



BYU HISTORY DEPARTMENT

NEWSLETTER

2021 - 2022

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A special thanks to Dr. Jeff Hardy, Meghan McConnell, Melissa Brown, Michael Green, Andra Lainhart, and everyone else who made this year's newsletter possible.

Message from the Department Chair

DR. BRIAN CANNON

In 2021, the History Department continued to adjust to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to limited classroom space and social distancing requirements, only 30 percent of our courses were offered in the classroom during the Winter Semester; we prioritized classroom space for required methods and writing courses for our majors, all of which were organized as in-person classes. Forty-three percent of our classes were taught in a blended format, meaning that students rotated between in-person attendance on some days and on-line attendance on other days. The rest of our classes (27 percent) were taught entirely online. Even in classes taught entirely in classroom mode, accommodations had to be made for those who could not attend temporarily because of illness. A mix of teaching modes was also offered in the spring and summer terms. During the fall semester the university returned to its traditional classroom mode of teaching with full capacity enrollments but with a classroom mask requirement.



We likewise adapted other campus events to pandemic conditions. Our annual Swensen Lecture in 2021 was delivered to a virtual audience via Zoom by Dr. Jeremi Suri (University of Texas Austin), as was our Black History Month Lecture, delivered by Professor Richard Bell (University of Maryland). As vaccines became available and infections declined, we received permission for Phi Alpha Theta, the History student honor society, to host a department student awards ceremony late in the Winter Semester. Typically, the awards are presented at a banquet in the Skyroom; in 2021 the student award winners and professors with whom they worked were invited to a ceremony in an auditorium in the MARB to facilitate social distancing. At the end of the awards ceremony attendees received a pre-packaged dinner to take with them. Even this scaled down celebration felt liberating after months of bans on department events outside of regularly scheduled classes. In April the college convocation was broadcast over Zoom, with individual departments playing a larger role than normal. Professor Ignacio Garcia and department valedictorian 2021–2022 Hovan Lawton spoke to the graduates from the department conference room and faculty members took turns reading the names of graduating seniors and recognizing them in a slide presentation. Aside from a technical glitch that occurred when my laptop began broadcasting a recording of a college basketball game during the reading of some graduates' names, the ceremonies proceeded seamlessly.

Fortunately, in Fall Semester health conditions permitted us to resume enjoyable department traditions, including our annual student/faculty picnic in September; Phi Alpha Theta and Family History Club activities; and in-person department lectures that are detailed later in this newsletter. The indoor mask mandate was then lifted during Winter Semester and we enjoyed our traditional

department banquet in March 2022, and in-person commencement and convocation ceremonies in April.

Several important developments involving our faculty and staff occurred during the year. Our department office took a hit in the fall when our beloved office manager, Lenore Carrier, and our friendly academic support coordinator, Jacque Stradling, moved on to other opportunities. Fortunately, we were able to hire highly skilled people to take their places. Jen Nelson, who previously worked as a librarian for Provo City, is our new office manager and Andra Lainhart, who previously worked in the department as a student receptionist, is our new academic support coordinator. After serving ably for four years as associate chair over curriculum and assessment, Evan Ward stepped down to begin a term as director of BYU's Washington Seminar and Kirk Larsen graciously agreed to serve as the new associate chair. Mark Choate began a three-year absence from the department after receiving a military appointment as Senior Defense Attaché in Chad.

A major development at the university with important consequences for the history department was the release of the Report and Recommendations of the BYU Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging in February. The department undertook several initiatives in response to that report involving recruitment and hiring, curriculum, faculty training, and events. The initiatives included the formation of a race and ethnicity reading group that is now addressing curricular innovation, the identification and purchase of art for our hallways that addresses themes of race and belonging, and the organization of a book of the semester program designed for History 200 and History 217 classes that culminated in November with a panel discussion on Annette Gordon-Reed's *On Juneteenth*.

Brian Q. Cannon
Department Chair

History Department 2022 Valedictorian *Pamela Burgon Peterson*



Pamela Burgon Peterson has attended BYU as a nontraditional student for the last 13 years while raising a family of six children—her greatest accomplishment. As a developing family historian, she finds the detective work of family history fulfilling and invigorating. Pam plans to pursue a career in family history with an emphasis in British research while she prepares for her accredited genealogist credential exams. She has loved her years at BYU and the wonderful professors she has been privileged to learn from and associate with. Her professors and fellow students have opened her eyes to new ideas, perspectives, and perceptions of peoples, cultures, and the world we live in. Her previously limited paradigm has been broadened and enhanced by her experiences and education at BYU. Pam is grateful for divine help and extends a sincere thank-you to the BYU faculty who give their lives to teach others.

IN *Memory* OF

Dave Montgomery

Selections from a talk given 31 July 2021 at the Funeral of David Christopher Montgomery by Paul B. Pixton, Professor Emeritus of History, BYU



My first impressions of David Montgomery were formed by reports that he was a desert survival enthusiast, born and raised in a Chicago suburb, an Army veteran, and not at all *The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit*, a novel of the mid-1950s which dealt with societal conformity. This can best be described in the words of our colleague, Neil York: “I [was] new to BYU [in 1971], a transfer student from the Bay Area, wondering if I had gone to Mars. It was all just a little strange: people a little too nice, too clean cut. And then I saw Dave Montgomery: handlebar mustache, wavy hair definitely past the collar, black turtleneck, smoky brown corduroy coat (patches on the sleeves), dark brown chinos, motorcycle boots. Alright, I thought; there is hope for this place yet.”

I was very impressed early on with David’s linguistic skills. His background was in Russian and Uzbek, and he was originally hired to teach Russian history at BYU, along with History 201 –the first half of the History of Civ sequence. Then, when a person better qualified to teach the Russian courses was hired, David was asked to develop courses in the Middle East, both Ancient and Modern. But David’s real training in graduate school and his first love was Asiatic Russia and points east—having been introduced to this exotic area years before at BYU by our beloved colleague Paul Hyer. In time, he was able to develop his own specialty course in Central Asia, as well as to teach Turkish for a few years.

David’s impact on students was extensive and reached beyond the classroom. A former student passed this along: “I worked as a TA for Dr. Dave for two years while working on my master’s degree.... He became a trusted mentor and friend over the course of that relationship. It wasn’t so much our interactions of a scholarly nature that made a lasting impression on me, but the time he took to get to know me as a person outside of my academic pursuits. He offered gentle guidance and a humble perspective on life.”

Over the many years David learned to deal with adversity and disappointment—both professional and personal. For more than twenty years he cared for a wife and sweetheart who had one affliction after another. And I watched him time after time, year after year, treat her and speak to her with the utmost tenderness. We never left his house to go somewhere but what he gave her tender words and a kiss. He knew deep down that this life was but a blip on the screen of Eternity, and that eventually he and his beloved Jeanne would be reunited without all the baggage of mortality. He has at last taken another step towards that finish line himself.

STAFF SPOTLIGHTS

New to the History Department Office

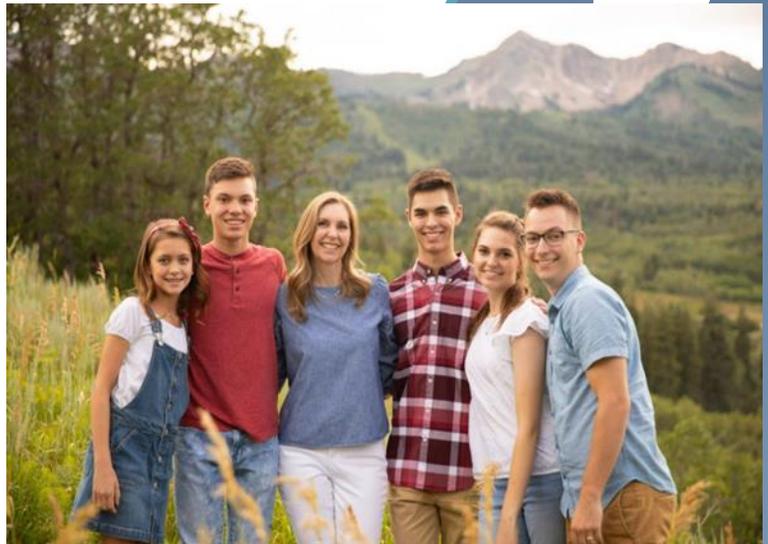
Jen Nelson

Jen grew up just outside of Houston, TX and deep down is still a Texas girl at heart. Her greatest happiness in life has been found in raising her four children, whom she describes as her favorite humans on earth. She has also been blessed to add an awesome son-in-law and darling granddaughter to her crew!

After a 15-year hiatus, Jen returned to BYU as a nontraditional student (occasionally with her youngest toddler in tow) to complete her BA in Humanities. She then went on to earn a Master of Library and Information Science at the University of Washington. She spent close to

nine years as the Children's Programming Librarian at Provo City Library, a position which expanded both her costume closet and her love of community exponentially. She still subscribes to Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop's theory of books as "windows, mirrors, and sliding glass doors," and firmly believes that good literature – especially children's literature – has the power to change the world.

Jen is now enjoying her new position as the History Department Office Manager. She loves the faculty and staff she works with and believes them to be some of the kindest and coolest people ever! Her biggest dreams include traveling someday, and Italy is her number one destination of choice (the UK comes in a close second). For now, she lives vicariously through the many travels of the History Department faculty, is soaking up the fleeting years with her last two teenagers at home, and tries – somewhat unsuccessfully – to keep up with her 2-year-old silver Labrador Retriever named Rocky. Life is rarely dull with a 90-lb. puppy!





Andra Lainhart

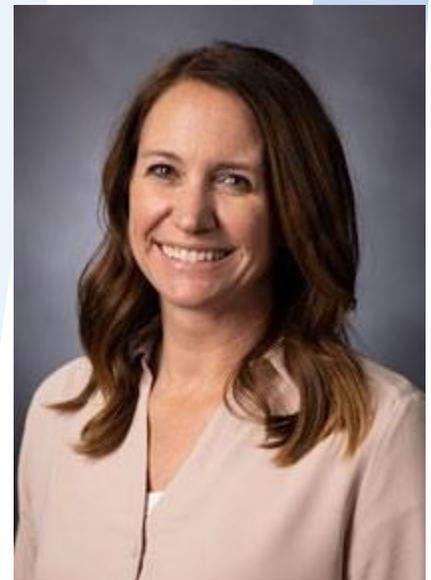
Andra was born and raised in Tecumseh, MI as the youngest of six children. She did a year of college before going on her mission to Gilbert, AZ. After searching for the right major, she graduated with a bachelor's degree in Editing and Publishing. If you ask her something about editing or grammar and she doesn't know it off the top of her head, she will get really excited to look it up and find the answer so she can learn it too. While at college, she met her husband Todd in their singles ward. They met at a ward game night and briefly talked. She then made her way over to a friend and said, "See that guy over there? Dibs." They were married in September of 2020. Andra started working for the History Department as a receptionist when Covid hit. She loved it so much that she decided to stay on when her previous job became available again. As

Andra was graduating, the Academic Coordinator position became available, and she was encouraged to apply for the position.

Andra loves reading, watching TV, playing games, art, crafting, and interacting with friends. After lamenting the loss in time to read due to college classes, she found the joy of audiobooks and can often be found listening to one while cooking dinner, doing chores, or painting. Her favorite author is Kiera Cass for the way she can create characters, her amazing quotes, and the way she can make you go from hating to loving a character in less than a chapter.

Alison Sondrup

Alison Sondrup grew up in Orem, Utah. She went to Utah State for a year and UVU for a year, completing her associates degree in 2002. She also completed her medical assisting certification and worked in pediatrics for 4 years. She, her husband Ryan, and two sons lived at the University of Utah married student housing for two years while her husband completed his MBA. After having four boys and a girl (15 years after she finished her associates degree) she went back to finish her bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Humanities at BYU. Alison loves all the time she got to spend on different university campuses and has always loved the excitement that comes from students learning and deciding on a life path. Upon graduating from BYU, she started working for the History Department as the internship coordinator and loves helping students connect their chosen major to a career through internship experience. Alison loves being outside and especially hiking, you can find her most mornings up in the mountains close to her home. She loves being with her family, camping, vacationing, celebrating holidays, gardening, baking, eating dark chocolate and watching movies.



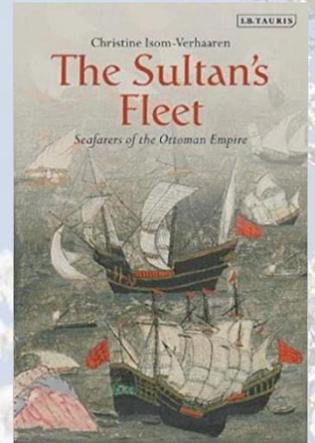
FEATURED FACULTY: CHRISTINE ISOM-VERHAAREN

Take a look what Professor Isom-Verhaaren published this year!

The Sultan's Fleet: Seafarers of the Ottoman Empire

While the Ottoman Empire is most often recognized today as a land power, for four centuries the seas of the Eastern Mediterranean were dominated by the Ottoman Navy. Yet to date, little is known about the seafarers who made up the sultans' fleet, the men whose naval mastery ensured that an empire from North Africa to Black Sea expanded and was protected, allowing global trading networks to flourish in the face of piracy and the Sublime Porte's wars with the Italian city states and continental European powers.

In this book, Christine Isom-Verhaaren provides a history of the major events and engagements of the navy, from its origins as the fleets of Anatolian Turkish beyliks to major turning points such as the Battle of Preveza. But the book also puts together a picture of the structure of the Ottoman navy as an institution, revealing the personal stories of the North African corsairs and Greek sailors recruited as admirals. Rich in detail drawn from a variety of sources, the book provides a comprehensive account of the Ottoman Navy, the forgotten contingent in the empire's period of supremacy from the 14th century to the 18th century.



Left: David Patton, who worked on the index, and Maya Kennedy, who assisted with the maps of *The Sultan's Fleet*, pose with Professor Isom-Verhaaren.

Right: Professor Isom-Verhaaren stands with her son in front of her "Historians at Work" poster in the JFSB.



Professor Isom-Verhaaren celebrates the publication of *The Sultan's Fleet* with her family.



FACULTY AWARDS

College Awards

Stewart Anderson

Marjorie Pay Hinckley Early Career Scholar Award

Karen Carter

Marjorie Pay Hinckley Achievement in Teaching Award

Rebecca de Schweinitz

Marjorie Pay Hinckley Associate Professor Award

David James Gonzales

Mollie and Karl Butler Young Scholar Award in Western Studies

Department Awards

Karen Auman

Ted J. Warner Award for Excellence in Citizenship

Eric Dursteler

Thomas G. Alexander Award for Excellence in Scholarship

Rich Kimball

Frank W. Fox Award for Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring

Brenden Rensink

Karl G. Maeser Award for Professional Faculty Excellence

FACULTY UPDATES

From Eric Dursteler:

In June I was able to take a research trip to several archives in Greece, including on the island of Naxos. On the weekend my wife and I climbed to the top of Mount Zas, which is where Zeus was born.

An article I published (“Habsburgs, Ottomans, and Venetians on the Frontiers of Dalmatia: The Capture of Clissa in 1596,” in *The Habsburg Mediterranean, 1500–1800*, eds. Stefan Hanzl and Dorothea McEwan. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 2021: 61–77), was selected as February 2022 Article of the Month by the Mediterranean Seminar. This is not a major award, but it was still nice to get recognized.

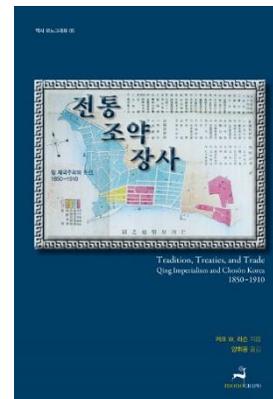


From Brenden Rensink:

While in Boulder, Colorado, doing archival research in September for my next book on outdoor recreation and wilderness experience I went for a solo evening trail run in the mountains west of town. While heading up “Bear Canyon” on a loop to the summit of Green Mountain I ran into this furry friend. It refused to get off the trail and let me by for a few minutes. After a stern lecture (and a few thrown stones), it bounded off down the mountain. I finished my run in one piece but was definitely looking over my shoulder for a while. The grand irony, of course, is that one of the topics I’d been researching is stories of people having dangerous run-ins with wildlife while out adventuring in rugged western mountains.

From Kirk Larsen:

My first monograph, *Traditions, Treaties, and Trade*, was translated into Korean with support from an Academy of Korean Studies translation grant. It was published by Monograph Press in Seoul in late 2021 and has since been favorably reviewed in the South Korean press.





From Jeff Hardy:

This year I published a book chapter titled “Religious Identity, Practice, and Hierarchy at the Solovetskii Camp of Forced Labor of Special Significance” (In *Rethinking the Gulag: Sources, Identities, Legacies*, edited by Alan Barenberg and Emily D. Johnson, 19–42. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2022). This research is part of a broader project investigating the practice and repression of Christianity in the Soviet Gulag. The attached image is of Russian Orthodox bishops and priests during their incarceration on the Solovetsky Islands in the White Sea.

From Matthew Mason:

Against all odds I was featured in Utah Valley Magazine as one of Utah’s “Fab 40” people for 2022. Here is what Jeanette Bennett wrote: “Matthew wore a Utah T-shirt to the Utah Valley Magazine photo shoot, but he’s also a history professor at BYU, an author, founding member and co-director of Historians Against Slavery, and UPEP volunteer. Heady stuff? Let’s break it down. Matthew earned his PhD in history from the University of Maryland in 2002 and started teaching history at BYU in 2003. He is the author of “Slavery and Politics in the Early American Republic” (2006) and “Apostle of Union: A Political Biography of Edward Everett” (2016) as well as co-editing several other books. But Matthew is making history himself with his education work in prisons. The University of Utah Prison Education Project provides education for inmates, and Matthew says he makes it a point to not know why they became incarcerated — he simply wants to meet them where they are and add to their knowledge. Matthew has been married for 31 years and has three daughters.”



**Matthew
Mason**

STUDENT PAPER

AWARD WINNERS

African or Middle Eastern History Award

Paul Guajardo

"Equatorial Guinea: How Nature Nurtured a Nation"

American Indian Studies Indigenous History Award

Colin Tompson

"Navajo Nation Self-Determinism"

Bertis L. and Anna E.C. Embry Award in Global Latter-day Saint History

Ellie Hancock

"The Ground Where Hares, Foxes, and Hounds Ran: The Missionary Work and Persecution of the Mormons in 1840s Britain"

Carol Cornwall Madsen Award in Latter-day Saint Women's History

Taylor Tree

"Latter-day Lesbians: An Exploration of Queer Women and the Mormon Church, 1979–1990"

Cultural History Award

Charity Ford

"Progressive Regression: Failures of the Progressive Era Through the Working-Class Lens of Betty Smith's A Tree Grows in Brooklyn"

De Lamar and Mary Jensen Award in European History

Charles Toronto

"Merchants of Menace: Italian Politics and the Robbery of Merchants en Route to the Trade Fairs of Champagne, 1242"

Eugene E. Campbell Award in Utah History

Makoto Hunter

"Secede and Come to Dixie: The Lost Cause, Community Identity, and White Supremacy in the 'Secessions' of Utah's Dixie, 1987–1990"

Faith and Reason Essay Competition

Kate Peless

"Faith and Reason"

Family History Award

Pamela Peterson

"Wonser Family Compiled Lineage"

Fred R. Gowans Award in 19th Century American Western History

Ruth Hardy

"Reimagining Indigenous Female Power: Intermarriages in the North American Fur Trade"

Friedrich Schiller Award for Historical Representation

Madeline Carter

"Fit for Freedom: Suicide in Ex-Slave Narratives"

History of Empire Award

Alisa Greenhalgh

"Ainu Lives Through Western Eyes: Analysis of British and American Accounts of the Ainu Between 1877 and 1924"

History of the Family Award

Sarah Emmett

“Binding Interdependence: The Necessity of Marriage in the Stonor Letters”

History of Religious Liberty Award

Emma Lowe

“An Analysis of the Changing Freedoms of Black Latter-day Saints, 1830–1930”

Interdisciplinary History Award

Sara Grundvig

“Deaths of Despair and Meriwether Lewis: An Interdisciplinary Study of Suicide”

Latin American History Award

Heidi Riboldi

“Angel Babies Ascending to Heaven—A Family Saga of Death Across Cultures”

Leroy R. Hafen Award in North American History

Elyse Slabaugh

“We Want Religion in Prisons: An Analysis of the Historical Legacy and Impact of Religion and Religious Freedom in America’s Prisons”

Mark R. Grandstaff Award in Military History

Daniel Martin

“Harbingers of Hate: How Racist Ideology Affected the Philippine-American War”

Political History Award

Bethany Erickson

“Novel, Unlawful, Tyrannical, and Oppressive: The Life and Political Career of Lilburn Boggs, the Extermination Order, and His Relationship with the Latter-day Saints”

Sechin Jagchid Award in Non-Western History

Aiden Titel

“The Tokugawa Mystique: Informal Interaction with Tokugawa Japan Before Perry”

U.S. Constitutional History Award

Brady Early

“Contagions, Congregations, and Constitutional Law: Reciprocity and Religious Freedom in the 1918 and 2020 Pandemics”

William J. Snow Award in American West or Latter-day Saint History

Grace Soelberg

“Peculiar Students of a Peculiar Institution: A Historical Analysis of Racial Minority Students and Race Relations at Brigham Young University as Presented in the Banyan from 1911–1985”

Women’s History Award

Kaitlyn Richardson

“Blessed in Her Life and in Her Death: Female Economy, Social Networks, and Coming of Age in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century Salem, Massachusetts”



HISTORY DEPARTMENT

IN ACTION

The History Department is in constant motion, from study abroad programs to research in the archives. Take a look at some of the extraordinary things that have happened in the department this year!

PHI ALPHA THETA



PHI ALPHA THETA PRESIDENCY:
(viewed from left to right)
Madison Roney (incoming president)
Ellie Hancock (president)
Abi Macabee (vice-president)

Phi Alpha Theta has continued to promote the sharing and studying of historical scholarship at BYU. This past Fall Semester, Phi Alpha Theta hosted a discussion panel on the intersection of History and Faith with Drs. Leslie Hadfield, Gary Doxey, and Matthew Mason. The panel was able to share their own faith journeys as well as how their faith has been impacted by the study of History. Phi Alpha Theta also hosted a lecture with Dr. Jeff Hardy regarding the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine to help bring awareness and historical context for this current event.



In addition, students were able to present their own historical scholarship at the regional conference on March 27th at Weber State. During the spring, Phi Alpha Theta members also made an excursion out to the Japanese Internment Camp Museum in Delta, Utah. They finished off this semester with their annual induction ceremony and presentation by special guest lecturer, Keith Erekson. Phi Alpha Theta is grateful for faculty support and appreciate of student involvement. Phi Alpha Theta continues to accept new members and remains devoted to fostering the exchange of learning and ideas among historians.

INTERNSHIP

EXPERIENCES

Several of our students have had opportunities to work in unique internships. Their experiences teach how knowing history enhances interactions and learning.

Hunter Gappmeyer

This last semester I had the opportunity to be a Teacher-Learner Assistant through the University of Utah Prison Education Project where I assisted Dr. Mason in teaching Civil War history to 8 incarcerated individuals at the Utah State Prison. I am not exaggerating when I say meeting with that group of students twice a week has been one of the most powerful and worthwhile experiences I've had in my life. Although we are the teachers, I know I have learned more from them regarding the impact of simple volunteer service and seeing the good in everyone you meet.



Katie Rolfson

Teaching at the prison was a life-changing experience. My worldview changed and I made so many friends. I came to realize that learning can happen anywhere, as long as there are people who value education. I was able to strengthen my teaching skills and learn so much from my students. My internship at the Utah State Prison was the most influential thing I have done in my time at BYU.

Sarah Jorgensen

I participated in an internship with the Wilford Woodruff Papers Foundation (WWP). The organization's purpose is to digitally preserve and publish all extant journals, letters, and documents related to Wilford Woodruff and make them universally accessible. As I searched through collections, I read through letters from dozens of different individuals all with different handwriting, including letters from Brigham Young, Franklin D. Richards, and George Q. Cannon. It was necessary for me to transcribe lengthy letters and journals with, quite often, terrible handwriting (particularly Wilford Woodruff's personal journals).



Taylor Tree

This semester, I worked as an intern under the supervision of Professor Greg Jackson on the podcast "History that Doesn't Suck." The challenge of finding sources and determining which parts of each source are relevant to the episode we're working on has helped me develop the ability to quickly analyze large documents and historical sources. Before the podcast, I'd only done research on my own. The team process of checking and rechecking sources, writing and rewriting sentences, and then verifying that it all flows together has taught me skills for working in groups, and given me a perspective on what it takes to make history accessible to the public that I never would have had otherwise.

Alumni News

Miya Jensen is a recent family history alumnus who is, in the words of Dr. Amy Harris, “creating a new subfield of professional family history out of whole cloth.” She is developing Polynesian family history as a discipline and is actively sharing her research on social media. Additionally, she has started a podcast for Deseret Book and works on Polynesian collections for FamilySearch.



Lynn Turner (BA in family history/genealogy, 2004) was recently named Director of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. The FHL is the largest genealogical library in the world with collections spanning the last 700 years and covering most of the globe. During his undergraduate years, Lynn specialized in Spanish and Latin American research and was mentored by retiring professor George Ryskamp.

Katy Barnes (BA in family history/genealogy, 2014) recently became Director of Genealogical Services and Programs at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. While at BYU, Katy worked on the Nauvoo Project at the Center for Family History and Genealogy. Before taking her new position, she was a senior researcher and editor at Legacy Tree Genealogists.

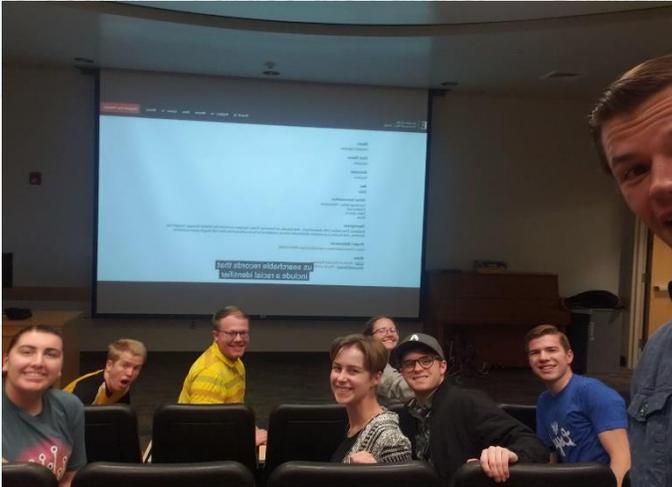


Abraham Driggs leveraged his history degree into a position as financial analyst for Wells Fargo. On the transition Driggs stated that, “History doesn’t translate to being a professor or going to law school... History [is] a great field because it’s so open and so broad.” Driggs has also been involved in BYU’s Sandbox initiative, which helps students launch their own companies.

Sam Heywood, who is now pursuing an MA at the University of Arizona, recently had his Honor’s Thesis cited in the New York Times (“A Century Ago, Miners Fought in a Bloody Uprising. Few Know about it Today,” 09/06/2021). His thesis demonstrated how mining interests in W. Virginia worked, including by actually writing a history textbook, to shape and limit what students learned in their state history classes about the Mine Wars of the early twentieth century and labor militancy more generally.



Family History and Genealogy



FAMILY HISTORY CLUB

After a year-long hiatus due to the pandemic, the Family History Club resumed activities during the 2021–22 academic year. Led by president Dallin Ward, they held a RootsTech watch party and a few other group activities, such as a “Whine and Cheese” social to eat pizza, play games, and support each other during finals week. They are looking forward to an expanded slate of activities next year!

ARCHIVE BOOT CAMP

On 25–26 February 2022, Professors Sarah Reed and Amy Harris took 35 Family History students on an overnight Archive Boot Camp. They toured and conducted research at the Utah State Archives, Family History Library, and Church History Library in Salt Lake City. It was a rousing success. Students universally praised it strengthening their confidence in conducting onsite archival research and for giving them new research skills. In addition to research time, the students learned about various career paths and were mentored by enthusiastic and highly trained staff at the various locations. Here are some of the responses received from students afterwards:

- “It was one of the best experiences of my BYU career!”
- “I learned a lot about possible career paths and feel more confident doing onsite research.”
- “Archives are cooler than I thought they were.”



Century of Black Mormons Database

Each semester, several students in Dr. Christopher Jones' African American Family History class (including those without African American ancestors) research and write about a Black Latter-day Saint who lived between 1830 and 1930, and their family. Their research forms the basis for new entries added to the Century of Black Mormons (CBM) database. To date, students in this course have contributed to 30–40 entries, each receiving research credit (and for a couple of students, full authorial credit). Working with the CBM project has been wonderful, allowing BYU students from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds to learn more about early Black Latter-day Saints. It provides a meaningful opportunity to use the genealogical research tools they learn and then share their research with a broad audience.



Cosmo Finds His Ancestors

On March 31, 2022, Cosmo the Cougar toured the Center for Family History and Genealogy to help promote History 205. Students guided him through the center, explained the various projects and classes, and helped him get his DNA tested. They then took him to the JFSB quad and revealed his pedigree and analyzed his DNA. History 205, Introduction to Family History Doctrine and Practice, was added to the department's curriculum in 2019. It is a 2-credit religion elective course and a requirement for Family History majors and minors. Thanks to the hard work of students and faculty the event was a smashing success! A video of Cosmo's tour will be released later this year.



Cosmo the Cougar

FERNANDO R. GOMEZ LATINO LECTURE SERIES AND OTHER LECTURES

In September 2021, the History Department inaugurated the **Fernando R. Gomez Lecture Series**, which comes after several years of working to make Latino historical narratives an important part of the diverse public lectures sponsored by the department. It is named after the director of the Museum of Mormon Mexican History in Provo. Fernando R. Gomez, BYU '67, is the premier public historian in Mexican Mormon history and his collection of documents on the church in Mexico and the Southwest is unparalleled in Mormon studies.



Professor Felipe Hinojosa (Texas A&M University) delivered the first Gomez lecture, titled “Apostles of Change: Religion, Radical Politics, and the Latino Freedom Movement.” In it he traced the experience of Latino immigrants to Chicago and how their experience of discrimination and forced dislocation due to urban renewal projects led many to become involved in local organizing and radical politics. Hinojosa concluded with a hopeful message that diverse people can unite to accomplish worthy goals.

The History Department also conducted its three other annual public lectures this year. Nicholas Terpstra (University of Toronto) delivered the De Lamar Jensen Lecture on “Moving Targets: Young People in the Early Modern World.” Robert Trent Vinson (University of Virginia) gave the Darius Gray Black History Month Lecture on “Up From Slavery and Down with Apartheid! African Americans and Black South Africans against the Global Color Line.” Finally, Matthew Restall (Pennsylvania State University) gave the Russel B. Swensen Lecture on “The Conquest of Mexico: Five Centuries of Flawed Data and Fake News.” He also delivered some memorable remarks at our end-of-year department banquet on March 24.



Islamic World Conference

In 2017, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints invited Dr. Grant Underwood, who holds BYU's Richard L. Evans Chair of Religious Understanding, to organize a conference on Islam. He quickly formed a committee which proposed a conference to explore topics such as women and Islam, the Qur'an and its historical origins, Islamophobia, and Shari'a law. However, some senior church leaders felt it wasn't yet the right time. Planning was thus delayed until Church leaders and the BYU administration decided to move forward with the conference in January 2020. When the pandemic hit later that month, Dr. Underwood and colleagues from the History Department (Dr. Christine Isom-Verhaaran, later joined by Dr. Daren Ray), the Middle East Studies/Arabic program, the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, the library, and the Kennedy Center, began meeting over Zoom to finalize the conference program. They issued formal invitations to fourteen scholars a full year in advance of the conference which was held in October 2021 as "The Islamic World Today: Issues and Perspectives." Most of the invitees accepted their invitations to participate for the duration of the conference and serve as interlocutors following the other presentations.

All of the presentations are available on the islamconf.byu.edu website. Visitors to the website will note that the presentations were rich and informative, but also accessible to a general audience. As Dr. Underwood related to the presenters following the conference:

"After all, we're not only in the same Abrahamic family; we're in the same eternal family."

"Your presentations can benefit Americans in general, not just Latter-day Saints. They constitute a great two-day course in key aspects of Islam. Instead of hearing from pundits and podcasters, the audience learned from you, the experts, leaders in the field of Islamic studies. You distilled down for a general audience what you felt were the most important and salient points on the topic." As one student remarked, "I got it. It wasn't dull or boring. What I heard was fascinating, I understood it, and it didn't seem dumbed down." The organizers are now working with the presenters to prepare a book based on the conference.

In addition to advancing the educational mission of BYU, the organizers aimed to strengthen the university's relationship with Muslim communities in Utah. They invited a number of our Muslim friends to be our VIP guests, sit up front, and join us for meals. Local Utah Valley imam, Talaat Al-Shuqairat, delivered a beautiful Qur'anic recitation in Arabic in the opening session. Prayer space for Muslim guests was provided throughout the conference. Salman Masud, a doctor at Shriners Hospital, attended the conference and later wrote, "This is a singular event in my 25 years here in Utah."

The aim of the conference to foster inter-religious dialogue also made an impression on the speakers. As one wrote: "[I]t was truly an experience in interreligious living and learning and is a highlight of my entire career. I've already begun incorporating what I learned about the LDS today in my lecture on Martyrs, Saints, and Mystics. What a joy to have lived for a few days in the community of Saints and to have witnessed with my own eyes what is possible when people of good faith and goodwill come together with determination... As I said in class today, I experienced a different reality of hope, of what is possible, and what a strong-knit community looks and feels like."

On the final evening of the conference, the Church organized a special session in which LDS apostles Elder David A. Bednar and Elder Gerrit W. Gong expressed the importance of friendship with Muslims. They also introduced a pamphlet that would help Latter-day Saints understand their Muslim neighbors and the religion of Islam generally. Their presentation and the pamphlet are available in the Books and Lessons section of the Gospel Library App under "Interfaith Relations." The session drew a capacity crowd in the Joseph Smith Building auditorium. It was gratifying to see efforts at fostering inter-religious dialogue amplified so clearly by Church leaders as the conference concluded.

The essential and concluding takeaway from the "Islamic World Today" conference is this: "Let us reach out and embrace our Muslim neighbors. After all, we're not only in the same Abrahamic family; we're in the same eternal family."



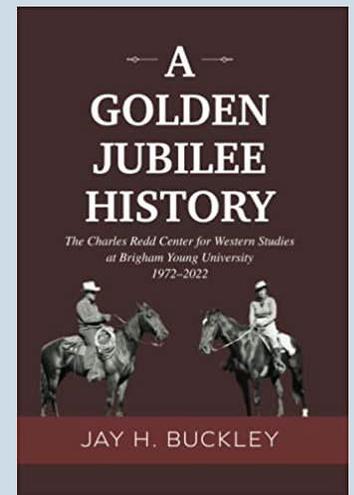


BYU Redd Center
Charles Redd Center for Western Studies

CELEBRATING
50
YEARS

On March 25, 2022, the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with a roundtable discussion by past directors, talks by members of the Redd family, a special exhibition at the library, and a public lecture by Gregory E. Smoke (University of Utah). And, of course, a big birthday cake. In preparation for the event, current director Jay Buckley published *A Golden Jubilee History*, which chronicles the Center's activities along with the many influential people who have contributed to its success over the past half century.

The Redd Center's mission is to promote the study of the Intermountain West by sponsoring research, publications, teaching, and public programs in various academic disciplines. Research grants are awarded annually to students, independent scholars, faculty, and museums.



Fifty years ago, the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies was established by a group of visionary western studies history faculty. Charles and Annaley Naegle Redd, prominent southeastern Utah ranchers and philanthropists, donated funds to the university due to their deep roots in the West and their interest in western history. They also established the Lemuel Hardison Redd Jr. Chair of Western History, named in honor of Charlie Redd's father.



Leonard J. Arrington, an economic historian, became the first Redd Chair and the first center director. Thomas G. Alexander served as assistant and then associate director. In 1980, Alexander became the Redd Center director (1980–1992), and he was followed by William A. (Bert) Wilson, a folklorist and English professor (1992–1996). Edward A. Geary, an English professor and essayist, was Wilson's successor (1996–2002), and Jessie L. Embry served as acting director following Geary's term (2002). Brian Q. Cannon, a historian specializing in western rural history, assumed directorship in 2003 (2003–2018). The center's current director is Jay H. Buckley, a historian specializing in American West and American Indian history (2018–present).

Through the years, the center has received additional support from the Redd Foundation, a nonprofit organization established by Charles and Annaley Naegle Redd. In the 1980s, Karl D. Butler donated funds and encouraged his sister Hazel Butler Peters and her husband, William Howard Peters, to bequeath funds to the Redd Center. In 1986, those funds established the John Topham and Susan Redd Butler Research Endowment, named in honor of Karl and Hazel's parents. Jessie L. Embry's parents also donated funds, and the Redd Center established the Bertis L. and Anna E. C. Embry Endowment.

THE NUMBERS

BYU DAY STUDENTS: 34,737

TOTAL MAJORS: 449

HISTORY: 231

TEACHING SOCIAL SCIENCE: 93

FAMILY HISTORY: 69

HISTORY TEACHING: 56

TOTAL MINORS: 90

HISTORY: 59

HISTORY TEACHING: 5

FAMILY HISTORY: 16

AMERICAN STUDIES: 10

