17 students) about

the varieties of the lived religion across the width and breadth of the world.” Given his research expertise in the history of Indonesia, Tagliacozzo emphasizes that the majority of Muslims do not live in the Middle East. The course addressed the diversity of Islam across the world, tracing how it has come to be so

important in contemporary global society. A wide array of readings was used to guide students through the landscape of Islam, from VS Naipaul's classic travelogue *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* to the *Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

Cornell University

College of
Arts & Sciences

Department of History

450 McGraw Hall

Cornell University

Ithaca, NY 14853

Phone: 607-255-8862

Fax: 607-255-0469

<http://www.arts.cornell.edu/history/>

Newsletter committee: Holly Case, Durba Ghosh, and
Mary Beth Norton

Chair's letter continued: We wish that we could thank all the department's many generous supporters, but at least we can mention a few. On April 6 we held the second Seymour Lecture in Sports History, named for the late **Harold Seymour Ph.D. '56**, a pioneering baseball historian. Eminent Indian historian Ramachandra Guha enthralled an enthusiastic and overflow crowd with a vivacious talk on "Sport and the Nation: Towards a Social History of Indian Cricket." Funding for the event was provided by Manhattan College Professor **George Kirsch '67**, himself an eminent scholar. Incidentally, Dorothy Jane Mills, who was Harold Seymour's wife, has been recognized by Oxford University Press as co-author of their classic, three-volume history of baseball. On April 14, Prof. Susan Shirk (University of California-San Diego) delivered the annual LaFeber-Silbey Lecture, named in honor of our Emeritus colleagues **Walter LaFeber** and **Joel Silbey**, and endowed by **David Maisel '68**. Shirk spoke on "Will China's Political System Derail its Peaceful Rise?" Professor Shirk's talk questioned whether China's foreign policy, particularly in regard to the U.S., is potentially damaging to its economic rise on the global stage.

Elizabeth Grover '75 supports undergraduate education with the Polenberg Fund, which honors **Richard Polenberg** through such activities as guest speakers and field trips. **Paul Shang '78** supports graduate colloquia in History, crucial to the education of future teachers.

November 29 marked the bittersweet occasion of a retirement party for **Steven Kaplan**, who retires after 41 years of service. Goldwin Smith Professor in History, Steve played a leading role in the field of French history; he is a pioneering scholar of food. His many honors include recognition from the French government as Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and Chevalier de l'Ordre du Mérite. Congratulations, Steve, but we'll miss you!

Barry Strauss/Department Chair and Professor/ bss4@cornell.edu

Books by Faculty

