



History Newsletter

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Letter From Chair



Welcome to this year's newsletter, which incorporates those familiar historical themes, continuity and change. Some changes will be obvious. We have a new emblem that emphasizes our place in the heritage of this great public university. We have a new cohort of students—graduate and undergraduate—with new interests and perspectives. Likewise, departures and arrivals continue to reshape our faculty. Finally, I begin my term as department chair, succeeding Steve Stern, whose contributions and leadership I can only try to continue. Of course, this newsletter attests

deeper continuities as another academic year begins. The articles from our undergraduates reflect the high caliber of the students we have always attracted and the quality of the educational experience we strive to offer. The chronicles of my colleagues' achievements demonstrate that they uphold the History Department's storied tradition as an incubator of innovative and transformative scholarship. Just as important, the pieces on our graduate program underscore an often overlooked continuity—the central role these emerging professionals play in sustaining our international reputation as the "Big Red Machine."

Underlying all these accomplishments, however, are important and heartening changes. Our undergraduates can travel for archival

research, thanks to such new resources as the Kaplan Family Fellowships. Generous gifts like that from Julie and Peter Weil allow us to train the next generation of Wisconsin historians. Donations to funds honoring beloved teachers or illustrious scholars invigorate our intellectual life through lectures, workshops and seminars.

Recently, an alumnus referred to the University of Wisconsin—an educational powerhouse in a mid-sized Midwestern state—as a "miracle." Locked into our routines and buffeted by the changing budgetary climate, we here in Madison often lose sight of that fact and of our own department's persisting excellence. Your continuing loyalty and support remind us that miracles can and do happen.

Julie And Peter Weil Create A Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowship

We are excited to announce the creation of the Julie A. and Peter M. Weil Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowship. The Weil Fellowship has been designed to attract annually to the UW-Madison one of the nation's most talented students. It is a multi-year graduate fellowship which provides each holder with

substantially all the financial resources to attend graduate school at Wisconsin, including full tuition, generous stipends and professional development funds.

According to Marion Brown, Vice President of the University of Wisconsin Foundation, "the Weil Fellowship will enable the

History Department to compete, even in today's trying fiscal environment, for outstanding prospective graduate students in select fields of U.S. history. Graduate students are a vital part of the overlapping intellectual conversations – among faculty, graduate

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- AND MORE

Kaplan Family Fellowship Undergraduate Research Trip

by Shauna Fitzmahan, May 2006

My journey began two years ago with interviews of former Ukrainian dissidents. Inspired by their stories, I wrote a senior thesis on Ukrainian dissent in the 1960s under the guidance of Professor Jeremi Suri. It has been twenty years since any scholar published a detailed study on Ukrainian dissent in the Cold War. The Soviet Union has since dissolved and many more records and

documents have been released, but they are unavailable at the UW library. I learned about the Kaplan Family Fellowships, which gives undergraduates a unique opportunity to conduct original primary source research. It was exactly what I needed. I won the scholarship, and in the summer of 2005 I began my research trip across the United States.

My first stop was at the Harvard

Ukrainian Research Institute where I met several Ukrainian scholars. We spoke about 1960s Ukrainian poetry, the stability of Khrushchev's leadership, and the role of nationalism. I enjoyed discussing Ukrainian history with other scholars, but I spent most of my time looking through boxes of old documents. Every day I sorted through letters, photographs, and

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Transitions and Events: Brief Notes

by David McDonald

Four talented scholar-teachers joined our roster in 2005-06. We welcomed *Cindy I-Fen Cheng*, appointed (jointly with Asian American Studies) to teach 20th-century U.S. history and Asian American history; *William Powell Jones*, a scholar of 20th-century U.S. history; and *Sarah Thal*, an expert in Japanese history and religiosity. We also welcomed *Camille Guerin-Gonzales* as a shared appointee (with the Chican@ & Latin@ Studies Program). These appointments improved our ability to teach post-1945 U.S. history, moved us toward a four-scholar vision of our East Asian history program, and added to our ability to teach the diversity of the U.S. experience. Last year's Newsletter provided additional information about the expertise and achievements of these scholars.

We also made two successful offers and a successful affiliate-offer in 2005-06. *Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen* accepted a position in U.S. cultural/intellectual history, effective Fall 2006, as the new Merle Curti Assistant Professor of History. Her dissertation focuses on the reception of Nietzsche in U.S. culture and draws on archival research on both sides of the Atlantic. *Ipek Yosmaoglu* accepted a position, effective Fall 2007, in Ottoman/Middle East, 19th-20th centuries. Her research explores the remaking of social and ethnic identities – how religiously identified peoples such as “Christians” in late Ottoman Macedonia came to be seen as nationally identified peoples, such as “Greeks,” “Serbians,” or “Macedonians.” *Mitra Sharafi* accepted a Legal Studies interdisciplinary position in Law, with affiliate faculty status and significant teaching in History, effective Fall 2007. She focuses on legal pluralism and ethnic identity issues in modern South Asia, and on Anglo-American and British Empire law more generally. We are thrilled that we managed to recruit such intellectual talent despite the hard fiscal times that afflict public universities.

Three of our scholars also earned promotions last year. Congratulations to *Ned Blackhawk*, who works on American Indian history, and *James Sweet*, who works on African diaspora and Brazilian

history. Both were promoted to associate professor with tenure. We also congratulate *Louise Young*, an expert on modern Japanese cultural and imperial history, for her promotion to full professor.

We also experienced some attrition. *William Brown*, who taught in our distinguished African history program for thirty-two years, retired at the close of the academic year. Our excellent Undergraduate Advisor, *A.J. Dubois*, also retired. We again faced retention challenges, and we again won some and lost some. We bid farewell to two professors who decided to explore new positions. *Brett Sheehan* (Chinese history) will begin a tenured position at University of Southern California in Fall 2006, and *Paul Stephenson* (Byzantine history) accepted a tenured appointment, effective Fall 2007, at Durham University in the United Kingdom. We wish them well in their new posts.

The Department's professors, students, and friends enjoyed stimulating intellectual engagement through lectures and symposia. Highlights included the very well attended Fall 2005 Merle Curti Lectures of Emeritus Professor *Paul Boyer*, on the topic “Apocalypse Then, Apocalypse Now: Bible-Prophecy Belief in American Religion, Politics, & Popular Culture.” We also welcomed *Howard French*, the award winning *New York Times* journalist and Shanghai Bureau Chief, and *Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney*, the distinguished UW-Madison anthropologist and Vilas Research Professor, to join us at our Fall 2006 symposium on “Legacies and Mythologies of World War II: From the Kamikaze Pilots to the World Today.” We featured our distinguished emeritus professor *Jan Vansina* at two events in Spring 2006. In February, Jan spoke on “When Does History Begin?” at the annual Luncheon to Honor Emeritus Faculty; he offered a dazzling overview of new research in other disciplines that may prod us to reconsider how we conceptualize history and its time lines, and how we talk about “race” in a 21st-century context. In May, Vansina shared a retrospective reflection on Africa as a field of historical knowledge, and on why Africa matters in today's world, at a Chicago seminar for alumni and friends.

UW-Madison alum *John Rowe*, the Chairman and CEO of Exelon Corporation, organized and hosted the event. We are grateful to John Rowe for his generosity, and for his example as a lifetime learner and student of history.

Faculty earned notable honors last year. For excellent teaching, *Michael Chamberlain* won the Department's Dorothy and Hsin-Nung Yao Award; *Mary Louise Roberts* won the Department's Karen F. Johnson Award; and *Jeremi Suri* won a campus-wide Distinguished Teaching Award. Scholarly achievement awards were also numerous. *Florencia Mallon* won a WARF Named Professorship, and is now the Julieta Kirkwood Professor of History. *Francine Hirsch* won a Vilas Associateship from the Graduate School in support of her fascinating project on the Soviets at Nuremberg. *Susan Johnson*, *Paul Stephenson*, and *Thongchai Winichakul* all received residential fellowships at the UW-Madison Institute for Research in the Humanities (Johnson also received a fellowship from Chicago's Newberry Library). *Karl Shoemaker*, *Steve J. Stern*, and *James Sweet* received fellowships from Princeton's Institute for Advanced Study, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the National Humanities Center, respectively. *Francine Hirsch* and *Steve J. Stern* received award citations from the Council of European Studies for *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (2005), and from the Latin American Studies Association for *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: On the Eve of London 1998* (2004), respectively. Meanwhile, *William Cronon* was recognized for career achievement by election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Our staff also merits recognition for their fine work. We are pleased to announce that *Jane Williams*, who performs such a vital role in graduate admissions and fellowships coordination, as well as Timetable management, received a very well deserved Classified Staff Excellence Award from the College of Letters and Science. We would also

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Julie And Peter Weil



Julie and Peter Weil

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students, and undergraduates – that create world-class learning experiences for all members of our University community.”

The priority field for the Weil Fellowship is American Jewish history, an area of study in which Wisconsin has gained notable strength in recent years as a result of the appointment and promotion to tenure of Professor Tony Michels. If, in a given year, we cannot identify and recruit an outstanding graduate student in American Jewish history, secondary priority fields (all in U.S. history) include environmental history, the American West, and racial, ethnic

or immigrant history in a comparative perspective that may cast light on the American Jewish experience. All Weil Fellowship holders will do at least some graduate study in Jewish history and studies. This award thus lays a foundation for bringing Jewish history concerns into the mainstream of U.S. history scholarship.

Julie and Peter, who live in Los Angeles, are longtime supporters of various projects at Wisconsin. Peter (BA 70, JD 74) is a member of the Board of Directors of the UW Foundation and was a student of Merle Curti, Stanley Kutler and Willard Hurst (American Legal History in the Law School), among others, while at Wisconsin. Julie (BA Illinois, JD Northwestern) and Peter have been involved with both The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, with which the History Department enjoys a special relationship through the Mosse Program, and the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, one of the world’s most dynamic Jewish cultural institutions whose mission is to explore the connection between 4,000 years of Jewish history and the vitality of American democratic ideals. According to Peter, “Julie and I created the fellowship in order to encourage and nurture a new generation of scholars who wish to direct their talents and energies to researching, understanding and teaching about the Jewish experience in America. We expect that the History Department’s contribution in this field will match the significant impact the History Department has had in so many other areas during its distinguished history.”

The History Department and its students are grateful to Julie and Peter for their generosity and vision. To Julie and Peter, and to all who help us improve the intellectual environment for faculty and students at our extraordinary institution, we offer a heartfelt “thank you” and a pledge to do our part to continue the History Department’s tradition of excellence.

Last-Minute Shopping for the Life of the Mind by David McDonald

By the time you receive this newsletter, the gift-giving season will have leapt upon us all, as suddenly as it always does. Those of you of you who find yourselves looking for last-minute purchases could do worse than considering any of the new books published by History faculty over the last year. Like the department itself, these offerings cover an impressive breadth of topics, regions, and time-periods. In *Rearranging the Landscape of the Gods* (U. of Chicago), Sarah Thal examines the history of an important pilgrimage site in southeastern Japan, tracing the changes that overtook it due to political and social changes from the late sixteenth century through the Meiji Restoration of the late 1890’s. Ned Blackhawk’s new book with Harvard University Press, *Violence over the Land*, chronicles the impact of Spanish, British, and American imperial expansion on the indigenous peoples of the Great Basin in the American Southwest during the eighteenth and

nineteenth centuries. The creation of a much different historical memory of this period forms the focus of Jean Lee’s edited collection, entitled *Experiencing Mount Vernon: Eyewitness Accounts, 1784-1865*, released by the University of Virginia Press. Tony Michels studies the roots of a powerful sub-theme in the history of American political culture in his new book with Harvard, *A Fire in Their Hearts: A Fire in Their Hearts: Yiddish Socialists in New York*.

Several of our colleagues have also brought a historical perspective to bear on matters of current political interest. Alfred McCoy’s *A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation from the Cold War to the War on Terror* (Metropolitan Books) traces the institutional background underlying the most recent revelations from Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. Closer to home, Bill Reese offers an instructive and sobering overview of two

hundred years of American education in *America’s Public Schools: From the Common School to ‘No Child Left Behind,’* published by Johns Hopkins. Last, but not least, the producers of the popular *Daily Show* on Comedy Central knew just whom to consult when they needed a scholarly authority to revamp their instant classic *America: The Book* (Warner). Professor Emeritus Stanley Schultz displays his encyclopedic knowledge of American history to good advantage as the guest kibitzer in the book’s most recent edition, with marginal comments and correctives, in a handwriting font especially encoded for this production.

Contact your local bookseller to order any or all of these titles.

Fertility in the Margins; or A Most Fruitful Furrow

by Jason Rozumalski

Agriculture lends itself to a particular metaphorical richness. Cyclical growth and decay, separation of grain from chaff, the parable of the mustard seed: agrarian experiences mix inexorably with human experiences, creating ways of understanding and contextualizing our lives. Even as technology - and information-based societies drift away from broad populational connections between people and the land, agrarian observation both simplifies and complicates intellections of self and society.

Last year, I conducted research for my senior honors thesis in UW-Madison's Department of History. Under the mentorship of Jean B. Lee, Professor of History and also Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Research in the Humanities, I completed my project *Vegetable Politick: Enlightenment and English Rural Life*. In my text I argued that the English Enlightenment was not solely an intellectual movement conducted by an academic and political elite. Instead, English Enlightenment belongs to a larger narrative grounded in the agrarian innovation and material invention of alternative agriculture in seventeenth-

century England. I grounded my argument in agrarian historical sources (farm records, cultivation schemes, tools, and so on) and worked to understand agrarian changes through material culture as well as potential influences on political philosophy. My thesis encompasses a story of creative reason, a spirit of improvement, and influences on society from the margins.

But it is on a personal level that agrarian metaphors sprout to mind. I think of chervil, that spindly herb, fresh and green and restorative. Although used for centuries in medicinal tonics, chervil stayed largely in the woods and kitchen gardens. That was until the 1650s when farming families throughout Huntingdonshire cultivated chervil on a larger scale as a specialty crop, thereby saving themselves from deep economic depression. Families in Tewkesbury did the same with mustard, walnuts in Surrey, teasels in Somerset, and liquorices in Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire. When considered on a national-agrarian scale, these crops do not appear significant; they seem to make little impact on the economy or politics or society of seventeenth-century England. Yet, on a local scale

they meant salvation from ruin, an opening to expansion and opportunity. From these sometimes-desperate margins, creativity grew, experimentation increased, and self-determination took a foothold.

Voilà! – my thesis's personal significance. In the course of writing my thesis, I have sampled nearly all of the processes that a major academic project entails, aspects that the readers of this newsletter will surely be more familiar with than I am. In viewing the whole of academia, *Vegetable Politick* makes not a dent, not a blip, not a ripple. But that doesn't matter. For me, my thesis opens opportunities, for which I will be forever thankful. A foothold for the future. In agriculture, in history, even in life, everything is great and small.

This summer, I am working as a farmer at George Washington's home, Mount Vernon, Virginia. I plan to go to graduate school, although I do not yet know in which discipline. That immense academic fertility of Madison-Wisconsin, and my thesis, have helped to get me here. As for the future, I believe that I can get there from here.

Researching Political Conservatism

by Adam Diederich, June 2006

I considered myself a Democrat when I arrived at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, but an uninformed one at that, without deep political values. I held a simple belief that Al Gore deserved to be president and would make a better president than George W. Bush. However, informed by my coursework and more dedicated attention to current events, I quickly became appalled by what I saw as my government's dishonest, fear-based campaign to invade Iraq. Further, I was confused by a conservative ideology that claimed to stand up for individual freedom and small government while drastically expanding the size of a government that became increasingly involved in individuals' lives. I became a campus co-coordinator for Wesley Clark's

campaign for president, viewing him as an accomplished public servant and as a person with the best chance to defeat Bush. At this time, I enrolled in a senior history seminar on the 1960s. Professor Jeremi Suri led this class, which helped me to see the 1960s as a tumultuous and much-debated era with important implications for modern American politics. While the "New Left" earned status as the most glamorous movement of the 1960s, the "New Right" was the most successful, a movement that was crucial to understanding modern American politics. Motivated to "learn more about the enemy," I spent the summer after my junior year reading for a senior honors thesis on conservative ideology.

With my senior honors thesis, I sought to understand the principles of the "New Right" – the movement that spurred modern conservative ideology – and in doing so, understand the political landscape of my times. Why, I wondered, did conservatives control the majority political party and run the federal government? My thesis asks the following questions:

What ideas characterize postwar American conservatism? How have these ideas evolved? Are modern conservatives conservative? I chose *The National Review* magazine as my primary source because of its reputation as the founder of modern conservative ideology and for its

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Graduate Numbers

by Jeanne Boydston

The Department of History's justifiable renown for excellence in research and undergraduate teaching should not obscure the importance of our graduate students and graduate training to our community and to Wisconsin's reputation throughout the country and around the world. Countless undergraduates have absorbed and been transformed by the passion and commitment of generations of TA's, who later became professors and representatives of our departmental heritage at institutions of higher learning.

The Graduate Program of the University of Wisconsin—now roughly 200 students strong—continues to be a national leader in preparing the next generation of historians. The sixteen distinct specializations offered by the program include not only the expected staples of a US universities—American and European history—but also vibrant programs in

Southeast Asian, South Asian, Central Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American history, and African history (as well as programs in Comparative World History and Gender and Women's History). The sheer variety and the quality of these programs distinguish Madison as a world center of excellence and innovation in the study of history, as attested in numerous rankings. In 2005, for example, US News and World Report rated Wisconsin's program in Gender and Women's History first in the nation in its field, and the programs in African History and Latin American History second nationally in their respective areas.

Unsurprisingly, our placement record has remained strong, even in a fairly tight job market. UW History PhDs hold more than 350 tenured or tenure-track professorships throughout North America. UW's commitment to public

education is evident in the numbers of UW graduates teaching in public colleges and universities both in and beyond Wisconsin. These include all of the UW system campuses except Platteville, and such other institutions as UCLA, Berkeley, Illinois, Michigan, the University of Washington, Penn State and Minnesota. Our Ph.D.'s also hold positions at the nation's finest private universities, including Princeton, Yale, Harvard, Stanford, Columbia, Duke, and Dartmouth. Finally, UW graduate have successfully competed for the nation's most prestigious post-doctoral fellowships in history, including, in the last two years alone, post-docs at Stanford, Rutgers, and Yale. This latest generation of young professionals has maintained a century-long tradition of excellence and achievement at Madison. We look forward to its continuation.

Researching Political Conservatism

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focus on conservative principles. My reading of *National Review* led me to understand the formation of a political coalition consisting of libertarians and moral traditionalists.

In the early 1960s conservative intellectuals at *National Review* forged a compromise between the radical individualism of libertarian businessmen and the statism of moral authoritarians. In short, libertarians who formerly opposed any constraints on the individual's ability to accumulate and enjoy wealth accepted that greed and materialism were not proper ends of American free enterprise. Traditionalists who formerly sought state sanction to impose their religious and moral values on society accepted hard work, patriotism, and civil religion as traditional values to be enforced by social consensus rather than state coercion. A shared opposition to materialism and coercion united libertarians and traditionalists behind a set of core

conservative principles and a soon-to-be powerful political movement.

The Watergate scandal, however, denied the newly conservative Republican Party immediate political success. At the same time, social changes created opportunities for strategic elites to attract additional supporters. Specifically, the perceived economic failures of Jimmy Carter and the Democratic Party, along with the growth of the Religious Right in response to liberal secularism gave conservatives a chance to broaden their coalition. Conservatives embraced supply-side economics and allied with the Religious Right, forging a conservative majority, but at the expense of their principled opposition to materialism and coercion. I conclude that conservative elites – at *National Review* in particular – became increasingly practical between the late 1950s and mid 1970s in order to overtake liberalism and “save America.”

I expected to emerge from my thesis experience reinvigorated in my

opposition to conservatism. Instead, I developed a grudging respect for *The National Review* and its original principles, and a deepened scorn for modern “conservatives” who criticize “big government” while legislating morality and champion virtue while encouraging materialism. My work benefited not only from the guidance of Professor Suri and our world-class library system, but also from the Trewartha Grant I received through the College of Letters and Science Honors Program, which covered the hundreds of dollars I expended on photocopies and printing. I also used grant funds to purchase archived copies of the influential conservative television show, *Firing Line*. With the support of a quality public university and a history department that values undergraduate teaching, this experience helped me to deepen my understanding of modern American politics. It also led me to reevaluate and solidify my own beliefs.

Transitions and Events: Brief Notes

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like to announce the addition of Liz Preston as our new undergraduate advisor.

Our emeritus faculty also matter to our community and continue to earn notable honors and recognition. Highlights included news that *Stanley Payne* received the 2005 Marshall Shulman Prize for *The Spanish Civil War, The Soviet Union, and Communism* (Yale

University Press, 2004), and that *Jan Vansina* won a Melville J. Herskovitz Prize (his second Herskovitz Prize) for *How Societies are Born: Governance in West Central Africa before 1600* (University of Virginia Press, 2004). *Gerda Lerner* delivered the 2005 Charles Homer Haskins Lecture of the American Council of Learned Societies, and *Kemal Karpat* is the winner of an Andrew Mellon Foundation Emeritus Fellowship.

A final note of transition is that which occurred in the Department's academic-administrative leadership. *Jeanne Boydston* completed a three-year term of service as Director of Graduate Studies; *Francisco Scarano* is the new DGS, effective Fall 2006. *Steve J. Stern* completed his term as Chair; the incoming Chair is *David McDonald*. *Laird Boswell* will continue his superb service as Associate Chair.

Kaplan Family Fellowship Undergraduate Research Trip

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pamphlets. By the end of the week I had photocopied hundreds of pages of information that supplied evidence of a worldwide awareness of Ukrainian dissent.

The next stop was the National Archives in College Park, Maryland. Here I read through State Department documents, looking for anything pertaining to Ukrainian dissent. After a few days I found several fascinating

reports from the American Embassy in Moscow, revealing widespread unrest in the Soviet Union. These reports supplied the framework for my argument.

My final stop was the Hoover Institution at Stanford. There, I met a friendly Ukrainian librarian. She described memories of the 1960s, recalling poetry meetings, demonstrations, and arrests. Then she showed me to the relevant archives. I searched through letters, posters, and photographs that helped create a cultural picture of Ukraine

in the 1960s.

The Kaplan Family Fellowship funded my investigation into Ukrainian dissent in the 1960s. This research gave me many first-hand insights into the way scholars view Ukrainian dissent, and the Cold War in general. It also deepened my love of history. I hope to expand my research in the future. This was one of my most fulfilling endeavors as an undergraduate at the University of Wisconsin.

New Department Website

As some of our more web savvy readers might already have noticed, the History Department website has leapt into the twenty-first century. The department's new website boasts a much more user-friendly environment and many new features, themselves the result of discussion among faculty, students and alumni over the last year or more. A quick hop to <http://history.wisc.edu> takes you to a homepage graced with the department's new logo, anchored by the Field House's "Shield W," that has become the standard campus emblem. Clearer headings aimed at our many constituencies allow for easier navigation to the information browsers seek. Faculty pages offer fuller profiles of our colleagues. Our support personnel have worked to enhance our advertisements for important events—we hope also to post photographs of recent events and departmental gatherings. Plans are currently underway as well for an ongoing series of pages that examine the "history of history" at UW-Madison that will highlight the outstanding teachers and programs that

have shaped our shared legacy. As ever, we welcome any and all suggestions for how to improve this increasingly important external "face" to our community.

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Credit the James Ford Bell Library, University of Minnesota

As a department of the undergraduate College of Letters and Sciences, the UW-Madison History Department attracts over 600 undergraduate majors each year and serves countless additional students drawn to history to meet other requirements of the College. As a member of the Graduate School, the History Department admits roughly 30 students annually. For all of its students, the History Department is committed to providing an exciting and diverse intellectual community—and a connection to last a lifetime.

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If you would like to discuss creating a fund to benefit the History Department, or if you would like more information about supporting the Department with a life income or estate gift, please contact Anne Lucke at the University of Wisconsin Foundation (608.262.6242 or anne.lucke@uwfoundation.wisc.edu).

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THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT IS ALIVE & WELL!

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