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UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY · COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES



Department of History



Message from Department Chair Phil Harling

June 2021

Dear Friends of History,

In the middle of May we made it to the end of perhaps the most unusual academic year ever. The pandemic brought innumerable challenges to us, as I know it did to you, too.

We've been sorely tested in so many ways. By the loss of loved ones and wonderful colleagues, notably our treasured emeriti professors Ellen Furlough and Bruce Holle. By the loss of so many social connections that add sweetness to our daily round and keep us emotionally healthy and balanced. By the loss of routine that has often made it hard to focus and to work without distraction.

As the weight continues to lift and we start to feel our return to those sunlit uplands of normal life, those of us in the History Department can also see that we've gained some important things. We've gained the knowledge that a whole lot of learning happened under very trying circumstances, because our faculty and our students were committed to making it happen. That we persevered with our research despite many obstacles and setbacks—for instance, you'll see below that we got a number of great books published! That our intrepid master's and doctoral candidates earned

their degrees despite the roadblocks thrown up by Covid. And that our ties of community remained strong when everything conspired to undo them.

At the end of this remarkable academic year, I asked our faculty and our students to take a bow, because persevering through it, and excelling throughout it, have been herculean achievements, and collective ones. As you read through this newsletter, you'll see abundant evidence that we've thrived in this testing time. So I offer our faculty and our students my heartiest congratulations on a job remarkably well done, and my deepest gratitude for their hard and fruitful efforts, their resoluteness and their good cheer, in the face of so much adversity. I am so privileged and so very proud to be able to call them my colleagues and my friends. And I'm no less privileged to thank you for being such generous alumni and friends of the UK History Department. We greatly appreciate your abiding support.

Cheers, Phil

Dr. Phil Harling
Professor of History and Chair

Vanessa Holden to Lead the New Central Kentucky Slavery Initiative

By Phil Harling

This has been an exciting academic year for our friend and colleague Vanessa Holden. She's returned to Lexington after a fruitful time as a Distinguished Visiting Scholar in the Center for Diversity Innovation at the University at Buffalo. She's just been promoted to the rank of Associate Professor with Tenure. And she has an important book coming out in July with the University of Illinois Press, *Surviving Southampton: African American Women and Resistance in Nat Turner's Community*. Her pathbreaking monograph promises to be a foundational text in our effort to understand practices of survival and resistance within communities of enslaved people, including the crucial but all too often overlooked roles that women and indeed even children played in them. And starting in July, Vanessa will be serving as Director of the Central Kentucky Slavery Initiative (CKSI), which will be housed within UK's new Commonwealth Institute for Black Studies (which is directed by another wonderful History colleague, Anastasia Curwood).



Vanessa Holden is Associate Professor of History and African American & Africana Studies.

Vanessa says the CKSI will begin its life as an interdisciplinary digital project that will tell the Black history of the University of Kentucky from its beginnings. The project will also emphasize the history of slavery and enslaved people in Kentucky's broader history. "There hasn't been a large synthetic work dedicated to the history of slavery in Kentucky since the 1930s," she points out. "There's been no big overarching project trying to characterize the business of slavery in Kentucky, or

what enslaved peoples' lives actually looked like," she says. "It's time to remedy that." [Read more.](#)

Akiko Takenaka's Class in Asian American History Connects Students to Their Heritage, Probes Origins of Hate

By Richard LeCompte

Carrigan Wasilchenko was adopted from China through Holt International and grew up as an Asian American in Powell County, Kentucky. Thanks to the opportunity to pursue a liberal arts education at the University of Kentucky – and to take part in a new class that looks at the history of Asian Americans – she was able to see how her story fit into the mosaic that is the United States.

"Growing up, I always tried to fade into the whiteness of my community, and I was just kind of afraid because I didn't know, first of all, what it meant to be Asian," said Wasilchenko, who recently graduated from the College of Health Sciences and will enter UK Medical School in the fall. "In your teen years, everyone has an identity crisis: 'Who am I? What do I stand for?' I always felt uncomfortable saying I'm Asian. Even though I'm from China, I felt I wasn't Chinese. But this class really helped me to see I am an Asian American."

The class, HIS 351 Asians in America, is the first course on Asian American history to be offered at the University of Kentucky. It promises to be a key part of the UK College of Arts & Sciences' Race and Ethnicity requirement, which starts in Fall 2021. Akiko Takenaka, Associate Professor of History, put the class together with an eye toward presenting the full spectrum of Asian American experiences in the U.S., including those of intercontinental adoptees like Wasilchenko. [Read more.](#)



Associate Professor Akiko Takenaka created the first course in Asian American history to be offered at UK.

New York Historical Society Book Prize Awarded to Tracy Campbell

Tracy Campbell, accomplished author and UK history professor, is the winner of the New-York Historical Society's Barbara and David Zalaznick Book Prize for *The Year of Peril: America in 1942*. The prestigious honor is awarded each year to the best work in the field of American history or biography.

"I'm deeply honored by this award and all it represents," Campbell said. "When I sent the final version to the publisher in late 2019, I wondered



Tracy Campbell is the E. Vernon

if anyone would be interested in reading about a traumatized nation struggling to survive.”

Smith and Eloise C. Smith Professor of American History in the College of Arts & Sciences.

The Year of Peril, published by Yale University Press, is a month-by-month chronicle of 1942—the tumultuous and unsettling year in which America engaged in World War II. The deeply researched and richly detailed book underscores the fragility of democracy by recounting a moment in time when America seemed to be on the brink of defeat and was beginning to splinter from within. [Read more.](#)

Madeline Imler '22: Spreading Knowledge and Building Community Through a Remote Internship

By Julie Wrinn

While online education has existed for some time, not until Covid-19 did anyone imagine that an online internship made sense. The whole point of an internship is to exit the classroom and experience real-world environments, working side-by-side with people in your field of interest. But with so many of those real-world environments also operating remotely during Covid, suddenly the idea of a remote internship didn't seem so peculiar.



Madeline Imler is a double major in history and anthropology who plans to pursue graduate work in history.

Madeline Imler (B.A. in History and Anthropology, May 2022) can now attest to the value of such an internship. A graduate of Assumption High School in Louisville, Madeline served as an intern in fall 2020 for the UK Cooperative for the Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS). Inaugurated in 2020 and led by former History Chair Karen Petrone, CHSS fosters interdisciplinary scholarly connections among faculty and graduate students at UK, as well as facilitating graduate student engagement with local, state, national, and international communities outside of UK. Its purpose is to demonstrate the value and contributions of the Humanities and Social Sciences in sustaining communities and solving critical social problems, especially in this time of crisis. In a recent interview, Madeline described her experiences as a remote intern with CHSS:

What were your responsibilities at CHSS?

One of my tasks was to help publicize events hosted by the CHSS during the fall semester, my two favorites being “Leadership in a Time of Crisis” and “Mobilizing the Arts in a Crisis: The WPA’S Lessons for Today.” [Read more.](#)

Our Eternal Gratitude to "Dr. C." (Eric Christianson) Upon His Retirement

By Phil Harling

We're delighted to congratulate our great friend and colleague Eric Christianson (known to everyone as Dr. C.) on his retirement! This past spring semester he taught the final classes of his 44-year career at UK. They were nothing if not timely, with one entitled "Health and Disease in the U.S." and the other "Disease Outbreaks." Many thousands of students, from the Ford to the Biden administrations, from bell-bottoms to skinny jeans, have hugely benefited from Dr. C.'s wisdom and quite considerable wit. They owe him an eternal debt of gratitude, as do his colleagues. He is not just an outstanding teacher, but also a warm and highly relatable person. For several decades, Dr. C. has been a constant and a consistently kind and genial presence on the 17th floor, full of encouragement and good cheer. I made a point of asking him how he was doing whenever I ran into him in the hallway or in the department's galley kitchen (where we bonded over our mutual love of avocados, and of peppers from his beloved New Mexico), because in response he'd usually say "fair to partly cloudy." This always made me laugh, because this Eeyore-ish reply was entirely (and deliberately) at odds with the brightness that always marked one's casual encounters with Dr. C. We wish him all the very best in his retirement, and we fondly hope those encounters will continue!



Professor Emeritus Eric Christianson is a scholar of U.S. History, the history of medicine, and environmental history.

Alumni & Faculty News

Julie Anglin (B.A. History and Classics, 1998) has been promoted to Vice President of Latin America Policy at the Motion Picture Association in Washington, D.C.

In August 2020, **Richard Bailey** (Ph.D., 2006) was named the Fitzpatrick Professor of History at Canisius College, an endowed professorship that offers him the opportunity to oversee the William H. Fitzpatrick Chair of Political Science Lecture Series. He also received notice early in 2021 that the NEH awarded a team of scholars, including him and Joanne Pope Melish, a Discovery Grant to develop a website in cooperation with the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association. "Lucy Terry Prince: A Window on African American Life in Early Rural New England" will focus on the lived experiences of African Americans in early New England.

We regret to share the news that **Jim Baughman** (Ph.D., 1976) died peacefully at home surrounded by his family on August 21, 2020. Jim retired from Jefferson Community & Technical College in 2016 after teaching in the History Department for 40 years. In 1982 he co-founded the Interdisciplinary Studies Curriculum, a program for honors students, and led the program for 35 years. Several times he offered a months-long series on the history of the Book of Common Prayer at local Episcopal churches.

Tom Bowden (B.A., 1973) is a research fellow at the Ayn Rand Institute and web editor of the Institute's journal, *New Ideal*.

We regret to share the news that **Philip Cochran** (Ph.D., 1984) passed away on November 2, 2020. After graduating from high school, Philip earned undergraduate and master's degrees from East Texas State University at Commerce, and at UK did his doctoral work in twentieth-century British history. Philip began working at Texas Education Agency in 1980, retiring in 2012. While working full-time at TEA, he also taught two or three classes of American History at Austin Community College each semester. Philip was an adjunct faculty member at ACC for 35 years, and taught his last full semester at ACC in the spring of 2020.

Ashley DeWitt (M.A., 2011) has been promoted to Senior Lecturer in the School of Information Science, College of Communication and Information, University of Kentucky.

Joshua Farrington (Ph.D., 2013) is now a full-time Instructor at Bluegrass Community and Technical College here in Lexington. He also had an article that came out last year, "Evicted from the Party: Black Republicans and the 1964 Election," *Journal of Arizona History*, Special Edition: Barry Goldwater and the Election of 1964, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Spring 2020). He also co-edited a free, open-access African American History textbook with Norman Powell and Gwen Graham entitled *Slavery to Liberation: The African American Experience*.

Kara Lambert (M.A., 2015) just wrapped up almost 6 years at Epic Systems in Madison, and is starting a new job in April as a marketing manager at a healthcare startup called Luma Health. Kara's wedding planned for 8/13/20 was postponed due to the pandemic, but it's now planned for October 14, 2021. Her fiancé is Michael Bodner.

Alan Lowe (B.A., M.A., 1982–89) will be inducted into UK's Hall of Distinguished Alumni on October 1. He is co-hosting a podcast, now in its second season, called "American POTUS." <https://americanpotus.com/>

Louis Mitler (M.A., 1972, M.L.S. 1974) published a novel in 2019, *The Snake That Did Not Bite: Nuriye's World*, an historical novel set in Istanbul. It's available on Amazon.com, if anybody would like to read or review it.

J. Patrick Mullins (Ph.D., 2005) has served as History faculty and Public History Director at Marquette University since Fall 2016. In Spring 2021, he was awarded promotion to the rank of associate professor of History with tenure. Patrick is currently working on his second book, *Killing Kings in America: Violence, Art, and Memory in the Transatlantic American Revolution*. He will be conducting research for this project in Washington, D.C., this summer as the 2021 Keith Armistead Carr Fellow of the American Revolution Institute of the Society of the Cincinnati. He has two chapters forthcoming on the political drama of Mercy Otis Warren and is developing a museum exhibit of political art from the Revolutionary period. Patrick lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with his son, Jonathan (a 5th grader), his stepdaughter, Shir (a Marquette sophomore), and his wife, Corinne (associate professor of philosophy at Marquette). They have weathered the pandemic of 2020–21 well and look forward to catching up on canoeing, family visits, and road trips in the summertime!

Tom Owen (Ph.D., 1982) has been the Archivist for Regional History at University of Louisville's Archives and Special Collections for 46 years. Recently, he posted Episode #6 on his Youtube Channel, "Hometown Louisville with Tom Owen," titled "140 Years of Black History at Dixie Highway and Dumesnil." Each episode is in the six- to nine-minute range. Also, last year, he was appointed to the Kentucky Humanities Council.

Delores “Dee” Pregliasco (B.A., 1964) has retired from the practice of law but is still mediating, and has taught the mediation seminar the last two semesters at the Brandeis School of Law, University of Louisville. She is still on the Board of the Legal Aid Society of Louisville. Dee’s volunteer time is spent as VP and Redistricting Chair of the League of Women Voters of Kentucky, working on Women’s Equality Day and other suffrage history programs and keeping up to date with programs from the Filson Historical Society, and recently, a program with Dr. Melanie Goan of UK as the featured speaker. Her son Donn H. Hill, a UK history graduate, was recently promoted and will be a two-star Major General.

Dr. Melanie-Préjean Sullivan (M.A., 1977) has been keeping busy during the pandemic by teaching here and abroad via Zoom. As a Research Associate and Guest Lecturer with the Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology in Cambridge, England, she has offered courses in liturgy, church history, and spirituality. In Louisville, she taught a course on scriptural commentaries in the Jewish and Catholic traditions for the Louisville Melton program at Adath Jeshurun synagogue. The Journal of Practical Theology published her article, “Eucharistic Imagination as a Paradigm for Practical Theology,” online and in their December 2020 issue. She’s finally finished a collection of legacy essays and is searching for “just the right” publisher.

FACULTY

Francie Chassen-López had the great honor of being named to the Otis. A. Singletary Chair in the Humanities at UK in September. She made two videos, one in Spanish and the other in English, explaining the history of Hispanic Heritage Month for the Latino Festival of Lexington 2020, which went live on Facebook. She was also invited to join the Editorial Board of a new academic journal of history and social science, *Sinkronía 21*, edited by the Colegio Mexiquense, a research center in Mexico. But most importantly, her book, *Mujer y poder en el siglo XIX: La vida extraordinaria de Juana Catarina Romero, Cacica of Tehuantepec* (Women and Power in the 19th Century: The Extraordinary Life of Juana Catarina Romero, Cacica of Tehuantepec), was published by Taurus/Penguin Random House in Mexico City, (520 p.) in December 2020. Since then, she has been interviewed about the book by radio personalities, TV cultural programs, and websites in Mexico. The book was also reviewed by the major Mexico City newspaper, *La Jornada* in February 2021. She is presently working on the translation of the book to English.

Dottie Leathers and **George Herring** made it through this pandemic year with the help of books and more books, streaming of television series and movies, and crossword puzzles. We tried card games, but Dottie beat George at rummy so consistently and so badly that he stopped playing. She has found a much tougher foe in solitaire. They are both now vaccinated and ready to get out of hibernation, although George gets nervous when he hears pundits talking about a “light at the end of the tunnel.” In the first stages of the pandemic, Dottie got out her sewing machine, mass-produced numerous colorful, masks to combat the virus, and distributed them to family, friends, and neighbors. An especially popular one was decorated with bottles of wine. George does enough writing for it to be enjoyable but not so much that it seems like work. He writes an occasional op-ed. A fifty-year retrospective article on the Laotian incursion of 1971 will appear in the magazine *Army History* this spring. He has also managed to play some tennis between surges in the pandemic. One of the really good things to come out of the past year is hearing from and getting in touch with old friends and former students. We hope that will continue into the liberation.



Each Friday department chair Phil Harling emails a "Brag Blast" with that week's faculty and student accomplishments, everything from the birth of a child, to earning a new grant, to appearing on French TV or in the Washington Post. [Read more](#) for a round-up of highlights from the past five months.

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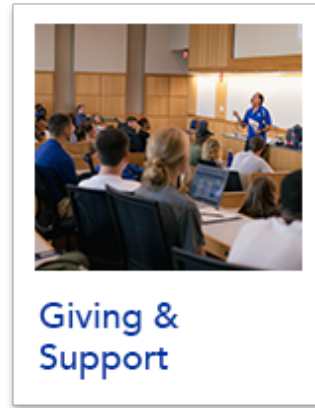
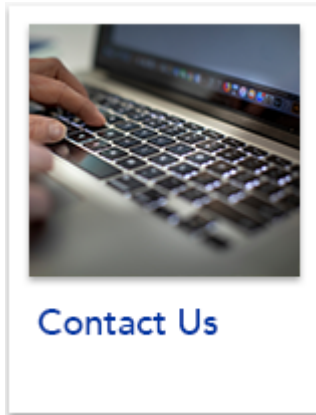
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Your gift of \$75 or more will qualify you as an active member of the UK Alumni Association. For assistance, please contact philanthropy officer Debra Gold at 859-257-8124 or debra.gold@uky.edu. We are grateful for your support!



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