Beginning fall semester 2012 Dr. Grant Underwood will introduce a new course entitled, “Mormonism Among Other Christian Theologies.” The following is an interview detailing the creation, content, and purpose of the class.

Please describe, generally, what the course is about.

This is a chance for students to take a closer look at Christian theologies, and I use the word theologies because there isn’t just one single Christian theology that everyone in the last two thousand years has embraced. For example, consider Protestant Christian theology, and Catholic Christian theology. Each of these broad groups continue to break down much like branches or little shoots on a tree.

In this course we’ll look at some of the major themes within major Christian theologies; sometimes we’ll be focusing on leading Catholic doctrines and figures, and sometimes on prominent Protestants, but the focus will be based around a half dozen major doctrinal and theological issues: the nature of God, the nature of human beings, the nature of salvation, etc. Typically, we will do this in two-week cycles. We’ll spend a week acquainting ourselves with Christian theology on a particular broad topic, and then the following week we’ll spend time reviewing Mormon views related to the same subject, followed by a day in which we are focused on drawing comparisons and contrasts, and considering how that process deepens our understanding of both theologies.

How did you come up with the idea for the course? What inspired it?

A colleague and I have a contract with Oxford University Press to do a book on this very topic. The course developed from our work on the book which is designed to be used by college students all across the country.
usually in non-Mormon settings. These students might want a deeper understanding of Mormonism, where Mormonism intersects with their beliefs, and how different Mormon ideas might be framed or described in their own terminology. Many Latter-day Saints realize that we have “Mormon Speak,” or our own vocabulary, our own conceptual universe, which often times is often a bit like an apple versus an orange compared to other Christian terms. We hope to take this Mormon “apple” and morph it a bit into a general Christian “orange” and see if we can help others understand a little more effectively what Mormon theology is, how it approximates or coincides with various Christian theologies, and where it differs.

What you’re describing sounds like a religion course. How does it fit in the History Department?

BYU religion courses have a particular objective, to consciously study the Latter-day Saint perspective and to deepen students’ understanding of the doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Our objective is to broaden understanding of other theologies and Mormonism’s relationship to them. It’s a course that could be taken anywhere in the United States and be acceptable. The Supreme Court, now almost fifty years ago, made a decision that in public settings you can teach about religion, but you can’t teach religion. This course meets that public standard; it is designed for a national audience, and it’s not trying to persuade people whether one faith is divine and another not.

Does the course cover the topics chronologically?

That’s one of the exciting parts. This is a history course and I’m a history professor, and my training, interest and activity is in the history of religious thought. There’s definitely going to be a historical orientation here; we’re not going to treat Mormonism as a monolith, as an unchanging, static set of beliefs. We’re going to consider how beliefs and ideas have emerged, examine varying concepts, and we are going to, as much as time allows, attend to diversity and chronology.

How do you hope this course will enrich the lives of the students who take it?

I think that to really communicate with someone in a foreign language, you have to know his or her language. If you’re going on a mission to France, the more French you know, the better you’ll be as a missionary there. If we’re really going to communicate with people of various Christian faiths, the more we understand their beliefs in their own terms, both figuratively and literally, the better the communication will be and the less we will speak past each other. I hope this course will equip students with some vocabulary and concepts that will enable them to be effective communicators. I also hope it will enhance their appreciation for other Christian faiths, and to not see them as the enemy. I want to move from antagonism to appreciation. A person who has traveled and has seen other cultures returns to their native land with an appreciation for the world, perhaps even with a deepened appreciation for their own homeland and culture. I think that it may well be that studying other theologies may actually deepen Latter-day Saints’ appreciation for their own faith. I hope it will be a win-win, that students will come to appreciate, value, and not fear other religions or other Christian faiths, while gaining a greater appreciation of their own Christian faith.
I attended a “tuning” meeting in early April, which was hosted by the Utah System of Higher Education. Tuning is the process whereby faculty from a specific discipline think about and work toward determining what it is we want our students to have learned by the time they complete their major. The meeting was enlightening for a number of reasons, but the most surprising thing that I learned was that students and their parents often view their college coursework, and their major in particular, as a ticket to an eventual job rather than as a holistic learning experience. Most faculty members in Social Science and Humanities disciplines would take issue with this notion. As historians, we try to provide our students with an education that will equip them with the kinds of skills that are far more broadly applied in their lives than the kind of simple vocation training they think they need.

Several years ago, a report of a study on the usefulness of a history degree published in The Guardian (UK) stated “History graduates are found in disproportionate numbers on the boards of the UK’s top 100 companies.” The same is true in the United States. Large numbers of history majors find work outside of the discipline. Employers value the kinds of critical thinking, organizational skills, and excellent writing skills that history students master during their courses of study. Indeed, Carol Geary Schneider, President of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, pointed out that in several important surveys employers “express their desire for colleges and universities to place more emphasis on cross-disciplinary intellectual skills and on providing students with the broad knowledge base necessary to understand the complex contexts in which they will work.” These are precisely the kinds of skills we attempt to instill in our students at BYU.

Almost 20 years ago, in a devotional address to BYU students, President Gordon B. Hinckley said that he hoped students would leave BYU having acquired three characteristics that he felt were rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. First, he hoped students would gain an intellectual discipline that craved more of the kind learning BYU has offered, second, a spirit of fellowship toward all people on the earth, and third, an unassailable spiritual strength. Our mission at BYU is not simply to train young men and women for particular jobs, as admirable as that may be; rather, it is to educate young men and women to live productive and worthwhile lives in whatever career they choose. This mission is not lost on the men and women of BYU’s history faculty.

Thanks to Donors

Each year the History Department awards cash prizes for outstanding student papers, excellent past performance and helps students obtain an education through generous scholarships. These funds do not come from the general operating budget of the university, but are provided by alumni of the History Department. Thank you to all who have contributed so generously in the past. If you are an alumnus we hope you will consider a donation to the department endowment, which is used to fund awards and scholarships. For more information, contact the History Department.
Cathryn Isert, a history major, is the daughter of Brian and Juanita Isert. While she was born in Orem, Utah, Cathryn grew up in Alberta, Texas, and Russia, and has enjoyed the cultural benefits of life overseas. She served in the New York, New York South mission from 2009-2010. While attending BYU, Cate received a Heritage Scholarship, interned in the International Vice President’s Office, and attended a direct enrollment program in Cambridge, England, where she completed a mentored research project. One of the things she has enjoyed most as a student is her work as a teaching assistant for various classes. Cate attended the Institut Villa Pierrefeu in Switzerland directly before she came to BYU, which cemented her interest in diplomatic protocol and international etiquette. She believes that knowing a person’s or culture’s history helps one to understand their present. Cathryn aspires to work in international protocol.
Nanci Johnson
Nanci was awarded an ORCA grant to work with Professor Mark Choate and research “Deutschtum,” the superior sense of Germanness as a racial and cultural identity, in Southwest Africa. In the spring of 2012, Nanci traveled to the former German colony of Namibia, to research at the National Library in Windhoek. After gathering oral histories, copies of correspondence, and other archival materials, Nanci traveled from Namibia to the Pembroke-King’s Programme at Cambridge University for the summer term. Nanci’s international, interdisciplinary research is a model ORCA project.

Shayla Sturgess
Shayla plans to author an article about British missionary policy and compromise in reaction to the anti-Christian campaigns of 1922-1927 in Nationalist China. She is using missionary reports and personal writings in order to compare various policies implemented by missionary educators in response to Chinese legislation which secularized Christian institutions and seriously threatened missionary evangelical efforts in China.

Bradley Kime
Bradley investigates the moral progression of Charlotte Brontë’s Quaker protagonist, Jane Eyre, to nineteenth-century Protestant conversion narratives. The historiography of this area of research suggests that the Christian elements have been neglected. Kime also compares Jane’s marriage to Rochester to ideas contained in prevalent Methodist periodicals, the writings of Margaret Fuller, and other contemporary documents.

Joseph Seeley
Joseph’s project is a detailed look at how historical memory is created, codified and then consumed into larger political and public discourse. By analyzing a particularly poignant and oft-misinterpreted controversy in early U.S.-Korean relations, the 1905 Taft-Katsura Memorandum, he hopes to demonstrate that what people say, think and believe about their own history is often more important than the factual story of the past itself. Using a wide variety of Korean and English-language sources, Seeley’s project will provide significant insight into the oft-tumultuous relationship between the United States and the nations of the Korean peninsula.

Aileen Christensen
Under the direction of Professor Paul Kerry, Aileen is focusing on an alternative vision for the 1870 unification of Germany. Rather than focus on Chancellor Bismarck, Aileen examined the correspondence and writings of Victoria, Princess Royal of the United Kingdom, his contemporary. Victoria was the eldest child of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. She eventually became Queen of Prussia and Empress of Germany through her marriage to the German Emperor Frederick III and was widely known as “Empress Frederick”. She hoped for and worked toward a German constitutional monarchy, along British lines. In contrast to Bismarckian Realpolitik, her vision was of a moral framework for Germany’s political future.

Michael Hoopes
Michael’s project, “Healing the Wounds of Exile: A Canadian Exile Community 40 Years After Flight from their Chilean Homeland,” led him to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada to complete his research. He is working under the direction of Dr. Evan Ward. Michael’s project grows out of his love for the Latino community in Canada, where he served a Spanish-speaking mission in Toronto. He hopes to better understand the exile experiences during the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship in Chile during the 1970s and 1980s by studying members of a Chilean community in Vancouver. He will work to understand what exile means to the individuals in this community, and how they have made peace with this tragic period in their lives.

The Office of Research and Creative Activities sponsors an annual grant program to help undergraduates work with faculty on research, field studies, or creative projects in their discipline. ORCA grants reimburse students for their travel, supplies, and or other expenses involved with conducting an academic project. The grants provide opportunity to work with professors outside of the classroom and promote mentored learning that can enrich a student’s undergraduate experience.
STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

Bradley Kime received college and department funding to present his paper “Masonic Motifs in Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory” at the 42nd annual Pop Culture Association/American Culture Association National Conference in Boston, in April 2012.

Catherine Isert became the first intern ever in BYU’s AVP’s office for International Affairs. Catherine also had a paper “Our God is a Consuming Fire: Symbolism in Gothic Architecture” accepted for presentation at the 2012 National Conference for Undergraduate Research.

Two BYU students earned best undergraduate paper awards at the Phi Alpha Theta regional conference that was held on Saturday, March 31st. Joseph Seeley won the first prize with his paper “Double-Edged Advocacy for a Dying Kingdom: Ernest Bethel and the Korea Daily News’ Case for Chosôn Korea, 1904-1905” and Nick Vigil won third place with his paper, “Conversion by Proof: Matteo Ricci’s Scientific Approach to Evangelization.”

SCHOLARSHIPS

History Department Scholarships for 2012-2013:

History Department Scholarship – Kayla Ann Freeman
Mark Earl Brotherson Scholarship – Bradley Kime
William J. Snow Scholarship – Shayla Sturgess
DeLamar & Mary Jensen Scholarship – Samantha Nicole Parkvold
Arthur Becker Scholarship – Christopher Naylor Morales
James B. Allen Scholarship - Annie Penrod

Endowed Family History Scholarship Awards
McKay Scholarship Award – Brandon Lee Baird
McKay Scholarship Award – Julia Shumway

Family History Internship Awards
Mansfield/Trejo Awards – Brenda Darrington
Mansfield Award – Camille Berg
Mansfield Award – Julianna Bratt
Conlee Award – Kaylen Walton
Rice Award – Amber Sumsion

AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING PAPERS

Women’s History Award

LeRoy R. Hafen Award in North American History

Eugene E. Campbell Award in Utah History

DeLamar & Mary Jensen European History Award
Michael Huefner - “Livable Child Labor in Great Expectations: Tempering the View of Industrial England.”

William J. Snow Award in Mormon History
Juliana Bratt - “To Lay A Single Stone: A Preliminary Investigation of James E. Talmage as a Scientist and Museum Professional.”

History of Science, Medicine and Technology
Nick Vigil - “Manchester and the Lit and Phil.”

Latin American History Award
Robert Christensen - “Cuba, Angola, and Culture: Finding the ‘Hombre Nuevo’ in Us All.”

Cultural History Award
Stephanie Fronk - “The Ministry of Food and the Obesity Epidemic in Great Britain.”

Black History Award
Michael Mendez - “Concern for... South Africa Must Not Impel Us to Commit Acts of Economic Suicide.”

Sechin Jagchid Award in Non-Western History
Joseph Seeley - “Pleas for Toleration Against the Call of Treason: The 1890 Shanghai Protestant Missionary Conference and the Debate over Ancestral Rites.”

History of the Family Award
Lark Plessinger - “Searching for Solace in a Changing World.”

Faith and Reason Essay Contest
Thanks and Farewell to Dr. Kathryn M. Daynes
by Mary Stovall Richards

Professor Kathryn M. Daynes will retire from BYU at the end of August; the loss to the History Department is immense. Dr. Daynes has been a full-time faculty member in the department for eighteen years, and she taught part-time for the department for a couple of years before that. Further, she served as director of the Center for Family History and Genealogy for three years. During her career she has emphasized the intersection of social history and genealogy and has taught and published in both areas. Her work on Mormon polygamy in particular has been groundbreaking and has garnered accolades and awards.

Professor Daynes was born in Rigby, Idaho. She received her B.A. from DePauw University and her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Indiana University, where she studied with Jan Shipps. While she worked on her degrees, she married Bill Daynes, who is now a professor of political science at BYU, and reared three children, including one son who has severe physical challenges and continues to require close attention and help from his parents.

At BYU, Dr. Daynes’s appointment as a family historian meant that she needed to be an expert in two disparate fields—genealogy and her area of history, each with its own academic norms, emphases, and literature. She has become adept at bridging and blending the two. She is an accredited genealogist in Mid-South states and Gulf South states research. In addition she has taught classes that reflect the breadth of her expertise—from the beginning U.S. survey course to the American Social History course to specialized genealogy courses to courses on family history for Religious Education. Students strongly praise her courses as rigorous, well-structured, and enlightening.

Professor Daynes’s research has added greatly to our knowledge about plural marriage in nineteenth-century Utah. Her book, More Wives Than One: Transformation of the Mormon Marriage System, 1840-1910, has been lauded in superlatives for its contributions. The late Dean L. May of the University of Utah declared, “This superb book is far and away the best study of Mormon polygamy ever to appear.” And, Yale University’s Jon Butler agreed: “Kathryn Daynes’s More Wives Than One is the most authoritative account of Mormon ‘plural marriage’—polygamy—ever written.” It received “best book” awards from both the Mormon History Association and the Utah State Historical Society for 2001. For her contributions to Mormon history, Dr. Daynes was elected president of the Mormon History Association for 2008-2009. She is currently at work on two books, one entitled Convictions: Mormon Polygamy and Criminal Law Enforcement in Nineteenth-Century Utah with co-author Sarah Barringer Gordon of the University of Pennsylvania, and another entitled Plural Wives and Tangled Lives: Polygamy’s Place in Mormon Society, 1850s to 1880s with Lowell “Ben” Bennion, professor emeritus at Humboldt State University.

Dr. Daynes has also served the department and university through numerous committee assignments, and she has been a voice of wisdom and vision in department meetings. Her directorship of the Center for Family History and Genealogy required thousands of hours of selfless service. The department, the college, and the university are all beneficiaries of Professor Daynes’s dedication and insistence on excellence as well as her warmth and unstinting support of her colleagues and students. We will miss her greatly and wish her the best in her new adventures as she retires.
Earlier this year, I and several other members of the Beta Iota chapter here at BYU had the wonderful opportunity to represent our institution at the biennial conference in Orlando, Florida. Thanks to the generosity of the BYU History Department, we were able to mediate much of the sizable expense of travel and leave the frosty climes of January Utah to bask in the warmth of the Florida sun. History essay draft and airline ticket in hand, I arrived at the Disney Hilton Convention Center, tired from the red-eye flight but excited to pursue my passion for history with students from other institutions all over the United States. Throughout the three day period I attended the conference, I was able to observe not only the presentations of my fellow BYU students, but also attend several other panels on topics of personal interest. Thanks in part to the gentility of our Disneyworld Hilton locale but also the assiduous preparation of conference organizers, other fellow BYU attendees and I were consistently impressed with the professional feel of the conference proceedings.

Arriving at the conference two days before my own presentation gave me the fortunate opportunity to observe other students’ presentation styles’ and learn from their strengths or mistakes. Some of the conference attendees launched at their essays with theatric gusto, while others reservedly hid behind the weighty pages of their analyses throughout the length of their presentations. Regardless of presentation style, the majority of student presenters exhibited a clear enthusiasm for the subject of history and the content of their research theses. Watching such presentations and being able to participate in subsequent question and answer settings instilled within me further excitement for my future academic ambitions. Despite the glittering and magical temptations of the Disney empire that lay only steps from our hotel, I was surprised and pleased by the fact conference panels were still enthusiastically conducted and well-attended.

Of course, as the old real estate maxim goes, “Location, location, location.” While Disneyworld didn’t seem to be the ideal spot for a gathering of nascent scholars, the other BYU attendees and I were happy to be able to partake in the magic of the Disney kingdom between conference sessions. Traipsing around the materialistic paradise of Downtown Disney on a balmy day, I even had time to reflect on the historical and cultural legacy of Disney and his idealized vision of idealized American culture. While Walt and I might have had different ideas on the contours of American history and the potential for material commercialism to shape societal values, I believe we do have one significant thing in common. Walt Disney, like me and every other conference attendee who made the trip to Florida in January, was motivated in his various pursuits by a passion for ideas and their potential to shape fellow human beings. The juxtaposition of Disney with the academy ultimately became less stark than I originally perceived. Whether our ideas are manifested in an entertainment empire or a weighty academic tome, a passion for the pursuit of truth, whatever form it might take, is what defined our conference proceedings that week in January.

I and the other members of our BYU delegation will be forever grateful for the incredible generosity of conference organizers and those members of the History Department here at BYU who encouraged our research efforts and funded a significant portion of our trip to Florida.
For the past two years, I have watched Phi Alpha Theta, Beta Iota Chapter transform from a small, barely recognized club of BYUSA into a well-known society that seeks to link faculty and students through their love of history. From friendly competitions to national conferences, the History Honor Society has sought to develop and improve these relationships beyond the classroom setting.

My first glimpse of Phi Alpha Theta featured Dr. Kirk Larsen discussing, “Why History Matters” at an induction ceremony in the Karl G. Maeser auditorium. I did not know anyone and sat in the back, free to observe the crowd comprised of faculty members that nearly outnumbered the students in attendance. As first impressions go, it seemed every student sat with two empty chairs on either side. This only strengthened my belief that history majors are dedicated anti-socialites. However, my two years as an officer have discarded my ignorance and permitted me to see the common bond shared by those studying history.

This school year, Phi Alpha Theta kicked off with the History Department’s Opening Social including a tug of war battle that pitted students against faculty. The students dominated, hands down. But the faculty in the Student v. Faculty Basketball Game crushed us, and ultimately won the war at the end of winter semester. Through the blood, sweat, and tears, we are all in agreement that there will be a day of reckoning next year!

In addition to those events, we held discussion panels, joint activities with other clubs on campus, conferences, and a field trip to the Topaz Internment Camp. One of our most successful events included a joint activity with the Multicultural Student Association showing the film, “Nobody Knows: The Untold Story of Black Mormons.” Publicized in the Daily Universe and in other mediums, more than one hundred students from different disciplines attended the showing and enjoyed a discussion with the producers afterward. Each activity planned by Phi Alpha Theta is geared toward creating a unique environment for students to develop relationships with others who are fascinated by history.

My final picture of Phi Alpha Theta this year was of a unified group of people sitting shoulder to shoulder in the Joseph F. Smith Building courtyard for the induction ceremony. Friendly smiles and enthusiastic applause enlivened the event; a true transformation from the first ceremony I attended.
Internships

Internships are becoming an essential component of a college student’s experience—our history students are no exception. In the past year, our student interns have worked across a wide spectrum of projects in libraries, museums, archives, secondary schools, universities, and other organizations located locally, nationally, and internationally. In addition to providing students with much needed real world work experience, a history internship offers a glimpse into the types of careers available to history professionals, enhances their research skills, strengthens their applications for graduate schools and post-graduate jobs, and sets them on a path toward entering a career in a history-related field.

The internship program in the History Department has experienced tremendous growth and diversification in the last two years as more and more students have discovered the long-term benefit of participating in an internship experience during their undergraduate education.

The internship opportunities for our BYU history majors are diverse and rewarding. Here’s a look at where some of our interns have been and where the program is headed in the future.

The Joseph Smith Papers Project at the Church History Library

The Joseph Smith Papers Project internship is a mutually beneficial partnership that pairs 8-10 history interns with professional historians at the Church History Library each semester. The interns work on the Joseph Smith Papers Project, an ongoing, multi-volume historical publication which includes unabridged transcripts of all extant Joseph Smith documents including journals, sermons, revelations, histories, and legal and business records. Interns assist production editors, web designers, and historians with primary source research, fact-checking, annotation, and transcript verification for print and web publication. To date, five volumes of the proposed 22 volume set have been published. The project is expected to require another ten years to complete and we expect to involve approximately 300 BYU interns over the course of the project’s lifetime.

“My internship experiences have been varied, unique, and relaxed, which has suited my schedule and interests well. Yet they have still been informative, enlightening, and practical in my education. They have exposed me to the fields of history and archives in new ways and taught me how the past plays a role in the present. They have channeled my passions and talents into new areas and taught me more ways of being a historian.”

Kelsey Samuelson, Two-time intern

New Projects and Opportunities

The Joseph Smith Papers Project is just one of many Church history-related opportunities open to prospective majors. We are also working to build similar partnerships with the Church History Museum and the Historic Sites Division of the Church History Department to develop additional local internship placements for history students. We have also been able to create a unique and fascinating internship opportunity with the Topaz Museum in Delta, Utah, to aid their research of the...
World War II Japanese internment camp. A host of history students have taken on the task of transcribing and editing a primary source document that lists all 11,212 Japanese internees who resided at Topaz during its three years of operation. This project is a vital component of the museum’s research, as they prepare for the construction of their new museum complex and develop new exhibits. There are many opportunities on campus, around Provo, and throughout the state of Utah for students interested in local internships, but we also encourage students to seek internships outside of Utah for a new and exciting educational experience.

Family History Interns

The History Department’s degree in Family History—Genealogy is the only one of its kind in the nation, which makes our family history majors highly desirable interns. An internship is a required component of the Family History degree and our students are often placed in renowned archives and research libraries throughout the world. This spring/summer, five family history interns will be traveling to the National Archives (both in Washington, D.C. and Riverside, California), the Allen County Public Library (Fort Wayne, Indiana), the New England Historic Genealogical Society (Boston, Massachusetts), and the Society of Genealogists (London, England) to begin internships.

History Teaching Interns

Eleven of our history teaching majors completed year-long student teaching internships at schools throughout the Alpine, Provo, and Nebo School Districts as a requirement for their degrees. In addition to their teaching responsibilities, these students participated in their school’s professional community and in many cases, acted as advisors or coaches for extra-curricular groups. Two students have been offered full-time positions in the districts where they interned, and the rest are interviewing at school districts throughout Utah and nationally.

Involvement & Funding

We encourage students to meet with the History Internship Coordinator, Liz Malone, to begin their search for an internship experience that matches their needs and research interests. Liz can be reached at (801) 422-1789 or at liz_malone@byu.edu.

The sooner students begin thinking about where and how to do an internship, the more possibilities are open for them. Students can learn about new and upcoming internship opportunities on the History Department’s website and blog, or by visiting the department office. We also invite alumni to contact the History Internship Coordinator to learn how they can support our internship program and expand opportunities for our students.

An internship experience, unfortunately, often comes at a price. Most internships are unpaid and many students sacrifice time spent working at paid positions in order to gain valuable educational and professional experiences. In an effort to help offset the cost of an internship, we are raising funds to begin offering need-based grants to 10-15 history majors a year. Donors who wish to contribute to our History Internship Fund may contact Jim Crawley at (801) 422-8028 or jim_crawley@byu.edu.
In 1943 Uruguayan artist and theoretician, Joaquin Torres-Garcia produced an arresting map: he turned the hemisphere upside down and replaced the tip of South America for North America. The point of his famous drawing was to emphasize to his countrymen and women that they were not necessarily on the global periphery, even if they were geographically isolated from North America, as well as Europe.

This summer I decided to take Torres-Garcia at his word and explore the Americas from the bottom up. History in the inverse has particular advantages. First and foremost, it is not counter-factual history, where we are discussing what might have happened if some variable had been different. Instead, we are simply looking at the past from a different point of view.

In the case of the Americas, an inverted point of view, or looking at relations in the hemisphere from a non-United States viewpoint, provides significant advantages. Part of my armchair journey this summer involved exploring the era of revolutions (1750-1850) from a Latin American perspective. I read John Lynch’s recent biography of Simon Bolivar (Simon Bolivar: A Life, Yale University Press, 2007), the Venezuelan liberator of northern South America.

From the perspective of Bolivar, the Latin American revolutions were very different from the revolutionary cause of British North Americans, yet he comes off just as heroic. His courage in trying to hold together a liberated continent is no less valiant than the more immediately successful efforts of the British North American rebels, despite the fact that South America soon descended into rule by caudillos.

From a North American perspective Bolivar’s war for liberation also shines light on the precarious position of all the new nations vis-à-vis European powers. His efforts for an alliance between Latin American nations appears more practical than a dismissive doctrine (the Monroe Doctrine) that signaled to Europe that we would go it alone.

It has been said that Bolivar traveled nine times the number of miles in liberating South America than Washington covered in his revolutionary efforts. These types of comparisons are less than useful in coming to terms with the legacy of both individuals. What matters most is the response of their countrymen and women to the prospects of new governments and enlightened ideas. We cannot gain the knowledge, however, unless we are willing to invert history and explore topics from a different perspective.
Dr. Mario T. Garcia, a professor of Chicano and Chicana History at the University of California Santa Barbara, was the invited keynote speaker at this year’s annual Russel B. Swensen Lecture in March. His lecture explored his own journey as a pioneer of the development of Chicano History, an experience based largely on the foundations of what he referred to as “Historical Agency” and “Generational Leadership.” Early in his career, Dr. Garcia was confronted with the opinion that Chicano History could not exist because there were no associated documents. While at the time he had no response for the suggestion, over the course of his career it would become apparent that while some sources may indeed have been untraditional, they certainly existed. As Dr. Garcia explains, “The problem with regard to Chicano History was not a lack of material, but a lack of interest…the fact was that the Chicanos had made history.” How they did is what he classifies as “Historical Agency,” in other words how Chicanos have made history as opposed to how they have been victims of history. According to Dr. Garcia, this proactive perspective includes, “social justice, human rights, civil rights, and the expansion of democracy in this country [all of which] have only been achieved by grass roots and community based struggles.” These have served as the focus for Dr. Garcia’s research and are all key to his idea of “Generational Leadership,” an academic approach which studies historical or political generations as opposed to generic biological ones. In relation to Chicano History in particular, Dr. Garcia pointed out that “abstract social movements alone don’t make history, people make history, and in the process, strong leadership surfaces.” The History Department thanks Dr. Garcia for sharing his personal historical journey.
A History of Mining in Latin America
Kendall Brown

For twenty-five years, Kendall Brown studied Potosí, Spanish America’s greatest silver producer and perhaps the world’s most famous mining district. He read about the flood of silver that flowed from its Cerro Rico and learned of the toil of its miners. Potosí symbolized fabulous wealth and unbelievable suffering. New World bullion stimulated the formation of the first world economy but at the same time it had profound consequences for labor, as mine operators and refiners resorted to extreme forms of coercion to secure workers. In many cases the environment also suffered devastating harm.

All of this occurred in the name of wealth for individual entrepreneurs, companies, and the ruling states. Yet the question remains of how much economic development mining managed to produce in Latin America and what were its social and ecological consequences. Brown’s focus on the legendary mines at Potosí and comparison of its operations to those of other mines in Latin America is a well-written and accessible study that is the first to span the colonial era to the present.

Light Beyond All Shadows: Religious Experience in the Work of J.R.R. Tolkien
Ed. by Paul Kerry

What forms can religious experience take in a world without cult or creed? Organized religion is notably absent from J. R. R. Tolkien’s secondary universe of elves, dwarves, men and hobbits despite the author’s own deep Catholic faith. Tolkien stated that his goal was ‘sub-creating’ a universe whose natural form of religion would not directly contradict Catholic theology. Essays in Light Beyond All Shadows examine the full sweep of Tolkien’s legendarium, not only The Lord of the Rings, but also The Hobbit, The Silmarillion and The History of Middle Earth series plus Peter Jackson’s film trilogy.

Contributions to Light Beyond All Shadows probe both the mind of the maker and the world he made to uncover some of his fictional strategies, such as communicating through imagery. They suggest that Tolkien’s Catholic imagination was shaped by the visual appeal of his church’s worship and iconography. They seek other influences in St. Ignatius Loyola’s meditation technique and St. Philip Neri’s ‘Mediterranean’ style of Catholicism. They propose that Tolkien communicates his story through Biblical typology familiar in the Middle Ages as well as mythic imagery with both Christian and pagan resonances. They defend his ‘comedy of grace’ from charges of occultism and Manichaean dualism. They analyze Tolkien’s Christian friends the Inkings as a supportive literary community. They show that within Tolkien’s world, Nature is the Creator’s first book of revelation.

Like its earlier companion volume, The Ring and the Cross, edited by Paul E. Kerry, scholarship gathered in Light Beyond All Shadows aids appreciation of what is real, meaningful and truthful in Tolkien’s work.

Empire of Dogs: Canines, Japan, and the Making of the Modern Imperial World
Aaron Herald Skabelund

In 1924, Professor Ueno Eizaburo of Tokyo Imperial University adopted an Akita puppy he named Hachiko. Each evening Hachiko greeted Ueno on his return to Shibuya Station. In May 1925 Ueno died while giving a lecture. Every day for over nine years the Akita waited at Shibuya Station, eventually becoming nationally and even internationally famous for his purported loyalty. A year before his death in 1935, the city of Tokyo erected a statue of Hachiko outside the station. The story of Hachiko reveals much about the place of dogs in Japan’s cultural imagination.

In the groundbreaking Empire of Dogs, Professor Skabelund examines the history and cultural significance of dogs in nineteenth and twentieth-century
Japan, beginning with the arrival of Western dog breeds and new modes of dog keeping, which spread throughout the world with Western imperialism. He highlights how dogs joined with humans to create the modern imperial world and how, in turn, imperialism shaped dogs’ bodies and their relationship with humans through its impact on dog-breeding and dog-keeping practices that pervade much of the world today.

In a book that is both enlightening and entertaining, Skabelund focuses on actual and metaphorical dogs in a variety of contexts: the rhetorical pairing of the Western “colonial dog” with native canines; subsequent campaigns against indigenous canines in the imperial realm; the creation, maintenance, and in some cases restoration of Japanese dog breeds, including the Shiba Inu; the mobilization of military dogs, both real and fictional; and the emergence of Japan as a “pet superpower” in the second half of the twentieth century. Through this provocative account, Skabelund demonstrates how animals generally and canines specifically have contributed to the creation of our shared history, and how certain dogs have subtly influenced how that history is told. Generously illustrated with both color and black-and-white images, Empire of Dogs shows that human-canine relations often expose how people-especially those with power and wealth-use animals to define, regulate, and enforce political and social boundaries between themselves and other humans, especially in imperial contexts.

Zebulon Pike, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West
Ed. by Jay Buckley

In life and in death, fame and glory eluded Zebulon Montgomery Pike (1779–1813). The ambitious young military officer and explorer, best known for a mountain peak that he neither scaled nor named, was destined to live in the shadows of more famous contemporaries—explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. This collection of thought-provoking essays rescues Pike from his undeserved obscurity. It does so by providing a nuanced assessment of Pike and his actions within the larger context of American imperial ambition in the time of Jefferson.

Pike’s accomplishments as an explorer and mapmaker and as a soldier during the War of 1812 has been tainted by his alleged connection to Aaron Burr’s conspiracy to separate the trans-Appalachian region from the United States. For two hundred years historians have debated whether Pike was an explorer or a spy, whether he knew about the Burr Conspiracy or was just a loyal foot soldier. This book moves beyond that controversy to offer new scholarly perspectives on Pike’s career. The essayists—all prominent historians of the American West—examine Pike’s expeditions and writings, which provided an image of the Southwest that would shape American culture for decades. John Logan Allen explores Pike’s contributions to science and cartography; James P. Ronda and Leo E. Oliva address his relationships with Native peoples and Spanish officials; Jay H. Buckley chronicles Pike’s life and compares Pike to other Jeffersonian explorers; Jared Orsi discusses the impact of his expeditions on the environment; and William E. Foley examines his role in Burr’s conspiracy. Together the essays assess Pike’s accomplishments and shortcomings as an explorer, soldier, empire builder, and family man.

Pike’s 1810 journals and maps gave Americans an important glimpse of the headwaters of the Mississippi and the southwestern borderlands, and his account of the opportunities for trade between the Mississippi Valley and New Mexico offered a blueprint for the Santa Fe Trail. This volume is the first in more than a generation to offer new scholarly perspectives on the career of an overlooked figure in the opening of the American West.
Acknowledgements

Please join us in welcoming new staff members to the department this year:
Yevon Romney, Academic Support Specialist
Liz Malone, Internship Coordinator

Thank you to Dr. Grant Underwood, Dr. Donald J. Harreld, and Dr. Evan R. Ward for their contributions to this edition of the newsletter.