

History Matters at UIC

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Notes from the Chair

Telling good stories while remaining as faithful as possible to what actually happened is the central task challenging the historian. Even as we uncover the fascinating complexity and messiness of human story we also seek to identify larger issues and institutions that have shaped our world. Countless hours of careful, and often solitary, research—often in the confined space of the archive—must be counter-balanced with discussions with colleagues and with regular excursions into an open intellectual space in which creativity and artistry can come into play in crafting meaningful and engaging narratives. In this issue we recognize the contributions of our late colleague, Jim Searing, and also give you a window on how other members of the UIC community are engaged in making history.

Department News

James F. Searing, 1953-2012

Jim Searing, Professor of History at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he taught since 1992, died unexpectedly on December 3. Searing, who specialized in African History and served as Chair of the UIC Department of History from 2005-2010, will be missed greatly for his sense of humor, his deep intellect, and his commitment to the Department and the University. Professor Searing is survived by his wife Patricia Hickling and three children, and will be missed by all who knew him. To see more on the life and career of Jim Searing and for remembrances penned by colleagues and students, you may visit the *In Memoriam* section of our website at <http://history.las.uic.edu/history/news-and-events/2012/12/04/james-f.-searing-1953-2012-->



Department News

Faculty News

Leon Fink has been named one of ten Researchers of the Year by UIC's Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research. The purpose of the Researcher of the Year Award is to recognize the efforts and commitment of those researchers who are advancing knowledge in their area of scholarship and inspire and promote continued excellence in research at UIC. Each honoree will receive a one-time \$5,000 prize and a commemorative award, which will be presented at a ceremony in their honor.

Robert Johnston and **Kevin Schultz** have both been recognized by UIC's Office of the Chancellor with 2012 Teaching Recognition Awards. Two of only fourteen faculty members across campus to receive such, the recognition comes with a \$1500 award.

A third edition of **John D'Emilio's** *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* was released in December by the University of Chicago Press. At this year's Organization of American Historians annual meeting, there will be a session that reflects on the book and its impact, 25 years after its initial publication.

Deirdre McCloskey has been elected as a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Keely Stauter-Halsted hosted a talk on October 11, 2012 given by **Dominic Pacyga** (BA '71, MS '73, PHD '81) on "Polish Chicago: The Ongoing Connection," drawing from his 1991 book, *Polish Immigrants and Industrial Chicago*, as well as his more recent research.

Along with faculty from Governor's State and DePaul Universities, **Chris Boyer** organized the Midwest Latin American Conference at Loyola University on January 26, 2013. Our own **James Mestaz** and **Joaquín Chávez** also presented their research.

Faculty News, cont.

Desire for History: Essays in Gay, Community, and Labor History by **Allan Bérubé**, coedited with an introduction by **John D'Emilio** and Estelle B. Freedman, and published by the University of North Carolina Press, has been awarded the 2013 John Boswell prize for best book in LGBT History by the Committee on LGBT History of the American Historical Association.

Sunil Agnani's book *Hating Empire Properly: The Two Indies and the Limits of European Anticolonialism*, will be published by Fordham University Press in April.

Graduate Student News

Amy Sullivan is currently in residence at The Loft, a Minneapolis creative writing organization. The Loft Mentor Series in Poetry and Creative Prose provides twelve emerging writers the opportunity to spend a year working with six well-established authors on fiction and creative non-fiction. Read more about Amy's experience at https://writersblock.loft.org/2013/01/16/1879/a_conversation_between_two_mentor_series_participants

The History Graduate Society has a new crop of passionate leaders.

President - **Jenny Boone**
 Vice President - **Anne Brixius**
 GSC Rep - **Erin Crawley**
 Secretary - **Alison Orton**
 Treasurer - **Jill Jozwiak**

Upcoming Events

Gilbert Osofsky Lecture 2013

This year's Osofsky lecture will feature Ben Vinson on April 17th at 2:00pm. Professor Vinson is the Herbert Baxter Adams Professor of History at Johns Hopkins University. A Latin American Historian by training, Vinson has a particular interest in race relations, especially the experience of the African Diaspora. While his research focuses on colonial Mexico, he also has a broader range of interests that include the 19th and 20th centuries, transnational networks, and the experiences between African-Americans, Latinos, and Afro-Latinos.

History Mystery Lecture Series

Professor **Jennifer Brier** will talk about the connection between Chicago's urban history and its LGBT past, pondering how the city of big shoulders became a nexus of queer life in America. The talk entitled "How did Chicago Become the Queer Crossroads of America?" will be given on Friday, March 8th, beginning with a welcome and beverages at 6:30 p.m., the talk at 7, and a reception to follow. The event will be held at the Institute for the Humanities, located in the Lower Level of Stevenson Hall.

Teaching of American History Celebration

The department's extensive and decade-long involvement with U.S. Department of Education Teaching American History grants ends this summer. Our \$1.5 million "American Dreams" TAH grant will conclude with a final summer institute for teachers in the Maine Township, Ridgewood, and Leyden districts. The grant's culminating event will be a day-long teachers' workshop on April 26th at the Newberry, featuring keynote address by Elaine Tyler May and Lendol Calder. All are invited to this free event; for more information please contact **Robert Johnston** at johnsto1@uic.edu.

History Department Lecture Series

Antoinette Burton, Professor of History and Bastian Professor of Global and Transnational Studies at the University of Illinois will give a talk entitled "The Roots that Clutch": Bodies, Sex and Race in European History, 1750-1945" on Thursday, February 28, 2013, at 3:00 p.m in UH 950.

Cosponsored Talks

Narrative Nonfiction Working Group's Workshop with Beryl Satter, Rutgers University, on February 4, 10am-12pm at the Institute for the Humanities. Satter will lead a workshop examining how scholars incorporate narrative nonfiction technique into their writing.

On Thursday, February 7 from 11:30am-1pm in UH 1501, Thomas Elsaesser, University of Amsterdam will present a lecture on a paradigm shift in German literature and film, wherein Germany went from being imagined as a complicit population of perpetrators to a nation of victims.

Professor Sanjeev Uprety of Tribhuvan University will revisit contemporary events in Nepali history from a masculinity studies perspective on February 14th, time and location TBA.

Additional News Items

At the Newberry Library

This spring, **Laura Hostetler** and **Ellen McClure** are co-teaching a Newberry Library Undergraduate Seminar entitled “Exchange Before Orientalism: Europe and Asia, 1500-1800”. The Seminar brings students together from Chicago-area universities for a semester-long interdisciplinary humanities course that engages collections held by the Newberry. This course investigates topics such as early modernity; gift exchange; tributary relations; “exotic” animals; Wunderkammer (or collections of curious objects); ethnography; cartography; art; trade; piracy; exploration; and religion and missionary activity. Students will use illustrated materials and other texts in the collections, which offer many first-hand accounts of these exchanges.

Christopher Van Den Berge chaired two sessions at the Newberry Center for Renaissance Studies, 2013 Graduate seminar. The first is entitled, “Mind and Body, Sickness and Disease: Medical Discourse in the Early Modern Era”, and the second session is entitled, “A World to Be Known: Spatial and Cultural Conceptions of Our Physical Environment”. He will also serve as a contributing editor for the conference’s forthcoming publication which will include some of the papers presented, due out in April 2013.

Newberry Seminars

Through the initiative of our faculty, the Department co-sponsors three Newberry Seminars:

- Early American History and Culture, **Corey Capers**
- Labor History, **Leon Fink**
- Women and Gender, **Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska**

For more information, see the Newberry Library’s page on Seminars and Workshops

UNESCO initiative

The interdisciplinary conference, “Slavery and Its Aftermath in the Atlantic World,” held last fall in conjunction with the exhibit “Commerce in Human Souls,” still on display in Special Collections at the Daley Library, has led to conversations with UNESCO regarding recognition of the treasures we have in the collections for the study of the African slave trade and early abolitionist movements.

Digital Humanities Working Group

Steve Jones, Distinguished Prof. of Communication, University Librarian Mary Case, and **Benn Williams** created a Digital Humanities Working Group at the Institute for the Humanities. The group met for the first time in October. Participants are building DH community via DHWG@listserv.uic.edu and are now creating a website. Steven E. Jones, Professor of English at Loyola University Chicago gave the DHWG’s inaugural public lecture, entitled “The Emergence of the Digital Humanities” on November 28th at the Institute for the Humanities. The DHWG intends to host other nationally known speakers later this year.