Notes from the Chair

Jamie Kreiner

Greetings, friends and fans of history! I write you as the new head of the Department of History here at UGA — and as a historian of the early Middle Ages, I can assure you that this is not a barbarian takeover. Things are bright as ever in LeConte. For instance...

In August we welcomed Dr. James Brooks to campus, who trekked all the way from Santa Barbara to join us as the inaugural Carl and Sally Gable Distinguished Chair in Southern Colonial History. We launched two new double-degree (or “Double Dawgs”) programs, which allow students to graduate with both a bachelor’s and master’s degree in five years: a new History AB/MA and a History AB/Historic Preservation MHP. Thanks to your generous support, our history majors were able to study this past year in D.C., Bamberg, Florianópolis, Freiburg, Lancaster, Oxford, and Verona. And our faculty members garnered some highly prestigious awards recently, including Scott Nelson, who won a Guggenheim Fellowship, and John Morrow, who received the Pritzker Literature Award for Lifetime Achievement in Military Writing.

This summer was also the second year of our Summer History Fellows Institute, a program that brings promising undergraduates from underrepresented groups to UGA to foster their interest in history and to encourage them to go on to graduate school. This year, eight fellows took workshops with our faculty that introduced them to new ways of working with evidence and new ways of asking questions about the past. They developed their own research projects that took them into the archives. And they wrote and honed their personal statements — that all-important genre for graduate-school applications. When historians expand their ranks, our perspectives on history widen as well, and we are very grateful to Kay and John Parker for making this program possible, thanks to their three-year commitment.

If you’re ever in Athens and want an excuse where you live. If you’re an alum, I’d encourage you to fill out an update online, at https://history.uga.edu/alumnusa-update-form. Not only are we happy to learn what you’ve been doing. It also helps us give our students real-life examples of the many ways we can transform historical thinking into careers and lives after college. We have a great community near and far, and that’s thanks to all of you.

And we’d love to hear from you, no matter Jamie Kreiner
Associate Professor and Department Head

ALUMNUS/A UPDATE FORM
https://history.uga.edu/alumnusa-update-form
2019 History Summer Fellows Institute

Civil War Chair Stephen Berry and Master’s student Annelle (Nellie) Brunson coordinated our Summer Fellows program this year in an intensive introduction to our UGA graduate academic resources and local Athens community. Nellie Brunson reported on the summer:

Saying goodbye to our tie-dyed, water-researching young historians, the department celebrated the end of an intense, collaborative July filled with archival research, professional networking, and exploratory learning, thanks to our History Summer Fellows Program. Our eight residential fellows—all rising juniors and seniors interested in graduate school—Daniela Aguirre, Tia Coleman, Jacob Finegan, TiBerni Hall, Raven Manygoats, Denise Marion, Braden Pollet, and Jaslynn Ware—spent the month under the mentorship of Stephen Berry and Annelle Brunson, getting to know the University community, learning about our graduate student resources, and experiencing life as a resident of Athens.

At the end of the institute, all of the students noted having had positive experiences and associations with history faculty, grads, and staff during their time in Athens. Throughout the month, our Fellows heard from fifteen history faculty members along with Professor Barbara McCaskill in English, and alums LaShonda Mims and Tom Okie. Putnam County Schools Community Liaison Avis Williams opened the conversation of history’s role in the secondary classroom and surrounding community. On July 23, we heard from an array of panelists about Diversity at UGA.

Jacob Finegan found the rigorous and welcoming environment to be “an opportunity for scholastic exchange which is necessary and formative for every burgeoning scholar.” TiBerni Hall noted the program “reaffirmed [to] me that History is my passion.” For Daniela Aguirre, SFI allowed her for the first time “to realistically see myself as a historian.”

Moving beyond the confines of LeConte Hall, the Institute met with the publishing team at the UGA Press.

They also heard from Ph.D. student Sidonia Serafini about her process curating the ongoing Convict Labor in Georgia museum exhibit, and later visited the Chief Vann House State Historic Site in Chatsworth, Georgia.

In a hands-on session at the Center for Geospatial Research, the Fellows engaged with Sergio Bernardes to learn about potential uses of virtual reality and mapping technologies in the humanities.

Peggy Galis hosted two gatherings at her home to connect our Fellows with other Athens locals and the program’s participants. Here they met with Athens native and Georgia politician Michael Thurmond, author of A Story Untold: Black Men and Women in Athens History.

The Summer Fellows Institute would not be possible without the Fellows, session leaders, and collaborators mentioned above, as well as the sponsors who made it all possible, John and Kay Parker. Thank you John and Kay!

Frances Abele (A.B. ’19, Public History Intern in DC) Development Communications Assistant, National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Jessica M. Brown (A.B. ’19, Public History Intern in DC) Guest Experience Ambassador at the Atlanta History Center, Master’s in Public History student at Georgia State University.


Langston Leake (A.B. ‘18, Public History Intern in DC), Exhibit Assistant, Atlanta History Center.

Jason R. Kirby (Ph.D. ‘18), Assistant Prof. of History, Francis Marion University.

Isabel Mann (A.B. and M.A. ‘17, Public History Intern in DC), Museum Educator, Kennesaw State U Museum of History and Holocaust Education

James A. Owen (Ph.D. ’19), Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of History and Political Science, Otterbein University.

CAREER NOTES
Tell us about your research. One thing that has long fascinated me is why perfectly decent people do perfectly terrible things. Because we don’t have to look very far and wide in history to see that this is commonplace on the part of our species. And so, my work for the last 30 years has really been looking at cases, primarily the Southwest of North America, to help me understand how people can do bring our worst to one another, often while claiming to be at our best.

My first decades of research were devoted to trying to understand the appearance and function of the system of slavery in a region and among peoples of North America that we hadn’t really imagined was going to be a place where we were going to see human bondage. But in fact, the Southwest borderlands were replete with all sorts of forms of enslavements and captivities and bondage and peonage from very early days and well into the 19th century, and actually well after emancipation and the end of the Civil War. My early work culminated in a publication in 2002 of a book, Captives and Cousins, that turned out to make a bigger splash than any of us had imagined.

For my second project, Mesa of Sorrows, I change the focus from looking at intercultural violence to looking at intracultural violence. I wanted to understand cases which we have archeologically and historically where communities implode on themselves. The one that I wrote about is the case in the autumn of 1700 when a coalition of Hopi villages field an army of warriors to go and destroy one of their own towns, one of their own communities, Awat’ovi, the High Place of the Bow Clan. And a few survivors, mostly women are distributed among the villages of the attacking army and thereby become clan founders. There are three villages and today descendants of these surviving women, all of whom carry substantial social stigma, because they’re descended from this haunted place. So, I wanted to work from a historic case but toward a contemporary perspective. Mesa of Sorrows looks at the deep past, and present, in that this is 320 years old, yet it haunts Hopis today. Deeply. And so what I tried to do combine my training as a historian and archeologist to sort through the evidence to find some deeper truths and lessons within that violence…it one sense, it all boils down to let us be careful not to make strangers of our kinfolk and neighbors...a message with meaning yet today.

How does your research inform your teaching? Teaching to me is something that happens both in the classroom and very much something that happens out in the public sphere. Because we academic humanists are doomed to extinction if we don’t reach the non-academic public and convince them that our work matters and convince them that life is better because we’re in the world. I want my students to understand that we’re not just here to learn historiography and to pour libations to our disciplinary ancestors, but we’re here to understand how the world functions and how we can make the place a little better if we look back at the past and forge ahead with the wisdom of experience.

That’s also why I’m very much committed to public history. Public history takes various forms: it’s the museum world, it’s national parks, historic sites, interpretation, it’s archives, it’s national register nominations and property title searches...“putting history to work in the world” as we say at the National Council of Public History. This is also why I enjoy serving as Editor of the journal The Public Historian, the flagship journal of that discipline. I think vitally important that we reach outside the classroom, outside the campus and into public conversations and interactions with non-academics.

We’re here to understand how the world functions and how we can make the place a little better if we look back at the past and forge ahead with the wisdom of experience.

How do you see UGA helping to advance your research? The Gable Chair at Georgia gives me a great opportunity to expand my notion of what the South is, and to suggest that in North America there is a “Greater South,” stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, which is unified by one quality—heat—and it’s made distinctive by two qualities, that one side is really wet and the other side is really dry. And from a cultural-ecological perspective that sets up all sorts of interesting questions: how do people adapt to hot-and-dry and hot-and-wet? How does it show archeologically? How does it show in the historical record after colonization and the intrusion of empires? How do societies form up in different ways across the two regions? They’re unified by an indigenous world that spread across the continent. All the great experiments in social complexity in pre-Colombian North America took place across the Greater South—the Cahokian Mississipians, the Chacoan network, and the Hohokam in the Salt and Gila River basins of today’s Arizona. Let’s consider that at time the Franciscans are having multiple failures in missionizing among the Apalachee in north Florida, they’re also dreaming up a mission system in California—and repeating the same mistakes they’re making in Florida. The two great slave systems of North America developed across the Greater South, one in the Southeast and one in the Southwest—why? What are the lingering consequences of the vastness of human bondage in the region? Those are the kinds of questions that we can use to enliven classrooms and scholarship. I’m coordinating a long-term effort to join the Western Historical Association and the Southern Historical Association, in a joint conference in 2024, in Kansas City...we’re calling it, with tongue only somewhat firmly in cheek, “The Unholy Union.”
Graduate Research Fellow
Maggie Neel

A first-year doctoral student in public history, Maggie Neel is the recipient of a competitive Graduate School Research Fellowship. She was interviewed recently by another first year doctoral student, Valerie McLaurin.

What brought you to do a PhD in history? In my sophomore year of college, I decided that I was going to be a history major instead of an international relations major. From that I was exposed to some really incredible professors…. and then my own life experiences had me asking lots of questions that were historically based. I decided that I wanted to answer those questions and the best way to do that was to just keep going to school, keep doing my own research, and a PhD seemed like the way to do it.

With the multidisciplinary perspective that you have on history, how does that inform your research interests now and what you're going to be pursuing? In school…. I was interested in French imperialism and colonialism in North Africa, particularly Morocco. But I started learning more and more about the built environment. I was a backpacking guide in New Mexico for three summers and during those summers the program I was with did a lot of interpretation of historic sites. They had areas where there was living history, preservation of specific buildings and sites, a whole section where they did archeology, and interpretation of ancestral Puebloan petroglyphs. That got me interested in interpretation. I went back and took a bunch of courses in architectural history and did a couple of things on philosophy of heritage and interpreting of historic sites. Then I worked for a year with the National Parks in the archeology department. Through that I got interested in museum studies and particularly using not just written sources but materials, environments, and landscapes as sources. I think it opens up a lot of venues that some historians don't look towards as much. And it's a way of bringing in different types of evidence to use in your historical study which can diversify and bring a new multidisciplinary way of looking at history.

Endowment honors UGA Press Advisory Council member Peggy Heard Galis

The University of Georgia Press created an endowment to fund a publishing apprenticeship program for students from UGA’s graduate history program. The Peggy Heard Galis History Ph.D. Apprenticeship allows history Ph.D. candidates to gain insight into and experience in the scholarly publishing process.

Georgia Press Internships

By Katharine Dahlstrand

For ten weeks this past summer, Dr. James Owen (PhD, UGA ’19) and I worked as interns for the acquisitions editorial team at the University of Georgia Press. As late-stage PhD candidates, this experience proved invaluable. Lisa Bayer, the Director of the Press, taught us to defend our ideas and challenge conventional wisdoms in a boardroom where editors described potential projects and why they mattered. We crafted memos on current projects and, in doing so, learned what effective book proposals look like. But we also learned how editors defend, advocate, cheerlead, and generally facilitate the writing and revision processes for authors under contract. Thursdays were our favorite days. That’s when Patrick Allen and Mick Guisinde-Duffy, Walter Biggins and Bethany Snead, and Lisa Bayer all pitched their projects to the entire press community. Marketing, intellectual property, and the editorial design and production teams sat down and walked each project through the process, updating each other on where a book might miss a deadline and what proposals are ready for reviewers. Essentially, Dr. Owen and I walked away from our time at the UGA Press knowing how the academic scholarship sausage is made. We’ll be stronger writers and more compassionate authors because of it.
John H. Morrow Jr, Awarded Pritzker Prize

Chicago, July 9, 2019—

John Morrow, Jr. wins $100,000 prize for lifetime achievement in military writing.

Military historian, professor, and author Dr. John H. Morrow, Jr. is the 13th recipient of the Pritzker Military Museum & Library Literature Award for Lifetime Achievement in Military Writing.

The Pritzker Literature Award—which includes a gold medallion, citation, and $100,000 honorarium—recognizes and honors the contributions of a living author for a body of work dedicated to enriching the understanding of military history and affairs.

“I am truly honored to accept the 2019 Pritzker Military Museum & Library Literature Award for Lifetime Achievement in Military Writing,” said Dr. Morrow.

“Receiving the award after nearly fifty years of historical writing, teaching, and consulting constitutes the ultimate affirmation of my career as a scholar of the history of modern war and society.”

Author or co-author of 8 publications, Morrow is an accomplished military historian and respected professor. His work includes The Great War: An Imperial History, The Great War in the Air, Harlem’s Rattlers and the Great War (co-authored with Jeffrey T. Sammons) and German Airpower in World War I, among others. He has gained recognition for his ability to demonstrate how the past and the present intertwine inextricably.

“The screening committee’s recommendations and Colonel Pritzker’s selection speaks to Dr. Morrow’s years of dedication to the field of Military History,” stated Dr. Rob Havers, President and CEO of the Pritzker Military Museum & Library. “For the depth of his writing and research, his years of dedication and service to the field of military history, for his academic achievements including his commitment to shaping the minds of the next generation of military historians, Dr. Morrow stands as a deserving recipient of the 2019 Pritzker Military Museum & Library Literature Award for Lifetime Achievement in Military Writing. We are grateful for his devotion to the field and are proud to shine a light on his exemplary work in military history.”

A graduate of the Swarthmore College and the University of Pennsylvania and a recipient of the U.S Department of the Army Outstanding Civilian Service Medal, Morrow has been a guiding force for the study of history for numerous military and civic institutions. In addition to serving as the Franklin Professor and Chair of the History Department at University of Georgia.

Scott Reynolds Nelson, Georgia Athletic Association Professor in Humanities in the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, has been awarded a prestigious John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship. Nelson specializes in 19th-century American social history, and has authored or co-authored five books, most recently A Nation of Deadbeats: An Uncommon History of America’s Financial Disasters. Doctoral student Bryant Barnes asked him about his current research project:

My project is about cheap American wheat and how it changed the world. I try to reframe the Civil War and the Russian Revolution and think about them as bound up with a radical break in human society in which food becomes incredibly cheap. To break the Confederacy, the Union Army relied heavily on long-distance supply lines. I argue that those supply lines don’t disappear when the war’s over but instead transition from feeding Union soldiers to feeding Europe, which ultimately has drastic international ramifications. It leads to massive industrialization in Europe and an exodus of European people from the countryside. As a result, states like the Russian, Chinese, and Ottoman empires that had been marketing food products in Europe begin to break down between the 1880s and 1917. It’s a kind of world history of grain with Chicago in the center.

How does this new project ties into your previous work? The connection is everyday people and how they fit into a global economy. My first book was about black workers that built the Southern Railway and the effects the Railway had in creating the post-war South. Steel Drivin’ Man was about the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad, about common people and the ways in which Blues music emerges from the South. A Nation of Deadbeats is an international history of financial panics. It’s a reminder that personal crises are at the center of these larger crises. It changes the ways people live and work.

Scott Nelson Awarded Guggenheim Fellowship
In April, the history department with UGA Press hosted “Inscoe-fest,” a one day mini-conference in which all of John Inscoe’s past graduate students returned to Athens to deliver papers in his honor. Most impressive was the fact that the students published the academic version of their papers as Southern Communities: Identity, Conflict, and Memory in the American South with UGA Press, and advance copies were available at the event. For more than thirty years, John Inscoe was one of the great work-horses of this department: his decency and his scholarship will remain stars in the academic firmament for generations to come. Congratulations on your retirement, John!

New Publications by Peter C. Hoffer. Searching for Justice: Lawyers in the Civil Rights Revolution (University of Chicago Press, 2019); Litigation Nation: A Cultural History of Lawsuits in America (Rowman and Littlefield, 2019); Law and People in the American Colonies (2nd enlarged ed. Johns Hopkins, 2019); Uncivil Warriors: The Lawyers’ Civil War (Oxford University Press, 2018); co-authored Clamor of Lawyers: The American Revolution and Crisis in the Legal Profession (Cornell University Press, 2018); and co-authored, The Supreme Court: An Essential History (2nd ed. enlarged, Kansas, 2018). Forthcoming (copyediting is done) from University of Michigan Press in winter is Zombie History: Lies about the American Past that Refuse to Die.

Michael P. Winship’s latest book Hot Protestants: A History of Puritanism in England and America was published in February by Yale University Press, and an audio book version came out in May. It has already received a starred review in Publishers Weekly, as well as reviews in the Wall Street Journal, and the Times Literary Supplement.

Stephen A. Mihm received a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant (three-year award to research and revive extinct apple cultivars once grown in Georgia). The project is “Lost and Found: Resurrecting “Extinct” Apple Cultivars”.


Thomas Whigham celebrated his retirement December, 18, after 32 years in the history department!


A number of our faculty were recognized this year by the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences at the annual Faculty Recognition Dinner in October, including:

Scott Nelson, John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship

John H. Morrow, Jr., Pritzker Military Museum and Library Literature Award for Lifetime Achievement in Military Writing

James F. Brooks, Gable Distinguished Chair in Southern Colonial American History

Jamie Kreiner, M.G. Michael Award. Established in 1944 by LeRoy Michael of Athens to stimulate new initiatives in scholarship in all areas of the arts and sciences. Its primary purpose is to encourage the development of a new idea or project during the year following the award.

The University of Georgia Department of History and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is pleased to announce the first Capitalist Souths interdisciplinary graduate student conference to be held March 13-14, 2020, Athens, Georgia. The deadline for proposal submission is December 15, 2019. See our web site for more information: https://history.uga.edu/capitalistsouths.


SUPPORT HISTORY AT UGA!

The Department of History actively supports students who need financial assistance to attend our Public History Internship Program in Washington, DC, and other Study Away programs, and who are traveling to regional archives to complete research for their senior theses. If you would like to support our students, please consider donating to the History Undergraduate Student Support Fund. Your gift, no matter the size, provides support, removes obstacles and opens doors for History students.

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Alison Godley, Assistant Director of Annual Giving at Franklin College Office of Development, (706)542-3581 or alison.godley@uga.edu

Public History alum Frances Abele (B.A. '19) on the path of Public History

What is your job? I am currently working at the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a Development Communications Assistant. On a typical day I am helping the team draft anything from acknowledgement letters to donors, to drafting articles for the annual review. When I am not writing or researching I am the liaison between communications and all the other divisions in development concerning anything they will be writing about.

How did you find that job, and what do you think helped you get it? I first heard about the National Trust when I was doing the Public History Program (summer 2018) and we visited the building ...and we met with Katherine Malone-France, a head preservationist that also went to UGA and that just really interested me. I ended up interning here this past summer 2019.
History at Georgia

In February 2019, the Department of History hosted a walking tour that highlighted how the histories of persons of color, African Americans in particular, are intertwined with the namesakes and landmarks on UGA’s campus. In this photo, history major Tayjas Rajaraman (B.A. ’19) discusses Joseph LeConte’s efforts to restrict voting and marriage rights of black Georgians.