Greetings from the Chair

History majors and history professors are busy people, y’all. Check it out: SUNY Potsdam’s history department is all about internships, new courses, conferences, and published books. Let us hear what you’re doing, too.

Dr. Thomas Baker

Following the war, he worked in insurance and served as the President of the Syracuse Chiefs Baseball team for 35 years. Mahala’s project will be exhibited at the Onondaga Historical Association next spring. Austin Raetz (’18) is working with Dr. Sheila McIntyre to explore the rapidly changing conceptions of homosexuality throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries with an emphasis on the roles of love, intimacy and friendship among the gay male community. Since the late 1980s, when gay scholarship entered academia, historians have focused on the public lives of gay men and how they interacted with and were interpreted by straight onlookers. Austin responds to this historiography by researching gay men’s sense of romantic love amongst themselves: whether they had a sense of monogamous, committed love, or whether their particular social and psychological context precluded these feelings and made their relationships purely physical.

Alexis Michael (’18) is working on “Assessing the Early Entry of the Bow and Arrow in Ancient Eastern North America,” through her second major, Archaeology. Archaeologists divide the history of Eastern North America into three main periods: the Early, Middle, and Late Woodland. The bow and arrow was supposedly introduced to this area in the Middle-Late Woodland. Alexis is testing the hypothesis that it was actually introduced in the Early Woodland. She is making a replica of a projectile point from the Early Woodland called the Meadowood and putting it through various tests to assess its effectiveness.
Faculty News

**Dr. Thomas Baker** spoke to the History Channel about his book, *Sentiment & Celebrity: Nathaniel Parker Willis and the Trials of Literacy Fame* for its “History in the Headlines” series. The article, “Before the One Percent, Americans Resented the ‘Upper Ten’” is on Potsdam’s Facebook page.

**Dr. Geoffrey Clark** is teaching a section of HIST354 “The Enlightenment” at Jefferson Community College (JCC) in Watertown this fall. The partnership allows for SUNY Potsdam to offer its degrees on the JCC campus.

**Dr. Axel Fair-Schulz** gave a talk titled, “Collaboration, Manipulation, and the Politics of Anti-Fascism: The Cases of Dorothy Thompson and Hermann Budzislawski” at the 41st Annual Conference of the German Studies Association in Atlanta, Georgia, October 5-8, 2017. The talk was part of a panel on Leftist Refugees in the United States and Mexico.

**Dr. Libbie Freed** served as a commentator at the Workshop for the History of the Environment, Agriculture, Technology, and Science (WHEATS), October 13-15, 2017. Graduate students and recent PhDs are paired with senior scholars who provide feedback on their presentations and solicit comments from fellow participants. Editors from academic journals and university presses also participate in a panel. The conference was held at SUNY Albany, where Eric Martell (’14) is pursuing his Ph.D. in history.

**Dr. Kevin Smith** organized a film screening and discussion of *Hearts and Minds* (1974), a documentary on the Vietnam War, for the “World Forum.” **Dr. Shiho Imai** also presented a talk titled “What’s an Apology worth? The Politics of Saying Sorry” for the International Studies event.

**Dr. Steven Stannish** was invited to give a talk following Wole Soyinka’s “The Bacchae of Euripides: A Communion Rite” at the Prosencium Theater as a part of the LOKO Festival last spring. He offered the historical context of *The Bacchae* and commented on Soyinka’s imprint on the play.

Faculty Publications

Dr. Axel Fair-Schulz has published a new book, *East German Historians since Reunification* from SUNY Press. Co-edited by Dr. Mario Kessler, Associate Professor at the Center for Contemporary History, Potsdam, Germany, the book surveys how reunification in 1990 impacted historical scholarship in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR). The collection combines primary and secondary sources: younger scholars offer analyses of East German historiography, while senior scholars who lived through the dismantling process provide firsthand accounts. Contributors address broad trends in scholarship as well as the achievements and shortcomings of GDR historiography.

Featured Faculty

“You won’t find opportunities to study Middle Egyptian Hieroglyphs on many campuses, but motivated students need to look no further than SUNY Potsdam history Professor Steven Stannish’s hieroglyphs class. During his 15-year tenure, Dr. Stannish has been teaching the intensive course where students develop the skills to read and write the Middle Egyptian Hieroglyphic script—a beautiful written language with about 500 common signs, used predominantly from around 2000 B.C. to 1350 B.C.”

From SUNY Potsdam’s Faculty Spotlight on Dr. Stannish
Student Internships

Austin J. Raetz ('18) completed an internship at the National Archives in Washington, DC this summer. Working in the Education and Public Programs office, Austin helped create educational materials for visitors of the Archives Museum. He created an activity about the story of the Navajo Code Talkers during World War II and facilitated Learning Labs for school groups, especially those for secondary school teachers participating in professional development workshops. Together with Mahala Nyberg ('18), Austin has been working on another internship this fall with Dr. Sheila McIntyre to edit, annotate, and introduce a collection of writings by the 17th-century Puritan, Roger Williams. The edited book will be published from Wipf & Stock.

Trips and New Courses

**HIST250: Sick History of Early America**
charts political, social, and cultural change through the lenses of disease, health, sickness, and healing to Reconstruction.
Taught by Dr. Sheila McIntyre

**POLS395: Violent Dissolution of Yugoslavia**
provides students with a unique opportunity to study international and ethnic conflict in Dubrovnik, Croatia which was under siege during the Balkwan Wars in the 1990s.
Taught by Politics Professor Michael Popovic, with History Professor, Dr. Libbie Freed serving as faculty chaperone.

The photos (top) were taken at the top of Fort Lovrijenac (i.e. St. Lawrence Fortress) looking towards the Old City of Dubrovnik and the island of Lokrum and (below) at the site of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand and his wife in 1914 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina. Courtesy of Dr. Libbie Freed.

Learn more about studying history: www.potsdam.edu/academics/AAS/History

At the Museum

Katelyn Legacy ('16) worked at the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum in Boston as an Oral History Intern this summer. She notes, “This work was particularly interesting to me because of the experience I had at SUNY Potsdam in taking MJ Heisey’s American Oral History class.” Her responsibilities included reading the oral histories, creating table of contents based on the material, reading deeds of gifts to determine who owned copyright, and creating withdrawal sheets to address donor and government restrictions. She also worked with grief correspondence that was sent to Jackie Kennedy Onassis after the passing of JFK. She comments, “It was extremely moving to see how it touched people of all kinds across the country. There were letters from world leaders as well as beautiful poems written by elementary students.” Katelyn is pursuing her master’s degree in Library Science at Simmons College in Boston.
State Suffrage Centennial

On November 6th, 1917, women in New York state gained the right to vote. Students in Dr. Gaylynn Welch’s “History of New York State” (HIST379) celebrated the state suffrage centennial by creating fliers and putting them up on bulletin boards across campus.

Photos (front page): Dr. M. J. Heisey’s “Practicing Public History” class (HIST350) at the Six Nation’s Indian Museum in Onchiota, NY. From left to right, Dave Fadden, painter and guide, Mahala Nyberg, Dr. M. J. Heisey, Austin Raetz, Garth Olsen, and Reno Lenci.

Get involved and stay connected. Please email Dr. Shiho Imai at imais@potsdam.edu with any information that you would like to add to our homepage or next newsletter. Visit us on Facebook.

SUNY Potsdam
Department of History
44 Pierrepont Ave.
Potsdam, NY 13676