

History Department Newsletter

Skidmore College

Spring 2002

Professor David Eyman TO RETIRE

Before pursuing his academic career, David Eyman served in the USAF on both active and inactive duty from 1959 to 1970. From 1960 - 1965 he was a photographic equipment repairman working on Strategic Air Command B52's in California and in 1968 -1969 an intelligence officer for a tactical fighter wing in South Korea.

He did graduate work in History and Library Administration at Ohio University and the University of Michigan. In 1984, he came to Skidmore as College Librarian. In that capacity he played a critical role in coordinating the expansion and renovation of the Lucy Scribner Library during the 1990's, the results of which have benefited the entire Skidmore community ever since. He later undertook a second career at Skidmore by teaching courses for the history department and for Liberal Studies.

An outstanding teacher of Military History he has earned a devoted following among Skidmore students. In his final term at Skidmore this spring, his lineup of courses consisted of Hollywood goes to War, Vietnam War, and WWII in Europe, for all of which he had full enrolments with students on waiting lists. They and we will miss him.

His future plans include continuing to work part time at Barnes and Noble, catching up on some reading, and traveling through Europe.

WELCOME

The History Department would like to welcome:

Professor Erica Bastress-Dukehart

Professor Bastress-Dukehart will be teaching Medieval and Early Modern European courses at Skidmore College in the Fall semester. She completed her undergraduate work at the University of Oregon in 1988, and went on to earn her Master's and Doctorate degrees in Early Modern European History from the University of California, Berkeley.

Professor Bastress-Dukehart has recently finished the manuscript for her forthcoming book, *The Zimmern Chronicle: Nobility, Memory, and Self-Representation in Sixteenth-Century Germany*, to be published by Ashgate Press. The book is expected to appear August 2002.

The Zimmern Chronicle is arguably the most famous noble family chronicle to come out of sixteenth-century Germany. Unlike other noble chronicles that appeared at the same time, this work is distinctive in that it represents the collective memory of the southwest German nobility. Not content to give voice only to their own ancestry--and by extension their own existence--the Zimmern authors included the voices of their noble contemporaries. By memorializing relationships within their community, they drew attention to the increasingly important issue of how their lineages had been historically constituted.

Professor Bastress-Dukehart also has published an article in *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, "Family, Property, and Feeling in Early Modern German Noble Culture: The Zimmerns of Swabia." Vol. XXXII, No. 1, Spring 2001, pp. 1-19. She has also begun research on a new project about noble women's memoirs in sixteenth-century Germany.

Professor Lorenz Bichler

We'd like to welcome Lorenz Bichler who joins us from New York University. Professor Bichler is teaching HI 362A, "The Peoples Republic of China" for the Spring term. He would like to offer a few words about his experience of teaching at Skidmore, and follow up with some remarks about his current research.

"After receiving my MA in Chinese, Japanese and Modern History from Zurich University, I went on to Heidelberg University where I received my Ph.D. in Modern Chinese Studies. Since coming to New York in 1999, I teach at NYC.

I feel privileged to teach at Skidmore for a semester. Winter is simply whiter and cleaner up here. The journey from the city is beautiful and, when the train is on time, even relaxing. I find the students at Skidmore attentive, interested, gentle, friendly, relaxed and polite; different from my NYU students.

As an undergraduate I spent two years in China as an exchange student, mainly in order to learn the language. Ever since that time I keep asking myself: What does it mean for an intellectual, for a writer, for a journalist, to live in the PRC--to live under the rule of a Party that came to power with the promise of liberating China, and yet made life so terribly difficult even for those who embraced the Communists wholeheartedly at the beginning?

Throughout my years in China, I was introduced to playwrights, journalists, and fiction writers, historians, and Party cadres. They all gave their time talking to me and were patient with my questions that must have proved my ignorance to them. These encounters, together with the writings of these individuals, form the backbone of my understanding of China.

In recent years, it has become possible to access archives, and thus to supplement the two types of sources in new ways. Generally speaking, it has

become much easier to do research in China, despite the still rigorous attempt by the Communist Party to control and dominate history and historiography.

In my current research project I focus on the Chinese Communist Party's propaganda in Shanghai after 1949. Like other Leninist parties, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had to battle with an enduring dilemma: how can the Party appear to be the legitimate representative of the workers and peasants, when, basically, a group of professional revolutionaries were running the show? Mao and his lieutenants were keenly aware of this problem, and it was in the question of how the print media should be organized that this problem found expression in the early days of their regime. In 1948, Mao summed up the problem in one sentence: 'In running our papers, we have to rely on the whole body of the people and on the whole Party, we must not only rely on a minority of people to run the papers behind closed doors.'

The CCP tried to organize so-called correspondents (*tongxun yuan*) in order to actively involve 'the whole body of the people' in the Party's journalism. These correspondents were encouraged to write short reports about a vast number of general and specific topics and to send them to the editorial department of a Party paper. The editors went through the manuscripts, edited them, heavily at times, and published those they deemed appropriate.

The topic has never been studied, neither in the West, because there were no sources available, nor in China itself, where a deep-seated fear of using internal (*neibu*) sources obviously prevented researchers from tackling the problem. The basic assumptions, under which I analyze the Communist Party's attempt to organize the press in general and the correspondents in particular can be summed up in the following three points:

1. The Party functioned as a text-centered, quasi-religious organization, in which the sacred and the secret were intertwined. The Party was successful in using formalized language as an instrument of power
2. The Party organized various "limited public" spheres that were constrained to use this formalized language. These "limited public" spheres (which also functioned as limited "public spheres") were often separated from each other and the socially productive forces of secrecy were deftly used to strengthen them.
3. Most importantly, the Party was successful in managing the acquisition of formalized language by large numbers of people and in securing its hold on power for many decades. The correspondents, who are

at the center of this study, were among the most important factors in the Party's relentless efforts to engineer the acquisition of formalized language. These efforts had far-reaching consequences, because they enabled the Party to impose its legitimacy through the medium of language. This is also the reason why it is so extremely difficult to formulate dissent: there are no ways to express oneself without resorting to the discourse that had been elaborated by the CCP."

HISTORY DEPARTMENT NEWS:

Professor Jennifer Delton

Professor Jennifer Delton is presenting a paper, "Civil Rights Bureaucrats and Enlightened Management," at the Organization of American Historians in April. The paper looks at the multivalent relationship between company managers and the state anti-discrimination officials who hounded them in the 1950s.

Professor Jordana Dym

This spring, Professor Jordana Dym will present a paper entitled "More calculated to mislead than inform: Travel Writers and the Mapping of Central America, 1821-1950" at the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers, and an invited paper, "Cádiz & its Legacies in Central American independence, ca. 1810-1825" at a symposium on the independence of Spanish America at the King Juan Carlos I Center (NYU).

Professor Joseph Hodge

Professor Joseph Hodge has just finished an article, titled "Science, Development and Empire: The Colonial Advisory Council on Agriculture and Animal Health, 1929-43," which will appear in the *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 30, No. 1,

January 2002, pp. 1-26. The article looks at the engagement of colonialism, government and scientific expertise at the climax of the British Empire in the 1930s and 1940s. The Second World War marks an important transition in British colonial attitudes as officials came to embrace the idea of state finance and planning for colonial development and welfare. The new colonial initiative created an immense demand for new kinds of knowledge and expertise. By the late 1940s, the Colonial Office had created a whole range of specialized, advisory committees, whose members included many of the most prominent scientific figures in their respective fields. This article traces the origins and early work of one of these bodies: The Colonial Advisory Council on Agriculture and Animal Health.

Professor Hodge has also received a Rathmann Curriculum Development Grant to design a new history course as part of the Environmental Studies Program. The new course will be a 300 level senior seminar, titled "The Empire of Nature: The Expansion of Europe and Global Environmental History". This course will survey the interaction between western and non-western societies and peoples and the impact of this interaction on the relationship between human society and the natural environment. Professor Hodge will first offer the course in the Spring Term, 2003.

Professor David Baum

Professor David Baum is presenting a paper "Learning from the Venetian: The Renaissance in American Popular Culture". At the Renaissance Society of America conference in Phoenix, Arizona and also in May at the University of Nevada, Los Vegas.

Also "Fascism and the Renaissance: The works of Frederico Chabod". At the Huntington Library, Pasadena, CA in May.

HISTORY DEPARTMENT EVENTS:

Distinguished genocide Scholar at Skidmore, April 18

The History Department will co-sponsor a lecture and roundtable discussion on the history and politics of genocide in the 20th century. **Professor Omer Bartov**, of Brown University, will deliver a lecture entitled "*Modern Genocide and Other Crimes Against Humanity: Origins, Instances, Justice.*" The event is scheduled for Thursday, April 18th, at 8:15 p.m. Omer Bartov is the author of numerous books and articles on the Holocaust and comparative genocide including *Hitler's Army* and *Murderers in our Midst*. Professor Bartov's work raises important questions: Was the Holocaust unique or is it comparable to other forms of modern genocide (Armenia, Rwanda)? Is genocide the product of modernity? Why was the 20th Century a century of genocide and what made possible the industrialization of mass-killing? Students are particularly welcome to participate. A roundtable and informal discussion will follow the lecture.

Professor Delton's film series

Why we Fought: War Narratives in American Film, 1930-84
Davis Auditorium 8:00 p.m.

April 2: *The Green Berets*

Warner Bros., 1968. Directors, John Wayne and Ray Kellog. Hollywood's only attempt to explain Vietnam during the war itself was a colossal failure in terms of persuading a skeptical public to join the cause. Based on the novel by Robin Moore.

April 23: *Red Dawn*

United Artists, 1984. Director, John Milius. In

a film that reveals underlying discomfort with an activist cold war foreign policy, Americans get to be the noble, besieged, indigenous population protecting their land from cynical imperialists and their disillusioned pawns. Milius, who helped write the screenplay for *Apocalypse Now*, directs and writes.

Professor Hodge presents the new film by Raoul Peck, "**Lumumba**" Showing April 16th, at Davis Auditorium, 8:00 p.m.

Come see Raoul Peck's latest film, **LUMUMBA**, Zeitgeist Films, 2000. Lumumba is a gripping political thriller which tells the story of the legendary African leader Patrice Emery Lumumba, the first Prime Minister of the Congo. Lumumba's vision of a united Africa gained him powerful enemies: the Belgian authorities, who wanted a much more paternal role in their former colony's affairs, and the CIA, who supported Lumumba's former friend Joseph Mobutu in order to protect U.S. business interests in Congo's vast resources and gain the upper hand in the Cold War power balance. The film dramatizes Lumumba's brief tenure as Prime Minister as well as the chilling events that lay behind his brutal death in 1961.



POT LUCK DINNER

On Tuesday, March 5, history students and faculty came together for a pot-luck dinner. Seniors David Albright and Anne Detwiler, with junior Christine Feehan, organized the extra-curricular encounter, with the goal of encouraging social and scholarly exchanges among those with academic interests in different places and times in history. With an abundance of food and drink, conversation flowed freely and discussions of Italian film, ski techniques, baseball, the meanings of revolution, learning abroad, and methods of reconstructing the past abounded. A strong turnout from history minors, soon-to-be-majors and faculty leads us to hope the event becomes an annual one!

ALUMNI NEWS

Martha Kirpatrick '78 **Commissioner of Maine** **Department of Environmental Protection**

After graduating from Skidmore College in 1978, Martha moved on to law school. From there, her professional life has been entirely in the public sector in the field of environmental protection. In 1991 she moved back to her home state of Maine and took a position as a Bureau director in the Main Department of Environmental Protection. In 1998 she was appointed Commissioner by the Governor of her state.

Rebecca Brynteson Conner '95

Rebecca began a new job as Records Management Analyst at ASRC Aerospace Corporation. She is working as a US Government contractor for the Environmental Protection Agency, managing reference and database administration in the regional Records Center for the Southeast Region. She is also consulting with another company on another US Government agency archiving project, and developing web sites for people in the dog show world, primarily writers. Rebecca has been living in Atlanta for three years and was married in January 2001.



PHI ALPHA THETA



The Skidmore chapter (Alpha Delta Tau) was established at Skidmore College on April 20, 1989. Under the advisorship of Professor David Baum, the chapter hosted the society's Regional Conference in 1995. Professor Jordana Dym serves as faculty advisor to the chapter in 2001-2002.

The eligibility requirements for Phi Alpha Theta:

- A minimum of four courses in History.
- A cumulative average of 3.10 or better in history.
- A cumulative average in two-thirds of all other courses of 3.00

New members for 2001-2002 are **Christine Feehan '03, Samantha Frank'03, Evan Goldstein '03, Eric Hanson '03, and Bradford Keith '02.** The induction ceremony and dinner was held on April 9, 2002 at the Surrey Inn. Prof. David Baum deliver remarks on the occasion.

CALLING ALL HISTORY MAJORS and MINORS

The History Department is looking for volunteers to serve on the Advisory Committee & Academic Council. Members of the Academic Council serve as liaison between faculty and students in each department. The person(s) will also facilitate and exchange ideas, recommendations, and information between students and faculty concerning academic and social matters.

The Student Advisory Committee is made up of four to six students who serve in an advisory capacity to the chair and review and discuss matters of common interest to the faculty and students. The committee will also meet with the short-list of candidates for any faculty positions that the department fills during the coming year.

Willingness-to-serve forms will be mailed out to all majors and minors at the end of the semester. If you are interested in becoming involved in the Advisory Committee or Academic Council, fill out a form and send it in! Representatives for 2002-2003 will be chosen and notified before summer break.

Special Opportunities

Professor Tadahisa Kuroda, a trustee on the board of the Historical Society for Saratoga Springs, encourages history majors and minors to visit the Historical Society's museum in the historic Casino in Congress Park. The HSSS houses many manuscripts, records, artifacts, and photographs that pertain to local history. The museum also has exhibits and programs of lectures and presentations that are open to the public. History students have found interesting internship opportunities at the society. Those interested in pursuing such opportunities may contact Jamie Parillo, Director at the Society. Information about email address and telephone number may be accessed at <http://www.saratogahistory.org/>.

Prof. Kuroda also calls your attention to several other events that deserve your support. In June, the Conference of Local and State History will convene at Skidmore College during the weekend of June 7-8. Prof. Delton has agreed to serve as panelist for one of the sessions at the meeting.

He is also happy to announce that Skidmore will be a collaborating institution for the annual meeting of the National Council for History Education, which will hold its annual meeting in Saratoga Springs on October 4-5, 2002. Teachers, educators, and historians interested in the teaching of history at all levels from K-12 to college and graduate school will gather for discussion of key issues. Although final program details are always subject to last minute change, the NCHE expects to have scholars such as David McCullough and Kenneth Jackson, educators like Richard Mills, Commissioner of Education for New York State, and documentary film-maker Ric Burns deliver talks. Prof. Mary Lynn of American Studies and Joseph Hodge and Tadahisa Kuroda of the History Department are expected to

participate on panels during the meeting. For more information about the NCHE meeting, contact Prof. Kuroda.

HISTORY AWARDS



THE LEE



HISTORY PRIZE

Established in honor of Gladys and Gordon Lee, parents of Patricia-Ann Lee, Professor of History. Professor Lee joined the faculty in 1967. The Lee History Prize is awarded to an outstanding student in English or European history. The 2000-2001 Gladys H. and Gordon S. Lee History Prize will be awarded to **Rosalynn Chun '02**.



ALICE FARWELL



WARREN PRIZE

Established in honor of Alice Farwell Warren, Professor of History 1937-1962, by an anonymous donor, is awarded annually to an outstanding student in History. The 2000-2001 Alice Farwell Warren History Prize will be awarded to co-recipients **William Connell '02** and **Benjamin Simpson '02**

STUDY ABROAD



Our history major, Michelle Kurnik, shares her study abroad experience.

“Hello, my name is Amos Gelb and I’ll be the cruise director for your journey through the coming semester.” Sitting in the National Presbyterian Church on the first day of the Washington Semester in August 2001, I couldn’t have imagined how true this statement made by my Semester professor would be.

During my sophomore year when I began contemplating a semester away from Skidmore I considered various places within and without the United States. Spain, Costa Rica, D.C., New York City, and California were all places on my list, but there was something about D.C. that kept drawing me back. The Washington Semester Program seemed like such an exciting learning experience, one that was based more on real world experience and “doing” rather than conventional book learning. Plus, my sister had lived in D.C. since graduating college and I had visited her there many times before, so I knew the city pretty well and I loved the thought of getting to spend a semester there.

The Washington Semester Program is divided into class time and internship time. There are many different areas of study to choose from such as Peace and Conflict Resolution, American Politics, Justice, and Foreign Policy. I choose Journalism not because of any particular interest in it but because it seemed like fun. A common week was structured with class time on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday morning and internship time on Wednesday afternoon, Thursday, and Friday. Class time was more like a seminar than a “real” class. We would have just as much lecture and discussion as we would guest speakers and field trips. Going to class didn’t feel like going to class, it felt like getting together with a group of friends to talk about things that were of general interest to us all, especially with Amos running the show. Amos is a real live journalist who took time out from his busy schedule producing and editing TV news shows to teach us how the game was played. This is true for all of the professors in the program; they have lived and worked in whatever subject matter they teach. This gives them valuable real life knowledge, tips, and information that is beneficial to the students who one day hope to be involved in the subject matter they are studying.

The other aspect of the program, the internship, similarly provides this kind of hands-on, practical learning. I had an internship at Orr Associates, Inc., a for profit firm in Georgetown that does special event planning and public relations for non-profits. Mostly I did ordinary intern work like data entry and research but I also had the experience of working on an awards dinner OAI put together for the Davidson Institute for Talent Development. I was able to experience what it is like to organize and produce an event and I loved it. Well, I loved production tasks like securing the venue and designing and sending the invitations, but I hated the public relations work. My experience at OAI was invaluable because it made me realize that public relations is not what I want to spend the rest of my life doing (my hope before OAI) and that I really love event planning (not to mention the fact that I was able to meet Hillary Clinton and spoke regularly on the phone with Joe Piscopo, a comedian and close friend of Steve Orr). Hey, maybe someday I’ll wind up a wedding planner, who knows? Anything can happen!

So far, I’ve left out the best part of my semester in D.C. It wasn’t the class, though that was fantastic, it wasn’t the professor, though he was phenomenal, and it wasn’t the internship, though that was extremely valuable. It was being in D.C. for the semester, living and working and using public transportation. Studying on the national mall; working at Williams~Sonoma in Mazza Gallerie; shopping in Georgetown; having to visit the Senate Physician at the Capital because of possible exposure to anthrax (that’s a whole other story); learning to navigate the Metro like no other; riding the bus into Georgetown with yuppies and winos alike; taking advantage of free concerts and free museums; going to the National Zoo at least five times just to see the monkeys cause they are so hysterically funny; eating at Maggiano’s Little Italy and the Cheesecake Factory almost every day after work; single-handedly increasing Starbucks’ financial profile; walking till our feet fell off looking for a particular restaurant, bar, or shop; going to Mount Vernon cause it was so close; standing outside the White House just looking at it after September 11th; using the paddle boats on the tidal basin; sitting in Abraham Lincoln’s lap (don’t ask); walking into poles (again, don’t ask); packing groceries in sketchy black plastic bags at the Tenly Mini-Market; spending more money than I had. All these awesome, crazy, strange activities made up my semester in D.C. and I still haven’t fully digested it all. I miss my class mates, I miss Amos, I miss my job, I miss my internship, and most of all I miss my friends. The Washington Semester was one of the best things that has ever happened to me and I can’t begin to express its educational and personal value.

My only advice to anyone considering the Washington Semester or studying abroad in general is: do it. Just do it because you'll have the time of your life.