

IN THIS ISSUE

5 History Majors
Elected to Phi Beta
Kappa Society

Institute Launches
American Soldier
Grants Program

News from
our Alums

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY



History Department

Primary Source, Summer 2010

Welcome from the Chair...

Greetings from the History Department at Kansas State University! It has been a productive and enjoyable spring semester here in Eisenhower Hall. The department hosted several lectures; saw five of its undergraduate students elected to membership in the prestigious honor society, Phi Beta Kappa; and took pride in those graduate students who gave papers at national scholarly conferences or had their first articles accepted for publication in academic journals. We also had two winners of awards for whom nominations were solicited from across the university. Alida Boorn, a doctoral student who is studying trade and material culture in the nineteenth-century U.S. West, received the Extraordinary Student Award from the Department of Student Life; and Professor Chuck Sanders,



who teaches courses on the Jacksonian period, the Civil War, and Manifest Destiny, won both the "Putting Students First Award" sponsored by the Department of Student Life, and the "Honor an Educator" Award from Kappa Delta Pi, an international honor society in Education.

Despite recent economic challenges, the department was able to host several talks of broad interest to the university community. In March, Professor Mills Kelly, associate director of the Center for History and New Media, and a faculty member in the Department of History and Art History at George Mason University, spoke on the impact that digital archives and the internet have had on teaching and research – a topic of broad relevance across disciplines. In April, our own Professor Sue Zschoche presented "Women's History: A Manifesto," which focused movingly on the need for contemporary feminists and activists

to understand the struggles of women in the past, and to listen to their voices. Also in April, Professor Michael Poliakoff of the University of Colorado gave a public presentation on "Games, Contests, Violence and Culture: Sport and Competition in the Ancient World," and talks in the department on "The Challenge of Virgil" and grant opportunities in the humanities. Rounding out April was the university Open House, during which the History Department arranged for the Lecompton Reenactors to perform a historically based play depicting the debate in 1850s Kansas, known as "Bleeding Kansas," as to whether the new state should be a free or a slave state.

I was thrilled that so many of you responded to the call in January for news about your lives and accomplishments. As promised, this newsletter is the first to include a section devoted to alumni news. I thank all of the alums who wrote in to tell us of their activities after completing degrees at KState. You are an impressive group, and we are immensely proud. I hope that those who have not yet written to us will do so soon. We always appreciate the chance to "catch up."

As I complete my first year as chair of the History Department, I must thank my talented colleagues, and our dedicated students, for giving me so much to brag about, and our generous alumni and friends in the community, whose assistance is so critical in helping us to accomplish our mission.

Enjoy the rest of the summer, and don't forget to write!

PRIMARY SOURCE 1

Institute Launches American Soldier Grants Program

Professor David Stone, Director of the Institute for Military History & 20th Century Studies, introduced a new Institute-sponsored grant program in the 2009–10 academic year. With funding from federal appropriations, the Institute invited applications for funding to support scholarly projects whose content advances the understanding of the environment and impact of the American soldier. Faculty and graduate students in the History and Political Science Departments and the Security Studies program were eligible to apply.

The Institute awarded about a dozen grants, fairly evenly distributed among the various disciplines and between faculty and graduate students. Recipients included Kate Kidder, a master's student in Security Studies student researching West Point personnel allocations, and Ethan Anderson, whose grant is providing significant support for his research in Mexico City for his History M.A. thesis on the Mexican War.

The grants program has also underwritten three lectures by visiting scholars at KSU on subjects related to the experiences and employment of U.S. military forces. Professor Stone expects the program to continue and perhaps expand in 2010–11.

Department Invades Oregon

The department had an excellent showing at the recent joint meeting of the American Society for Environmental History and the National Council on Public History in Portland, Oregon.

On Thursday, March 11, in the session titled "Environmental Change on North America's Borders," Kent LaCombe, a graduate student working under the direction of environmental and Kansas history Professor Jim Sherow, presented "Freshwater Follies: The 20th Century Race for Resources in the Lake Huron Ecosystem." Later in that afternoon, in the "Iron Horse in the Garden: Railroads and the American West" session, Professor Sherow presented "Ecological Transitions and the Kansas Pacific Railway: Alexander Gardner and his Camera," a study of a leading photographer of the nineteenth-century West.

On Friday, David Vail, a PhD candidate also working under the direction of Professor Sherow, presented "Poison Winds over Chemical Lands: A Toxic History of Postwar Kansas, 1950–1980," in the session titled "Poisons, Pollutants, and Professionals: Toxic Bodies and Environments." Vail was awarded a highly coveted graduate student travel grant to attend the conference by the ASEH. On Saturday, Professor Heather McCreary spoke on "Gulf of Disease: Environment, Health, and the Tropical Menace of Disease in Latin America," in the session titled, "Latin American Currents: Iberian Transformation, Agrarian Reform, and Tropical Disease."

Also on Friday, recent MA graduate Janet Timmerman presented "Hospice for Small Towns," in which she combined her experiences in Kansas with the history department's Chapman Center for Rural Studies and Marshall County's Pony Express Museum with her current position as a community health coordinator.

Janet received her MA in 2008 under the direction of Professor Bonnie Lynn-Sherow. Sandra Reddish, a PhD student in the department working with Professor Sue Zschoche, gave a talk about her experiences in three small Kansas towns.

All of these sessions were very well attended, and the papers received excellent responses. Not surprisingly, we can look for several of them to appear in professional journals. Overall, "This was an unprecedented level of representation for our department at the ASEH," said Professor Sherow, who has been attending the conference for twenty years. "The ASEH is the flagship meeting for environmental historians and having so many K-Staters there sends a clear message that our program is prospering and a leader in the field of environmental history."

Meet Professor Bob Linder



As a senior member of the Department of History faculty, Professor Bob Linder has compiled an impressive record of published scholarship and touched the lives of thousands of students in his decades of service. As he prepares for a sabbatical to begin in the fall, he remains focused on current and upcoming research and teaching.

Professor Linder will spend most of the summer and fall Down Under as he finishes up a major monograph on the history of Christianity in Australia, on which he has been working as much as his schedule has allowed for nearly two decades.

As his part of the co-authored work, he is tracing Australian Christianity in the twentieth century. But his interests in Australia extend beyond the parameters of his formal scholarship. In his many travels over the Australian continent over the years, he has developed a deep understanding and appreciation of the Australian people. “It took me about ten years just to begin to figure them out,” he says of his research trips there. “They are a fascinating people who, despite the common language, are quite different from Americans.”

With this major piece of scholarship nearing completion, Professor Linder has several future projects already planned or underway. He will be working on a revision and expansion of his classic *Civil Religion and the Presidency*, first published in 1988. He is also hoping to finish a Second World War–era companion volume to *The Long Tragedy: Australian Evangelical Christians and the Great War, 1914–1918*. And then there are his long-deferred plans to complete a biography of Frank Carlson, the only person to serve Kansas as governor and as representative in both houses of Congress.

Besides his graduate seminars, Professor Linder teaches courses on the Renaissance and Reformation as well as the history of Christianity, including the history of Christianity in America. For many years, he has also taught very popular courses on the occult and witchcraft, as well as the history of baseball. He developed his course on the occult and witchcraft partly because there was always great student curiosity about the subject in his more traditional courses. Over the years, the emphasis has mirrored students’ changing interest in the occult, from the original fascination with Satanism to greater inquisitiveness about spiritualism and the New Age Movement in more recent years. One of the challenges of teaching the course is the paucity of historical literature on the subject, so Professor Linder designs the coursework so that students can work with primary sources.

Professor Linder’s “History of Baseball” is another course that is quickly filled every time it is offered. The course is about the evolution of both the sport and the business of baseball, but the course is built around the theme that baseball’s timeless attraction for Americans is that it is a republican game that teaches republican values.

Along with his commitment to the university and his students, Professor Linder has a long history of service to the community, including holding public office. He also makes frequent public addresses. Though he has spoken in venues as prestigious as the Australian equivalent of the Pentagon in Canberra, he has remained committed to sharing his expertise with fellow Kansans, as he did in a recent series of lectures on Anabaptist history presented in memory of the late Alfreda Nafziger.

Few students who have had the chance to study under Dr. Linder ever forget the experience, and many K-State alumni still keep in touch with him. More than twenty years ago, out of gratitude for their experience under his tutelage, his former students established a special undergraduate scholarship fund in his name. Many continue to contribute to the fund in the hope that KSU students will continue to profit from Professor Linder’s tenure at the university in perpetuity.

Indeed, Professor Linder has no plans to leave the classroom any time soon. Despite many offers over the years from other universities all over the country, Professor Linder has remained at KSU and has no desire to reduce his research and teaching efforts. He considers the Great Plains, along with the Australian Outback, to be the most beautiful places on earth. He has a special affinity for the people of Kansas, especially those who happen to wander into his classroom. The feeling is clearly mutual.

5 History Majors Elected to Phi Beta Kappa Society

Five of the department's best undergraduates — Chelsie Bonds, Hannah Hartsig, Patrick Michael Kirk, Tana Smith, and David Zeller — were recently elected to Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest and most prestigious academic honor society (founded in 1776).

Chelsie Bonds hails from Wichita, Kansas, and has primarily studied Europe in the Middle Ages. She is currently trying to decide between going to the Peace Corps and pursuing graduate work after KSU.

Hannah Hartsig is from Overland Park and also focused on European History. A double major in Art History and History, she said that her favorite aspect of the history department is “how passionate all the professors are about their subject and students.” Hannah also wrote us that she “loved the hands on research that the department offered” and her experience as a research assistant with the Chapman Center. This fall, Hannah begins a master's program at Syracuse University in Italian Renaissance Art History.

Patrick Michael Kirk resides in Scott City and prides himself on being a generalist — he has explored a wide range of historical topics with no definitive emphasis on any period. After graduation, Patrick will be commissioned a second lieutenant in the US Marine Corps.

Tana Smith, Paola, KS, minored in Spanish and enjoyed studying the early modern histories of Spain, France, Britain, and Central Europe. She especially praised her advisor, Professor Marsha Frey, for being “passionate, enthusiastic, and always willing to help me.” After graduation, Tana intends to pursue a PhD in history.

David Zimmer is from a farm near Olpe, south of Emporia. David studied widely, with an emphasis on military history, and wrote us that he has been “passionate about history since before 5th grade.” The day before graduation in May, he was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant in the Infantry. David plans on making a career as an army officer or eventually becoming a history professor.

Phi Beta Kappa has over 500,000 members in 280 chapters at American colleges and universities and admits fewer than 10 percent of arts and science graduates at these leading institutions. To learn more about the society, please visit <https://www.pbk.org/home/index.aspx>

Congratulations are in order...

Faculty

Brent Maner spent the spring semester as a Research Fellow at the International Center for Cultural Studies (IFK) in Vienna, Austria. In May, he gave a public talk at the IFK entitled "Stop the Speculation: The Vienna and Berlin Stock Exchanges during World War I."

Heather McCrea's book *Diseased Relations: Epidemics, Public Health, and State-building in Tucatan, Mexico, 1847-1929* will be published and released this fall by the University of New Mexico Press. Professor McCrea also gave a paper in April at KU's Hall Center for the Humanities. "Gulf of Disease: Environment, Health, and the Tropical Menace of Disease in Latin America" was presented as part of the Hall Center's "Nature and Culture" Series.

Charles Sanders was the recipient of this year's "Putting Students First" award sponsored by the Department of Student Life and the "Honor and Educator" award from Kappa Delta Pi, an international honor society in education.

David Stone has just completed an edited collection entitled *The Soviet Union at War, 1941-1945*, to be released this summer by Pen and Sword publishers.

Sue Zschoche was named an "Outstanding Faculty Member" by the members of Mortar Board National Honor Society.

Students

Margaret Bickers, Ph.D. 2010, has been awarded the Excellence in West Texas History Fellowship for 2010-2011. This \$40,000 fellowship, conferred by the West Texas History Foundation, Sangelo State and Texas Tech Universities, will support Margaret's research into West Texas archives as she extends her dissertation research on the environmental and cultural change along the Canadian River in Texas and New Mexico into the late 20th century.

Alida Born, Ph.D. student, was named the recipient of an "Extraordinary Student Award" and honored at an April banquet sponsored by the Office of Student Life. The award goes to students who have overcome unusual obstacles in pursuing their degrees. Alida was recognized for her diligence, grace, perseverance, and creativity - qualities that those of us in the History Department have so often seen in her. Alida's article, "Goggles in the Rocky Mountain West," will appear in the *Rocky Mountain Fur Trade Journal* in July of this Year.

COL Walter Hudson, doctoral candidate, has been awarded the Colonel and Mrs. T.F. Bristol Military History Writing Award, conferred by the U.S. Army War College. His paper, "Occupational Pursuits: The Army and World War II Occupational Planning," examines the origins of occupation policy.

Robin Ottoson, doctoral student, has been awarded a summer study grant for her continuing research into the reaction to the Vietnam War among Mennonite colleges in Kansas. She also has had an article accepted for publication in the *Journal of Church and State*.

Doctoral candidate **Kelly Sartorius'** article, "Experimental Autonomy: Dean Emily Taylor and the Women's Movement at the University of Kansas," was the lead article in the Spring 2010 issue of *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains*.

MA candidate **Darin Tuck's** article, "Heralding the Call of Populism: Kansas Methodists and the 1896 Presidential Election," will be published in October in *Methodist History*. Darin also presented a paper entitled "The Miracle of the Gulls and Collective Memory" at the Mormon Historical Association Conference this past May.

David Vail, doctoral candidate, was awarded two Othmer Library Research Travel grants to conduct research at the Chemical Heritage Foundation in Philadelphia this summer. David will be exploring materials related to his dissertation, "Poison Winds Over Chemical Lands: A Toxic History of the Postwar Prairie West."

Molly Yochim, BA 2009, has been awarded a Fulbright grant to teach English in Germany in 2010-2011.

News from our Alums

(Alums: please let us hear from you - we would love to print your story too. Just send us an email at histalum@ksu.edu.)

Jill (Schrag) Addison

After graduating from KSU with a double major in History and Public Relations, I moved to Eastern Europe to serve for one year with Campus Crusade for Christ. After returning to the States, I moved to Boulder, Colorado, to continue working with Campus Crusade at CU-Boulder. In 2000, I moved to San Clemente, California, and began using my degree in Public Relations to help promote the Jesus Film Project there. Eventually, I served as a producer on a new feature film called "Magdalena" which was translated into dozens of languages and seen in countries all around the world. In 2008 I moved to San Diego to be near my now-husband and continue to work in video production. Then, in 2009, I launched my own small video production company, www.JillAddison.com. I am currently focusing on writing and producing 1 and 3 minute online videos for small business owners. I have found that my History degree helped me hone my writing and critical thinking skills in ways that can be used in all kinds of communications, written and visual. My husband is also in the video production industry and is the owner of 100 Acre Films (www.100acrefilms.com). Our ultimate goal is to build a film and video production company that produces commercials, corporate video and feature films.

Annie Platoff

Annie Platoff (BA 1980), Slavic Studies Librarian at the University of California, Santa Barbara, recently published a book entitled *Russian Regional Flags: Flags of the Subjects of the Russian Federation*, published by the *North American Vexillological Association* [editor's note: vexillology" is "the scientific and scholarly study of flag history and symbolism."]. This is the first English-language book to discuss the symbols of all of Russia's federal subjects.

Cherie Cook

Here's an update on what I've been doing since graduating in 1982: Thanks to guidance and encouragement from Buddy Gray, I chose to use my History degree in the museum field and have found it to be a rewarding career. In 1984, I entered the Historical Administration Program at Eastern Illinois University and received my MA in 1985. Since then, I've worked as curator for the Reno County (KS) Historical Society (1985-88), as Oklahoma field services consultant (1988-93), as executive director of the Oklahoma Museums Association (1993-2004) and now as senior program manager for the American Association for State and Local History. At AASLH, I coordinate the Visitors Count! program (www.aaslh.org/visitorscount) and the StEPs standards program for small- and mid-sized history organizations (www.aaslh.org/steps). I recently received news that I have been selected to receive a 2010 Outstanding Graduate Alumni Award from Eastern Illinois University (awarded in April 2010).

Robert Irvine

Since earning his doctorate, Bob and his family (wife Elisa, daughters Emmaline and Tessa, and son Finn) have been in the Pacific Northwest. He is now vice-president of PARC Resources, a consulting firm focused on development, specializing in working with Indian tribes, non-profits and rural governments. He reports that the work is rewarding, noting that in the last few years, the firm has helped two different tribes "create domestic violence programs, have helped capitalize fire stations, low-income housing and a wide range of projects." He is a resource faculty member at Eastern Oregon University and an adjunct in American History at Blue Mountain Community College. He and a colleague Randy Trani, have just published *Fallacies in Education: Why Schools are Mired in Mediocrity* with Rowman Littlefield.

Martin Kennedy

I've been living in Topeka since I moved from Manhattan in 1985. I have two daughters, one 21 and one 12. My wife, Sabrina, is from Wichita and is Director of Finance at the Kansas Insurance Department. I enjoy travel, photography, reading, running, and fitness. I took up distance running a few years ago and ran my first marathon (26.2 miles) last year.



As Secretary of the Kansas Department on Aging (KDOA) I'm responsible for advocating for the interests of Kansas seniors before the public and the legislature. I serve at the pleasure of the Governor, and as a member of the Cabinet I was required to go through confirmation by the state senate.

At KDOA, we're responsible for a number of programs including Medicaid services for long-term care, regulation of adult care homes, and administration of a variety of community programs for seniors including nutrition services provided at meal sites and home-delivered services like Meals on Wheels. We have a budget of almost \$500 million and a staff of about 190 people working in Topeka and in regional offices around the state. Our provider network includes about 300 nursing homes providing Medicaid services, 11 Area Agencies on Aging, and a variety of community based providers.

Our mission is to support communities that enable seniors to make choices about how they live their lives. As noted above, we do this in a variety of ways, but our major focus is to provide services that allow people to live in their own homes and avoid nursing home admissions.

The work I completed for my history degree at K-State has served me well. The writing and thinking skills I picked up there are the foundation of many of my working habits. I've also kept my interest in history and in fact I teach a post-World War II US history class as an adjunct for Baker University. I smile when I remember Professor Hajda telling me that anything that had happened since World War II was current events, not history. Time has flown by since then!

Gail (Brackney) McDaniel

I retired from nursing (RN) mostly in acute care hospitals, the last being National Park Medical Center in Hot Springs, Arkansas, where I was working in the ICU through 2006. I have finally entered the academic arena, and have held an adjunct position since 2006 at National Park Community College in Hot Springs, Arkansas. It took me almost until retirement to finally use my BS, MA in history, and almost PhD and I am enjoying it immensely. I regularly teach three survey courses per semester usually one in either half of US history and two in either Western Civilization. The community college setting is very "user friendly" and it is a great "retirement" position. The students are quite a variety of ages and backgrounds, so it is a real challenge.

I recently submitted a proposal to my department head to teach a US women's history course. I will be teaching the history of women in America to 1900 in the summer of, 2010. I am busily preparing the class and very excited about the opportunity. I would enjoy hearing from any of my former professors or fellow grad students. Please feel free to contact me at my email or on facebook. Thanks for all your inspiration and assistance during the many years that I was there.

Leigh Ann Wheeler

I graduated from K-State with a B.A. in History in 1987 and completed by Ph.D. in History at the University of Minnesota in 1998. I'm married to Don Nieman, who taught History at K-State for many years in the 1970s and 1980s. (Yes, we knew each other in the 1980s but did not get involved until we met up again at the Organization of American Historians in Toronto Canada in 1999. Who knew a history conference could be so exciting?) We are pictured in the photo with our 6-year-old son Brady Wheeler-Nieman.



Don is Dean of Harpur College of Arts & Sciences at Binghamton University. I am an associate professor of History at Binghamton and am the new co-editor, with my colleague Jean Quataert, of the *Journal of Women's History*. Also, I have just signed a contract with Oxford University Press for my next book on how sexual expression became a civil liberty.

Open House 2010: Scenes from the Lecompton Reenactors' Performance

