



Department of History
Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

2020

ON THE RECORD



HISTORY NEWSLETTER

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings to our community of history lovers. We have all experienced tremendous upheaval this year, and although we are used to thinking about historical change, it feels very different when it feels so palpable in our day-to-day lives.

But history can also help us bridge the gap between past and present. To take just a small example: when the students in my medieval history course turned to the unit on the Black Death this fall, their experiences in the current pandemic made them highly receptive to chronicles and administrative records that only a year ago would have seemed more impenetrable to them. From sources that were more than six hundred years old, they noticed medieval witnesses updating their knowledge about the plague's trajectory, reevaluating their explanations of its causes, and adapting their routines and institutions — even their monastic elections! — in response to the cascading crisis. The past is never identical to the present, which makes these moments of insight and empathy all the more special.

Our faculty and grad students have also been involved in historical research even closer to home. An interdisciplinary working group at UGA under the leadership of Dr. Chana Kai Lee was awarded \$100,000 from UGA's Office of Research to research UGA's historic entanglements with the institution of slavery and its legacies in our community. And at the urging of our faculty last fall, UGA has joined the consortium of Universities Studying Slavery.

In other good news, we recently welcomed the newest member of our faculty to campus, Dr. Joey Kellner. Our students are as excited

as we are to have a historian of Russia among our ranks: his course on Modern Russia from Rasputin to Putin filled almost instantly. It was also a bumper-crop year for faculty publications, as you'll see. And Dr. Marvin Chiles, who received his PhD from UGA last year and was advised by Dr. Robert Pratt, is starting off the new academic year as Assistant Professor of History at Old Dominion University.

And although our campus landscape has changed significantly in the interests of public health, you'll still find our Lunchtime Time Machine series in swing, featuring lectures such as "How did the Nazis subvert democracy and seize power?" and "What did it take to be a Cold War spy?" For the details about these lectures and more, you can visit our News and Events page at uga.history.edu.

Or maybe you're staying home for the foreseeable future. Makes sense! But there are other ways to connect with LeConte. If you're an alum, let us know what you're up to at history.uga.edu/alumnusa-update-form. The stories you share help us give our students real-life examples of the many ways we can transform historical thinking into careers and lives after college. Even in a pandemic — or maybe especially during a pandemic — we are glad to hear from our friends near and far.

Jamie Kreiner
Department Head



Welcoming Our New Grad Students

Jared Asser hails from Canada. He completed his undergraduate degree in Toronto before beginning graduate work at a small liberal arts university in the Kawartha Lakes region. He plans to parlay his research on the history of hate groups into the history of emotion.

Ashley (Paige) Collins is from Austell, GA. Her research centers around the origins of the California mission tourism industry, and how these instruments of imperialism became idyllic tourist attractions in the waning decades of the nineteenth century.

Morgan Geiser is originally from Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His research interest is sixteenth-century French religious history. Morgan came to the Master's program as a member of UGA's unique and competitive Double Dawgs program.

Devin Jerome is a Memphis native studying agriculture, labor, and migration in the twentieth-century South. He earned an MA in History at UGA. Devin likes to travel, eat, read, and enjoy the great outdoors with his wife (Grace) and their two Chihuahuas.

Steve Krug studies Colonial American history and Modern European intellectual history. He received an M.A. from UGA in 2020. Steve worked in finance before pursuing graduate studies.

Theodora (Tedi) Light spent the last 8 years in the Beaufort, SC area where she met her husband, Carl. She was excited to return to Athens where she was born and raised—Go Dawgs! Tedi's research looks at the intersections between Indigenous and African peoples in the early American Southeast.

Ariana Persico is from Santa Barbara, California. She is working with James Brooks and studies Native American history, memory, museums, monuments, and decolonizing methodologies. She is a recipient of the Graduate School Research Assistantship (GSRA).

Rolando Rodriguez received a Master's in Latin American, Caribbean, and Iberian Studies from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He currently studies Latin American history with a specific focus on race, law, and politics in nineteenth century Brazil.



In late 2019, the University of Georgia awarded a grant to a team of twenty-one faculty members across the campus, led by the Department of History's Dr. Chana Kai Lee, to study the history of slavery from 1785 to 1865.

History of Slavery at the University of Georgia (HSUGA) Project

When the university approved renovations to Baldwin Hall in December 2014, the school did not know that it would spark a line of interrogation and inquiry about its history with the peculiar institution—slavery.

Nevertheless, construction crews uncovered the remains of twenty-seven people after breaking ground one year later in November 2015, halting progress on those renovations. Eventually, additional gravesites were discovered and confirmed to belong to members of Athens' enslaved community. And although very little became known or recovered about the personal histories and identities of those individuals disturbed by the university's development, the affair would lead to a grant of study dedicated to uncovering more about the school's relationship with slavery, the enslavers and the enslaved.

Eventually, the school officially joined a consortium of other colleges and universities from across the globe with roots in the

pre-emancipation period—the “Universities Studying Slavery”—to understand more completely the legacy of slavery. Across disciplines, ranging from history to geography and from Franklin College to the College of Environment and Design, faculty and students have worked to find clearer answers to questions regarding the university's place in fostering slavery and the exploitative labor practices inherent to it. Faculty members from these different disciplines brought to the project their expertise, methods, and skills. Within the Department of History, the team includes Dr. Lee, as the principal investigator, Drs. Stephen Berry, James Brooks, Cindy Hahamovitch, Scott Nesbit, Akela Reason, Daniel Rood, and Cassia Roth.

The school's antebellum history, spanning eight decades, gave project members much fodder to analyze, but it also presented significant problems. For instance, the grant's strict timeline restricted academic interrogation of sources, because slavery did not neatly end with

History of Slavery Project, cont'd

As an institution that defined and infected the Deep South, of which Georgia was a substantial part, slavery affected every corner of life in the region. And it had long-ranging and deep impacts on the way people related with one another. As such, it would be nominally dead after 1865, but slavery's effects continued to persist in the Jim Crow period through the Civil Rights Movement and into the present. Moreover, the hard periodization threw into question the use of documents produced after emancipation, such as the WPA's Slave Narratives, which were products of the New Deal in the 1930s.

Undergraduate and graduate students provided research support during the spring semester and over the summer. Graduate students from the Department of History included Imani Carter, Christian Choe, Devin Jerome, Valerie McLaurin, and Ally Velez. They pored over genealogical records of the school's alumni, faculty, and administrators, including census records, slave schedules, and grave indices; inspected last wills and testaments of the affiliates; analyzed the Clarke County property tax digests; probed the records of cemeteries in the county for enslaved people and Black people; surveyed available plantation books; combed through the Slave Narratives;

and investigated holdings at the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Over the summer, the primary goal and task was the process of naming the enslaved and returning to these individuals their identities, which were effectively erased from the record by their captors and exploiters. This was one part of a larger objective to pinpoint the exact contributions of enslaved labor and toil to the university's prosperity, progress, and overall success during the antebellum period. Researchers hoped to answer, or at the very least get closer to answering, the extent of the question to which the university grew on a foundation of coercion.

Christian Choe

Theodora Light Awarded Fulbright

Theodora (Tedi) Light, a first year MA student, has been awarded a 2020-21 Fulbright Predoctoral Research Grant to conduct research in Spain. Tedi will be analyzing Spanish involvement in the practices of Indigenous and African enslavement in the colony of La Florida, connecting the histories of colonial Spanish and English North America during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She will be hosted by Dr. Rocío Delibes-Mateos at

the University of Seville. The university has offered her full use of their comprehensive colonial archives in addition to the primary repository at the General Archive of the Indies. Tedi admits that attempting a cultural exchange program like a Fulbright in the age of Covid will present certain challenges, but luckily for the historian, the archives are full of human voices who speak without spreading viruses!



Dr. Joey Kellner Joins the Faculty

Tell us about your research -

I am a historian of Russia, responsible for the whole modern period, but specializing in the Soviet era. My research is at the end of the Soviet period, specifically cultural history of the collapse and transition. The collapse is kind of a new frontier of history that is starting to produce a lot of interesting reassessments. My research is about a highly visible and, for Russians, a highly memorable flourishing of radical new worldviews and spiritual movements that emerged at the time of the collapse. For anybody who lived through this period there, it's immediately memorable - at the time of the collapse there was a popular astrology boom, Hare Krishnas in the streets, apocalyptic sects, prophets and proselytizers and mystics and missionaries everywhere in Moscow and other cities. In my book I have four case studies of groups that were highly visible and successful at the time all based on oral history interviews, and I use

that as a lens to help understand what the collapse meant and how it was interpreted by Soviet people "at street level" rather than from above.

Will your book be the first study of post-Soviet cultural history?

To my knowledge it is the first cultural history of the collapse. That's what I tell people. It is wholly possible by the time that it gets out that there will be others, but for now let's say it is the only one.

What got you into late Soviet, and post-soviet, cultural history?

As an undergraduate I was not a historian, instead I was a Russian language major. From there, and from time spent in Russia, my interest spread from studying the Russian language into an interest in Russian culture. And as I continued to be exposed to Russian culture I began to think of it historically. I am of a set of people who just find Russian culture fascinating. There is just a certain set of people, for whatever reason, that feel drawn to Russia in this way, sometimes stemming from Russian literature, or film or whatever, and I got that bug in college.

When I got to grad school I had proposed a few more remote historical topics, but not with much serious commitment, and after talking with my advisor for a year or two I became a little more directed towards modern Soviet culture. So not surprisingly, given my interest in contemporary culture, I ended up studying the collapse period.

How does your research inform your teaching?

My research is ethnographic, it is meant to really immerse me, the researcher, and the reader in life and how it was lived. My approach allows us to experience the way people thought about and saw the world, and I think that is probably the major perspective of my classes as well, particularly in the Soviet period where I am most comfortable. Of course, in the survey, I teach all methods, but it is the cultural perspectives I am most interested in and, because of that, I think it sticks with students the most. So, I hope that anybody reading my research or watching my class would find a similarity in style for sure.

This fall, doctoral student Rob Ferguson talked with our newest faculty member about his research, teaching, and growth as a historian.



Kudos and Accomplishments

Associate Professor **Diane Batts Morrow** acted as a principal talking head in George Wingard's Documentary Film, *We Came a Long Way by Faith: Catholic Hill and St. James the Greater Catholic Church*, winner of Accolade Global Film Competition Awards of Merit in both the Documentary Short and Christian Categories, June 2020. The Catholic University Press invited her to contribute to its forthcoming anthology, "*Black Catholic Studies Reader*", including contributions from significant scholars in the field, including Thea Bowman, Diana Hayes, Cyprian Davis, Albert Raboteau, Clarence Rivers, among others. The contributions will be drawn in part from essays published in the scholarly quarterly, *U.S. Catholic Historian*.

Professor **Peter Hoffer** has a number of pending publications: A revised and enlarged edition of Hoffer's co-authored *Roe v. Wade: The Abortion Rights Controversy in American History* with two new chapters will appear this winter

from the University Press of Kansas. "Daniel Webster and the Unfinished Constitution" is in production and scheduled for the Spring of 2021 from Kansas. He also co-edited the Witness to History series at Johns Hopkins University Press and the Landmark Law and American Society series at Kansas. Last year's *Litigation Nation* was reviewed this year in the *Wall Street Journal*, his third book to gain recognition there.

Alum **Tore Olsson's** 2017 book *Agrarian Crossings* (Princeton), based on his UGA 2013 doctoral dissertation, has received five international and national book awards. Olsson is an Associate Professor in history at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Associate Professor **Jennifer Palmer** received an American Council of Learned Societies fellowship for 2020/21. She was also elected as President of the French Colonial Historical Society. And she published an article in *Histoire Sociale/Social History* in a

special issue on Slavery, Memory, Power: France and Its Former Colonies.

Associate Professor **Ari Levine** was awarded a Henry Luce Foundation/ ACLS Program in China Studies Collaborative Reading-Workshop Grant (\$15,000) in collaboration with two other researchers, to organize a three-day workshop, *Reading Biji: Randomness, Fluidity, Materiality, and Emotionality*, which will be held at UCSB next July.

Assistant Professor **Cassia Roth** published articles in *Gender & History, Medical History*. She also received a 2021 fellowship at the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale University; a Faculty Research Grant from the Willson Center (UGA); the M.G. Michael Award from Franklin College; and the History Department Teaching Award to develop a new course on public health in Latin America.

2020 Faculty Retirements

December 2020, Associate Professor **Diane Batts Morrow** (24 years)

Dr. Morrow is the author of *Persons of Color and Religious at the Same Time: The Oblate Sisters Of Providence, 1826-1860* (UNC Press, 2002). She plans to complete her second volume on the Oblate Sisters of Providence in her retirement.

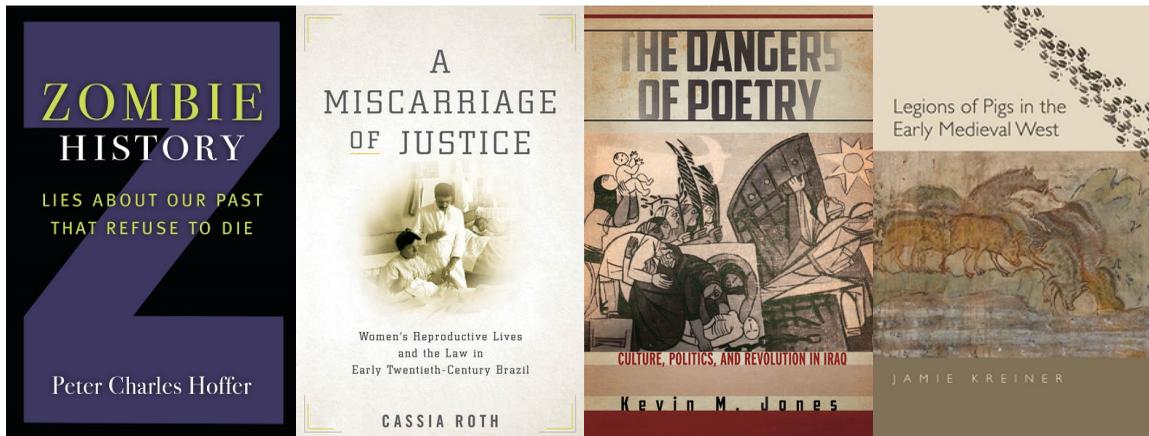
June 2020, Associate Professor **Miranda J. Pollard** (29 years)

Dr. Pollard retired in December after many years of teaching. She is the author of the book *Reign of Virtue: Mobilizing Gender in Vichy France, 1940-1944* (University of Chicago Press, 1998).

December 2020, Associate Professor **Kirk Willis** (39 years)

After many years in the classroom, Dr. Willis is looking forward to spending more of his time with his grandson Oscar!

New Books by Our Faculty



Peter Charles Hoffer, *Zombie History: Lies About Our Past That Refuse to Die*
January 2020, University of Michigan Press

Cassia Roth, *A Miscarriage of Justice: Women's Reproductive Lives and the Law in Early Twentieth Century Brazil*
January 2020, Stanford University Press

Claudio Saunt, *Unworthy Republic: The Dispossession of Native Americans and the Road to Indian Territory*
March 2020, W.W. Norton and Company

Kevin M. Jones, *The Dangers of Poetry: Culture, Politics, and Revolution in Iraq*
September 2020, Stanford University Press

Jamie Kreiner, *Legions of Pigs in the Early Medieval West*
October 2020, Yale University Press

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For questions about giving, please contact:

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Office of Development, (706)542-3581 or alison.godley@uga.edu

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Each year the Department of History actively supports students who need financial assistance to participate in Study Away programs and conduct research. Including those who are traveling to regional archives to complete research for their senior theses. And our History Summer Fellows Institute, which supports students from underrepresented groups who interested in graduate school, is another unique program that exists through donor support. If you would like to support our students, please consider donating to the History Undergraduate Student Support Fund. Your gift, no matter the size, removes obstacles and opens doors for history students.



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Department of History

NEWSLETTER

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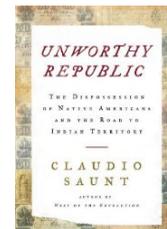
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Claudio Saunt's *Unworthy Republic*

Claudio Saunt's highly acclaimed book *Unworthy Republic: The Dispossession of Native Americans and the Road to Indian Territory*, was a Finalist for the 2020 National Book Award for Nonfiction and shortlisted for the 2020 Cundill History Prize. This "unflinching look at Indian Removal in the 1830's" (*New York Times*) and "haunting story of racialized cruelty and greed" (*Atlantic*) has also been named a Top Ten Best Book of 2020 by the *Washington Post* and *Publishers Weekly*.



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