Announcing the Leland and Marlita Bellot Research Grant Endowment

Especially in these tough budget times, the History Department is privileged and excited to be able to announce the establishment of the Leland and Marlita Bellot Research Grant Endowment. Dr. Leland Bellot, professor emeritus of History (and former dean), and his wife Marlita made a gift of $35,000 to establish this endowed research grant last year. The annual distributions from the Leland and Marlita Bellot Research Grant Endowment (which will commence in 2014) will be used to award qualified faculty within the History Department in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Faculty must be tenured and employed at California State University, Fullerton. Preference will be given to support new projects that will lead to publication. More details will be announced later this year.

Reflecting on a Career in History

Dr. Lee Bellott arrived at “Orange County State College” in 1964. At that time, the “History Section” of the “Division of Social Sciences” had “only about six faculty [members].” “From the beginning,” he remembers, “the department adopted the guiding principle that majors would be required to experience a wide and diverse exposure to the concepts and content of historical knowledge. Despite significant changes in the historical discipline, and in the numbers and diversity of our students, these underlying principles have survived and served our majors well.” Although much has changed over more than four decades, it seems we still fight battles that we should have won long ago. Dr. Bellott recalls being drawn into campus politics by the need to defend the GE “Civilization Requirement” from “perennial attack from other disciplines...that regarded any course requirement outside their major as ‘a waste of valuable units.’” He quickly found himself “spending an untold amount of time explaining the importance of educating Fullerton’s undergraduates about societies and cultures beyond Anaheim and Garden Grove.” Dr. Bellott recalls with satisfaction the department’s early decision to “recruit faculty colleagues who fit the ideal of teacher-scholars. Over the years, the consistent, manifest evidence of recognition by students and university peers of the day-in, day-out excellence of the History faculty, as well as the extraordinary honors attained by the teacher-scholars of the department, demonstrate the success of seeking to recruit and support the ‘best.’”

The Bellots’ generous gift reminds faculty, students, and alumni that CSUF can be an extraordinary place to pursue a passion for history. When asked why they chose to make this gift to the History Department, Lee Bellott remarked that he and Marlita “agreed that we owed a great debt to Cal State Fullerton and the History Department in particular, where for more than forty years I was able to do what I loved in company with colleagues whose mutual respect, ready friendship, and unfailing support made it a rewarding and treasured experience.” The Bellotts hope that, through “the assistance and encouragement” of the new award, CSUF and the History Department will be able to retain a new generation of teacher-scholars.
Adventures in Collaborative Learning: The History Department Student Mentorship Program

This semester I have the privilege of working with fourteen enthusiastic and very talented students on a mentorship project recently launched by the History Department. As part of this pilot project, student mentors are working directly with the instructors of our 300A and 300B classes, and are providing peer support for their colleagues as they work through two of our program’s most challenging and demanding courses. In some classes, student mentors are facilitating small group discussions, or are giving workshops on a wide range of topics. In most cases, mentors will also be working directly with individual students to provide help with their research and writing.

In addition to working closely with 300A and 300B classes, the student mentors will also be hosting a series of department-wide workshops throughout the semester. The first workshop, “Mission Impossible: Gutting a Book,” was well-attended, as was the second workshop “An Invitation to the Archives: Primary Sources (and Where to Find Them).” Apart from providing a valuable service to our students, these entirely student-run workshops also serve as training for the mentors themselves. Each workshop is offered twice, which gives mentors the opportunity to fine-tune their presentations, and to incorporate the feedback that they provide each other.

As part of this process, student mentors are creating a set of handouts and other materials that will be distributed to workshop participants, and then archived online.

Right now, these materials can be accessed at http://sjobbitt.wordpress.com/hist-499/resources-and-handouts/, but we hope to eventually make these available on the department website as well. We are especially indebted to Stephanie George at the Center for Oral and Public History for helping us compile our handout “Archival Resources In and Around Cal State Fullerton,” a 13-page guide which we hope will be of great use to students and faculty alike. This is a work in progress, one that we hope members of our department will contribute to. Please take a look at the guide, and let us know what we should add!

We hope to see you at one of our workshops. Keep checking your student portal for reminders of the dates and times of upcoming workshops, or check the hallways for posters!

Professor Steve Jobbit

Call for Papers
Student Research Conference on Richard Nixon and His Era, May 3-4, CSUF

Undergraduate and Graduate students in History, Political Science and other relevant academic disciplines are encouraged to submit proposals for papers, posters or other media (film, exhibits, etc.), for presentation at this conference. A more detailed "Call for Papers" can be found here, under the "Call for Papers" tab, which describes the requirements for the proposal in more detail.

Proposals are due by March 18, 2013, and should be emailed as a word document or PDF file to: Scott Spitzer, Conference Organizer Assistant Professor of Political Science California State University, Fullerton sspitzer@fullerton.edu
The National Humanities Center is a nonprofit institute for advanced studies in the Humanities that under the banner “America in Class” also offers online seminars to K-12 history and social science teachers for their professional development. On February 28, I had the opportunity to teach a 90-minute seminar titled “The American Business Revolution: Corporate Consolidation in the Late Nineteenth Century” to about 50 teachers all across the country. This seminar discussed the severe costs of the ups and downs in Gilded Age business cycles and the ways in which businesses sought to weather these storms in a time when government did nothing. The final outcome was a merger wave with more than one hundred major consolidations and – among others – the formation of the nation’s first $1 billion company – U.S. Steel.

None of this makes for particularly good visuals, and yet this online format turned out surprisingly productive. It even included a discussion of original sources the teachers had read beforehand and that I highlighted in excerpts in the presentation. Participants commented and asked plenty of questions in written form on the side panel, and by all appearances they were quite engaged.

Could this be the beginning of the end of personal in-classroom interaction even among the bigGEST defenders of the Humanities – historians? I don’t think so. Key to the success of this seminar was a moderator who played – excuse the 1990s sitcom reference - “Roz” to my “Frasier” and read the comments, answered some of them and highlighted others for me, occasionally reminding me of the time. Without this type of additional manpower, I would have probably lost my focus trying to do too many things at the same time. Online lectures can work, but they may take the work of two faculty members to be really good.

Professor Volker Janssen

The theme of the party was “The British Invasion.” The music fit and the food was very British. Hal and Joanne Hoffman clearly dressed appropriately! Thanks to all who contributed to the History Alumni Association.

Professor Gordon Bakken

The British Invade on Behalf of CSUF History Department

FOOTNOTES

On January 19, 2013 Brenda Farrington and Gordon Morris Bakken held a History Alumni Association benefit party and raised $1690 for student scholarships. Rubber Soul played Beatles music for three hours. Guests enjoyed food from The Olde Ship on 17th Street in Santa Ana and took advantage of Bakken’s bar. Rubber Soul included two physicians, a CPA and a special education teacher.

The theme of the party was “The British Invasion.” The music fit and the food was very British. Hal and Joanne Hoffman clearly dressed appropriately! Thanks to all who contributed to the History Alumni Association.

Professor Gordon Bakken

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY FOR HISTORY MAJORS at the La Habra Historical Museum!!!
Over intersession, I traveled to London, England, for ten days. I did not want to come back. London is an eclectic city with a diverse population and culture. It is the quintessential historical town. The hardest adjustment was the weather. As a true southern Californian, my winter typically consists of a sandals and a light sweater. London provided me with a reality check when I stepped off the plane and into 33-degree weather with rain and snow. After I scrambled to my hotel and added four to five layers of clothing, I began my journey through the many sights of London.

London is known for its rich history. I visited all of London's well-known monuments, such as Big Ben, Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, and the Tower of London. My favorite trip was to Stonehenge, which occurred on the coldest and rainiest day of the week. Stonehenge left me speechless with awe. Words cannot explain the mystifying atmosphere that surrounds this landmark, the origins of which still have scholars baffled.

British food proved a tremendous surprise. Before my trip, friends told me that British food is bland and dull. However, I thoroughly enjoyed every dish from the city's multitude of restaurants. From fish and chips to bangers and mash, the best way to experience English culture is through its cuisine. Needless to say, a good portion of my money went to stuffing my face.

Altogether, it was a delectable trip that brought many memories and, unfortunately, a few pounds. It is a city that leaves one feeling as if one belongs. I knew from the beginning that I will return to London one day, whether for vacation, school, or work. Hopefully with my history degrees I will make this dream a reality.
Publications, Presentations, Awards, and Generally Exciting News

- Dr. Cora Granata is celebrating the publication of “Political Upheaval and Shifting Identities: Holocaust Survivors in the Soviet Occupied Zone of Germany, 1945-1949” in Lessons and Legacies X (Back to the Sources: Reexamining Perpetrators, Victims, and Bystanders), ed. Sara R. Horowitz (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2012), 123-140.
- Dr. Kate Burlingham’s article, “Praying for Justice: Angolan Liberation and the World Council of Churches” has been accepted for publication as part of a special issue of the Journal of Cold War Studies.
- Professor Burlingham has also been accepted into the Woodrow Wilson Center's new project on the Global History of Sport in the Cold War. Her project will look at the Cold War history of basketball in Angola. The Wilson Center plans “a series of workshops and meetings, which will run between 2014 and 2016,” as well as “an edited volume, a series of journal special issues, a special edition of the Cold War International History Project Bulletin featuring primary documents in English translation, and a Critical Oral History Conference on the 1980 and 1984 Olympics.”
- Congratulations to the Center for Oral and Public History, which recently celebrated its 10th Anniversary as a CSUF Center of Excellence.
- The History Department is proud to announce that President García has approved a new Concentration in Chicana/Chicano Studies within the M.A. in History.
- Daniel Thomas Schwabe’s Invitation to a Meetinghouse has been accepted for publication by Potomac Books. Schwabe’s book is an expansion of his M.A. thesis on the fire-bombing of Japan during World War II.

Graduate Adventures in Academia: Reflections of the 2012 ASE Conference

I recently attended the American Society of Ethnohistory conference in Springfield, Missouri. Panel topics ranged from Native American military culture to aboriginal economics. I graciously accepted their invitation. Our “Native Economics in the American West” panel included, in addition to my research on California Indian economic advancement, studies on a female Yakima horse trader, water rights at the Salt River Reservation, and fur trade imports of the Kutenai.

Once I arrived at the conference, I had two whole days until my panel, so I did what ALL graduate students do—study. I ran into Dr. Neufeld at the conference and we attended each other’s panels. I have to admit that Dr. Neufeld’s research dealt with stray animals roaming the streets in Mexico.

Friday arrived, and I met our panel in the Taneycomo Hospitality Room. When we started, I noticed only two empty chairs and people standing against the back wall waiting to hear about Indian economics. Dr. Kugel introduced me as I walked to the podium to place my hands on the sides. Now, for those of you who have not taken Dr. Bakken, you should, because he tells you what not to do while presenting at a conference. I believe these are rules 22 through 25. For instance, a doctoral candidate had his hands in his pockets while reading while never acknowledging the audience. I began reading my paper with empty pockets and kept looking across the room. I stumbled a few times but finished exactly at the twenty-minute mark. I expected numerous questions from the audience, but unfortunately there were only two. The first inquiry dealt with the diffusion of glass trade beads in the state. The other came from an independent scholar who wanted to know all the journals I consulted during my long reading sessions at Berkeley. Where were the questions about my methodology, the Russian perspective, or the shift from native commodities to cash, gold dust, and credit?

The fieldtrip I chose was a short ride to the Delaware House from the hotel. In all reality, there was no house, just a foundation with remnants of a previous history. I had a better tour walking around Springfield, especially Route 66. Across the street from the hotel was a placard with a map of a Civil War battleground. This battlefield sat directly under the hotel. Since I was in BBQ country, I thought of beef brisket for dinner. After walking and searching for a restaurant, I found a place named Cross Town BBQ. I ordered up the sampler plate, and the beef brisket still makes my mouth water, ok drool!

Publishers were on hand selling books and shopping for manuscripts. I ran into Matthew Bokovoy, a Nebraska University Press senior acquisitions editor, whom I had met in Oakland last year. He remembered me and inquired if I was presenting research this year. I informed him of the date and time of our panel. He attended and listened to my presentation, as did Dr. Neufeld.

On the last day of the conference, I went and bought some books at a discount and walked out with 11 books this year. I bid farewell to Mr. Bokovoy, who gave me some wise advice, “Don’t publish your research yet, see me first.” Ta-da.

Thomas Fujii, M.A. student in History
Professor Emeritus Sy Scheinberg spoke at the opening of the exhibit, *The Courage to Remember: The Holocaust, 1933-1945*, in Pollak Library on Thursday, Feb. 21. The traveling exhibit, which is curated by the Museum of Tolerance of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, presents unique photographs that document the human cost of the Holocaust. The traveling exhibit has attracted more than two million visitors over the past twenty years.

(For more information on the exhibit, visit [http://www.couragetoremember.com/](http://www.couragetoremember.com/))

Professor Scheinberg, a noted expert on the history of the Holocaust, focused on the “non-education” of the Holocaust. He argued that education alone is not enough to truly educate people on the nature and meaning of the Holocaust.

The Pollak Library exhibit closed on March 2. The exhibit space was, apparently, recently leased to Starbucks.
Recently, the Daily Titan asked Dr. William Meyers, an instructor in the History Department, for his perspective on teaching World Civilizations (History 110A and B) in the university’s General Education program. Although the published article did not have space for all of Dr. Meyers’ insights, we wanted to share them with you!

I. Why teach History 110A?

History 110A is a survey of the history of World Civilizations until about 1500, and is part of a two-course general education requirement, the other being History 110B. These courses are required as part of the “general education” background for students not just here at Fullerton, but at virtually every “four year” university (I know of no exceptions). Taken together, these two courses refresh students’ understanding of human achievements over the past five thousand years or so, with the intent of helping them to appreciate the “cause-and-effect” dynamic which shapes our contemporary world. History is not always a popular subject among students, who often think that it is nothing more than a boring compendium of “names, dates, and events.” In reality, history introduces students to cultures with which they may be unfamiliar, and to the achievements or decisions of others in the past, along with the impact those events had upon their societies. Although there is no “crystal ball” to help modern people predict the future, an understanding of previous events in history can help us to anticipate potential impacts of contemporary choices.

2. What do you like the most about that course in specific?

I always include the reading of a large number of “primary sources” in the classes I teach because I personally believe that reading what ancient peoples said about themselves or their times offers a unique insight into the minds of people in the past. (These writings are what historians call “primary sources.”) Such documents often demonstrate that people in earlier times were not so much different from us. Here are just a few examples: Roman aristocrat Pliny the Younger wrote an eye-witness account of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 C.E. [A.D.] which provides a fascinating observation of one of the world’s most famous natural disasters. The Sumerian Princess Enheduanna [ca. 2250 B.C.E.], the Greek poetess Sappho [ca. 600 B.C.E.], and the Japanese aristocrat Murasaki Shikibu [ca. 1000 C.E.], all composed beautiful and emotion-inspiring literature which defy the customary concept that ancient women were uneducated and contributed nothing but children to their respective societies. The “Report of Wenamun,” an Egyptian priest [ca. 1200 B.C.E.], offer insight into the issues which concerned people at the very start of Chinese history.

There are many hundreds of other examples, but the most amazing thing is that these writings have survived for us to read in modern times!

3. Why do you think students choose that course over other courses?

This is a required general education course; there is no “choice” involved. My biggest concern is that some suggest making “ending this requirement in order to save money.” That would be a foolish mistake, because the real intent of college is to provide students with a broad range of knowledge to enable them to function successfully in our complex modern world. The study of history is a key element in that education process because it teaches knowledge of other cultures and, most importantly I think, by encouraging analysis of source materials it fosters the essential skill of critical analysis.

4. What do you think the students like most about this course? Least?

I believe students appreciate the opportunity to learn about earlier times, and often gain an insight into their own cultural backgrounds. I also think that they least like having to memorize dates, or to write long papers.

5. Did you know that History 110A had the highest enrollment of all classes last semester? How does that make you feel?

I am really pleased that so many students are being introduced to the excitement of history, and am honored when I can be a part of their “path of discovery” in college.
The History Department needs you to contribute to the Department Newsletter. Send pictures and short items (up to 200 words) that would be of interest to the departmental community to: lsargeant@fullerton.edu.