In this issue we celebrate the accomplishments of our faculty, students, and alums; announce a new scholarship fund in memory of Hugh Ambrose; and share reflections from our undergraduate students on what makes an excellent history class. Visiting Associate Professor Gillian Glaes also shares insight on on-line and in-person teaching, and we note the passing of former faculty member Robert R. Dozier. We are excited to move forward into another year of teaching and research.
Chair's Update

Robert Greene

Autumnal greetings from the University of Montana History Department!

The billowing clouds of late-summer smoke have lifted from the valley just in time for us to clear our lungs and welcome back all of our students, faculty, and staff at the start of a new fall semester. This year promises to be an exciting one. A fresh cohort of five graduate students entered our program this fall, and we wish them well as they embark on their studies. In addition, we are searching for two new tenure-track faculty: an assistant professor of Early American history and an Asian specialist (this latter position will be shared jointly between the departments of History and Political Science). We look forward to adding to our ranks a pair of top-notch scholars and dynamic teachers who will continue to carry out the department’s mission of a twenty-first-century liberal arts education founded on the time-honored precepts of critical thinking, writing, and research.

In the pages that follow, you’ll read more about what members of our community have been up to in recent months. As always, we appreciate your interest in the History Department and are grateful for your continued support. We’re eager, as ever, to hear from our alumni, so feel free to pass along any updates, accolades, or other information that we might include in the next issue of our newsletter. Best wishes for the months ahead.

Professor Volk Receives Two National Awards

The Organization of American Historians (OAH) awarded Professor Kyle Volk the Merle Curti Award for Best Book in Intellectual History. Kyle’s book, Moral Minorities and the Making of American Democracy, also received honorable mention by the OAH for the Frederick Jackson Turner Prize for best first book in American history.

It is a rare honor to even be considered for one national book award. To win one such award and garner honorable mention for a second is truly a remarkable achievement. Kudos to Professor Volk for the commitment to scholarly excellence evident in his achievements.

Kyle Volk and his editor Susan Ferber of Oxford University Press celebrate Dr. Volk’s book awards at the Organization of American Historians.

Students Reflect on Teaching Excellence

Editor’s note: Four undergraduate history majors agreed to share their thoughts on what makes an excellent history class.

Sydney Hayward: An excellent history class is one where the professor shows enthusiasm for the subject and makes an effort to interact with his or her students. I have found the classes where the professor seems excited to hear what the students have to say while offering thought provoking questions the most interesting and beneficial. Lectures are not given every class but are broken up with discussions. It is a great opportunity to listen to your peers.

Eamon Ormseth: An excellent history class begins with commitment. The students agree to critically engage with the reading, shepherded along by the professor. The best teachers treat their students like saplings. They help them find their niche, and then buffet it with the careful scholarship of the professor. Finally, they must be dedicated students.

Hugh Kingery: In my opinion what makes a history class excellent is the willingness of the professor to engage in the instruction. Undergraduate students respond positively to professors who annually update their curriculum, show enthusiasm for their subjects, and have high expectations for the students’ competency. Additionally they must be available for the students when they have questions. The University of Montana’s history department excels in that its faculty treats undergraduates as future colleagues.

Jennifer Pepprock: A great undergraduate history class uses excellent storytelling to question majority opinions and re-write history. It doesn’t remind you what you learned in high school; it shows you how to question everything you’ve ever learned. Most importantly, it asks you to produce your own historical ideas. In an excellent undergraduate history class, there are no wrong answers as long as you can prove your argument with well-synthesized substantial evidence.

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Online vs. In-person Teaching
Gillian Glaes

During the first week of spring 2015, students in my “Discovering Africa” course introduced themselves on the weekly Moodle forum and discussed why they were taking the class. Many replied that they were interested in learning about African history. One student, though, wrote that he was taking the class because he had to and he was not excited about it. He explained that he was a pharmacy student and he needed this class to graduate.

This might not sound too out of the ordinary, but the student in question was completing his required pharmacy internship in Kalispell and was not able to take an on-campus class to meet his last General Education requirement. So, he turned to the spring semester offerings and found “Discovering Africa;” an online course. Despite his initial reticence, he turned out to be one of the best students in the class, writing stellar papers on everything from medicine in ancient Egypt to the ways in which students in the class, writing stellar papers on everything from medicine in ancient Egypt to the ways in which students in the class, writing stellar papers on...
Hugh Ambrose: Grieving the Loss of a Department Alum

Michael Mayer

The History Department mourns the loss of one of its own. Cancer claimed the life of Hugh Ambrose on May 23, 2015. The son of Stephen Ambrose, a famous and widely read historian, Hugh established himself as an accomplished historian in his own right.

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, on August 12, 1966, Hugh grew up in New Orleans, where his father had taken a job as a professor of history. Hugh attended elementary grades in New Orleans and went to high school in Ireland. His family spent vacations in Montana, and Hugh did his BA at the University of Montana, where he majored in History. Hugh also earned his MA in History at UM. His PhD thesis contended that “in his reaction to McCarthy, . . . Truman engineered his own defeat.” Hugh maintained that the president had failed to offer “a clear distinction between his anti-communism and McCarthy’s.” Indeed, “the president sought to prove that he was the nation’s fiercest anti-communist, and he sacrificed civil liberties in order to do so.”

Truman’s actions, Hugh concluded, were “dishorable” and “left him with precious few supporters.” Even while completing his thesis, Hugh began to work as his father’s research assistant. As they discussed the prospect of working together, Hugh recalled, his father uttered the magic words, “I’ll pay you.” Hugh worked on Stephen’s books on the Lewis and Clark expedition (Undaunted Courage), the building of the transcontinental railroad (Nothing Like It in the World), and several books on World War II. Band of Brothers traced members of the 101st Airborne from D-Day through the end of the war. It became an enormous best-seller and was adapted as a mini-series produced by Spielberg, along with Tom Hanks and Gary Goetzman. In addition, Hugh wrote the book that accompanied the series. It debuted as number seven on the New York Times bestseller list. The Pacific tells the story of the major battles of the Pacific war through the experiences of five American servicemen. Hugh worked hard to present events from the perspective of the servicemen who fought. “It all comes down to storytelling,” he explained. “Good narrative history … [brings] alive a time, a place, and a cast of characters.”

Hugh and his father began work on what became The Pacific, but Stephen was diagnosed with cancer and died in 2002. At that point, Hugh became a consultant to the mini-series, also produced by Spielberg, along with Tom Hanks and Gary Goetzman. In addition, Hugh wrote the book that accompanied the series. It debuted as number seven on the New York Times bestseller list. The Pacific tells the story of the major battles of the Pacific war through the experiences of five American servicemen. Hugh worked hard to present events from the perspective of the servicemen who fought. “It all comes down to storytelling,” he explained. “Good narrative history … [brings] alive a time, a place, and a cast of characters.”

Contributions Welcome for Ambrose Fellowship Fund

Kyle G. Volk

In conjunction with the family and friends of Hugh Ambrose, the History Department is proud to honor Hugh’s life and work by creating the Hugh Ambrose Graduate Fellowship Fund. This endowed fellowship will support graduate students who follow in Hugh’s footsteps by earning their master’s degree in history at the University of Montana.

To give to the Hugh Ambrose Graduate Fellowship Fund, please send a check made payable to “UM Foundation–Ambrose Fund” to: Professor Kyle G. Volk, UM Department of History, 32 Campus Drive – LA 260, Missoula, MT 59812.

Alumni News

David Brooks (PhD 2012), Michael Dax (MA 2013), and Greg Gordon (PhD 2010) all spoke about their respective books at the Montana Book Festival, September 10-12, 2015 (see front page photo), Brooks’ monograph, Restoring the Shining Waters, was just released by the University of Oklahoma Press in August. Dax’s book, Grizzly West: A Failed Attempt to Reintroduce Grizzly Bears in the Mountain West, also was just released in August 2015 by University of Nebraska Press. Gordon’s book, When Money Grew on Trees: A. B. Hammond and the Age of the Timber Baron, came out in 2014 from University of Oklahoma Press. All three alums worked with Professor Dan Flores while at UM. Melissa Bruninga-Matteau (BA 2002) graduated with a degree in history from UM and went on to UC-Irvine for the MA/PhD program. She is currently an associate professor of history at Martin Methodist College in Pulaski, TN, and co-directs the Center for Teaching Excellence there. She will also be presenting at the 50th International Medieval Congress in Kalamazoo in May.

Chelsea Chamberlain (MA 2015) was awarded a major fellowship, the Lilly Fellows Program in Humanities and the Arts, which will support her doctoral work at the University of Pennsylvania through an annual $3,000 stipend, regular conferences, and mentoring.

Greg Gordon’s (PhD 2010) 2015 book When Money Grew on Trees has been named a finalist for the 2015 Washington State book award. Winners of the competition will be announced on October 10 in Seattle.

Rosalyn LaPier (PhD 2015) was appointed to be editor for Montana Magazine of History board in spring 2015. She also was appointed as a Research Associate (academic position) at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian, on May 15, for three years. She also co-authored a book...
Robert R. Dozier: Passing of a Beloved Professor

Linda Frey

Robert R. Dozier, retired professor in the UM History at UM, passed away on August 30, 2015. He was born in 1932 in New Orleans where he spent his early life. Those formative years gave his voice a Cajun cadence and a part of his heritage. After serving in the Air Force during the Korean War, he went on to UC Berkeley where he excelled at medicine and then math before turning his sights to history. He came to the University of Montana in 1967 and shared that love of history with his students in courses on English history, writing, and World War II. He continued to teach after his retirement in 1989, first on a three-year contract and then in various MOLLI courses, which were enthusiastically received. In 1983 he published For King, Constitution, and County: The English Loyalists and the French Revolution in Virginia.

Alumni News, continued from page 7

new book—City Indians—and a chapter on the same subject (see Publications). The Medieval Academy of America, in collaboration with the Richard III Society—American Branch, recently announced that the 2015 Schallek Fellowship has been awarded to Sam Rostad (BA 2010). The Schallek Fellowship is awarded annually to a student in North America and provides a one-year grant of $30,000 to support Ph.D. dissertation research in any relevant discipline dealing with late-medieval Britain (ca. 1350-1500). Rostad, the 2010 UM Outstanding Senior in History, received his Masters of Philosophy Degree with Distinction from Cambridge University in 2012, and a Masters of Arts Degree from Notre Dame in 2014. Now a History Ph.D. Candidate at Notre Dame, Rostad will use the Fellowship to work on his dissertation in England during the next academic year. Rostad’s dissertation studies the Bendictines, a cloistered monastic order whose devotional obligations usually required both silence and segregation from the outside world but who played a significant role—that was both vocal and interactive—in the religious life of Britain in the medieval period.

I have loved and been loved; I have been given much and I have given something in return.

An avid fisherman, he shared his love of Montana with his children and colleagues. Orphaned at three and separated from his sister, he was aware of the importance of family and of self-reliance. After the age of 13, Bob worked and educated himself. He was literally a self-made man. He and his wife of 61 years Joycee adopted a girl, Lorraine, and then three boys from one family, Ronald, Richard, and Robert. His ten grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren enlivened his home as did a number of students who were taken under the wings of the Doziers. Over the years, eleven students lived with the Doziers. One of his sons joked that they should put a vacancy sign in the front window that could be turned on and off. He inculcated in them a love of country, and the importance of hard work and of individual responsibility. He expected much of himself and of others. Bob himself wrote that “I have loved and been loved. I have been given much and I have given something in return.” His friends and family might change the last phrase to say, “He gave so much to so many.”

Faculty News

Thanks to an extraordinary generous gift from UM alum Sam and Julie Baldridge, the Irish Studies Program will soon hire a visiting scholar to teach two courses in Irish and/or Irish American History. The visiting scholar’s position carries the title of the David M. Emmons Visiting Scholar in Irish Studies. Thanks to this endowed position named after a former department historian, the Irish Studies Program continues to build on a legacy of Irish American History. The visiting scholar will be able to offer new and exciting courses to be taught by distinguished historians from Ireland and the U.S.


Regents Professor Emeritus Paul Lauren was invited to deliver the keynote address on “The State of Human Rights” at the 35th Anniversary Conference of the Urban Morgan Center for Human Rights at the School of Law at the University of Cincinnati in April. In May he was inaugurated into membership in the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters as a result of his international impact of his work. The elaborate ceremony took place in Oslo at the same location where the Nobel Peace Prize dinner is held. In July he was invited to deliver two weeks of lectures on international human rights at the major law school in Beijing during a time when a growing number of human rights lawyers in China were being arrested. Anya Jabour was awarded the Montana Historical Society’s Terry Hobckoff Choice Award for the favorite article published in Montana: The Magazine of Western History in 2014 for her contributions to “Women’s History Matters: The Montana Historical Society’s Suffrage Centennial Project.” Her contribution, “Feminism Personified: Judy Smith and the Women’s Movement,” also can be read online at http://montanawomenshistory.org/feminism-personified-judy-smith-and-the-womens-movement/.

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the Horse: The Eighteenth-Century Culture Per- 12-25

Jody Pavlack was in Santiago, Chile, in August, as an invited panelist at different symposiums, and one individual talk: Seminario Internacional, “El Comunismo y Su Impacto en America Latina, 1917-1948,” August 11, 2015, in the Archivo Nacional de Chile, Santiago, sponsored by the Universidad de Valparaiso de Chile and the Universidad Diego Portales; Coloquio Internacional; “Maxismo y Comunismo en America Latina contemporánea: recepciones, militancia y representa- ciones.” August 14, 2015, in the Universidad de Valparaiso de Chile; Charla: “Henry Wallace en America Latina,” August 12, 2015, at the Instituto de Historia, Facultad de Historia, Geografía y Ciencia Política, La Pontificia Universi- dad Católica de Chile.


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