

Spring 2009

# Department of History Annual Newsletter, 2008-2009

St. Cloud State University

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*Department of*  
**HISTORY**

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

2008-2009 – VOL 7

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*Some of the faculty and staff of the History Department*  
Photo by Neil Andersen, University Photographer

**LETTER FROM THE CHAIR**

Peter Nayenga, History Department Chair  
Photo by Neil Andersen, University Photographer

I am pleased to report that despite the current budgetary constraints, the department continues to show its strengths on several fronts—teaching, service to the university and community, scholarship, participation in international education, and above all, exhibiting a high level of civility, collegiality, and professionalism. These individual and collective achievements are reflected in various aspects of our 2008/09 Newsletter.

The department's strongest component is its excellent teaching and also its support staff, led by Ms. Janice Schlangen, Office Manager since 1992. The stability of the department has recently been enhanced through granting tenure to Drs. John Harvey, John Ness, and Mary Wingerd. I commend and congratulate them on their well-deserved achievements. I also would like to thank and convey my best wishes to Dr. Richard Rothaus for the great services he rendered to SCSU in



general and the History Department in particular between 1995-2008.

Equipped with such an excellent staff, the results are fairly predictable—we offer a wide array of courses regularly; have initiated curriculum changes in our undergraduate and graduate programs; faculty are involved in teaching courses in university-wide programs (Honors, First Year Experience and the General Studies Division); and our students are in a position to graduate on time. The department takes pride in producing quality students who either win awards or go on to earn their MA's or PhD's.

I am very grateful to our alumnae/ alumni and friends for their continued support of our department. The visit to the department by Mr. Edward Solberg (one of the donors) on October 16, 2008 and the attendance on April 29, 2009 of the end-of-year pizza party by emeriti and other donors (Ms. Haidako Wolfer and Dr. Cal Gower) are greatly appreciated. Their presence was both an inspiration and encouragement to our students and faculty alike.

I want to thank all of our donors for contributing to various scholarship and foundation accounts. We were able to award 14 scholarships to history majors this year because of their generosity. I ask that you consider making a donation to one of several history scholarship and foundation accounts. Please visit the SCSU Foundation Office website at [www.stcloudstate.edu/foundation/](http://www.stcloudstate.edu/foundation/) for more information about supporting the History Department.

In closing, I would like to thank my colleagues, Ms. Janice Schlangen and Dr. Jason Eden in particular, for their

overall support and their contribution in making the publication of this Newsletter.

## FACULTY NEWS

### Jason Eden

During his third year at SCSU, Dr. Jason Eden continued to teach multiple sections of History 109 (Race in America) as well as a section of History 490 (Craft of the Historian) and a section of History 491 (Senior Thesis). He also taught two new courses, including History 380 (History of Drinking) and History 451/551 (American Families). In the History of Drinking class, students looked at how societies throughout world history have produced, consumed, and regulated alcoholic beverages. Students also considered how alcohol consumption has affected the historical experiences of their families.

In Spring 2009, Dr. Eden's article, "Research Note: How Routinization Affects Power Dynamics in a Family Restaurant Chain," appeared in *The Journal of Foodservice Business Research*. The article addresses how corporate attempts to strictly regulate store level managers, workers, and customers break down in the face of worker resistance and diverse customer demands. It argues that even as corporate managers desire to meticulously script worker behavior, store level managers instead rely upon a system of "responsible autonomy" that enables worker resistance. When conducting this interdisciplinary study, Dr. Eden consulted company videos and documents and conducted interviews with employees, managers, and customers.

In March of 2009, Eden presented a paper titled "Joanna Cotton: Wife and Mother of Puritan Missionaries," at the "Women and Spirituality Symposium." This gathering of scholars, priestesses, pastors, and members of a variety of religious groups was held at Cleveland State University. Dr. Eden's paper showed how Joanna Cotton, whose husband was an adulterer, became a leader within her household and developed an independent spiritual life in spite of the limitations posed by English patriarchal society.

### Robert Galler

Dr. Robert Galler recently completed his sixth year at SCSU. This past year he taught Race in America, America to 1865, American Indian History survey, Concepts and Theories in History (a required course for the social studies teaching licensure program), Readings in American Indian History, and a graduate class titled "Teaching American History II." He has advised social studies (history emphasis) majors, served as the departmental representative to the (COSS) Olga Hart Scholarship Committee, worked on a task force to establish an American Indian Institute on campus, and collaborated with a committee of area educators to resubmit a "Teaching American History" grant to the U.S. Department of Education to fund professional development programs for teachers in central Minnesota.

Dr. Galler had two articles published in national journals this past year. "Making Common Cause: Yanktonais and Catholic Missionaries on the Northern Plains" appeared in *Ethnohistory* in summer 2008, and "Sustaining the Sioux Confederation: Yanktonai Initiatives and Influence on the Northern Plains, 1680-1880"

was published in *The Western Historical Quarterly* in winter 2008. He was granted sabbatical leave (2009-10) to revise his manuscript on the history of intercultural relations at Crow Creek Tribal School (formerly Stephan Catholic Indian Mission) for publication consideration.

### **Betsy Glade**

The academic year began with a wonderful surprise for Dr. Betsy Glade when she was humbled and most honored to receive the Miller Scholar Award for her outstanding services to SCSU. She greatly appreciates her colleagues in History for recognizing her. She is using the funds that come with the award to update her reading in the area of Democracy, as well as a new interest in the history of food in America, particularly the eating preparation and habits of residents of Civil War Minnesota. She has devoted most of this year to teaching, chairing the college curriculum committee, and working on the upcoming Northern Great Plains History Conference. The call for papers went out at last year's conference in Brandon, Manitoba, in October. Dr. Glade received over 120 paper proposals and two roundtable proposals. The paper topics range from ancient Rome to the Vietnam Conflict and touch all continents save Australia. In April, Dr. Glade and her very talented and professional graduate assistant, Debra DeSmet, put the program together and it was put on the NGPHC website (<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/history/NGPHC/>). The conference will be held at the Kelly Inn in St. Cloud from October 14-17, 2009. All members of the History Department and faculty from Economics, Criminal Justice, English, Theater/Film Studies, and Dance will all participate in the conference, either giving papers, or chairing sessions

or providing commentary. Several graduate students will also be reading papers. Dr. Mary Wingerd, who has recently completed her work on a new history of the North Country, has agreed to give the keynote address at the conference banquet. Dr. Glade hopes that you can all attend.

### **John Harvey**

Over the past year, Dr. John Harvey was promoted to associate professor and has received tenure. Aside from teaching, committee and advising duties, he has participated in the university search for a director of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Education. After receiving a SCSU university research grant, he spent the summer of 2008 conducting research at Harvard, Amherst, and Yale for his study on the famous *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*. Since the fall of 2008, he completed several articles for future publication, as well as book reviews for H-German and the *Journal of Modern History*. Early in 2009, his chapter "History and the Social Sciences" appeared for a new edition of the British historiography textbook, *Writing History - Theory & Practice*. He also continues to serve as a reader for Routledge Publishers in the area of historiography.

### **Don Hofsommer**

Dr. Don Hofsommer's *A History of the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railway* won the Railway Historical Society's 2008 book prize. His *Southern Pacific, 1901-1985*, out of print for a few years, has been re-released by Texas A&M University Press.

### **Mark Jaede**

Dr. Mark Jaede was on 50% reassignment from teaching this year, serving as Faculty Co-Chair of Enrollment Management, and co-facilitator of the Climate Task

Force of the College of Education. He also served on the University's Strategic Planning Committee and Budget Advisory Group, as director of Latin American Studies, and as chair of the Department's Evaluation, Promotion and Tenure Committee.

He was President-elect of the Faculty Association, a member of the FA Executive and Budget Committees, and a member of the Board of Directors of the statewide Inter Faculty Organization. He begins his one-year term as FA President on June 1, and will be on 100% reassignment from teaching during 2009-10.

Dr. Jaede taught Race in America, the two-term survey of Latin American History, and Introduction to Latin American Studies. He also participated in three workshops to improve pedagogy and service to students. He co-led two faculty workshops on campus – one on coordinating Racial Issues classes with the Community Anti-Racism Education (CARE) workshops, and the other on supporting student survivors of sexual abuse. He was also a co-organizer of and participant in a two-week workshop on anti-racist pedagogy held during the May intersession.

Dr. Jaede published a book review in the *Journal of the Early Republic* and two entries were accepted for publication in the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of American Politics*. He is currently reviewing a book manuscript on the history of race in America for Wiley Blackwell Publishing.

### **Marie Seong-Hak Kim**

Dr. Marie Kim continues working on her research and publication in



comparative legal history. During the past year, she published or had several articles accepted for publication in leading journals. Her article, “Colonial Jurisprudence and the Construction of Customary Law in Korea,” was published in *The American Journal of Comparative Law (AJCL)*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (2009): 205-247. Established in 1952, *AJCL* is the world’s leading journal in comparative law. Her article in Japanese language, “Nihon tōjika ni okeru kankoku no kanshūhō no kōsei [The Construction of Korean Customary Law during the Colonial Period],” appeared in *Tōyō Bunka Kenkyū [Journal of Oriental Studies]*, published by Gakushūin University Tōyō Bunka Kenkyūjō, Vol. 11 (March 2009): 179-193. Another article in comparative legal history, “Comparing the Incomparable: Local Custom and Law in Sixteenth-Century Korea and France,” is forthcoming in *The Journal of Early Modern History*, Vol. 12 (2009). *JEMH* is edited by Professor James D. Tracy at the University of Minnesota and published by Brill.

Old habits die hard, and Dr. Kim continues publishing in sixteenth-century French history. Her article, “Civil Law and Civil War: Michel de L’Hôpital and the Ideals of Legal Unification in Sixteenth-Century France,” has been accepted for publication in *Law and History Review*, Vol. 28 (2010). *LHR* is the official journal of the American Society for Legal History.

Dr. Kim’s research in East Asian legal history was recognized when she received a Japanese Foundation Short-Term Research Grant. Funded by this grant, she conducted research in Tokyo, Japan, from December 2008 through January 2009. She is grateful to have received reassigned

time from the College of Social Sciences that allowed her to accept the award.

Dr. Kim delivered three invited lectures to international audiences during the past twelve months. The first was a lecture at the Maison Franco-Japonaise in Tokyo, Japan, on June 19, 2008, under the title “Reconstruire la coutume et le droit: la modernisation de la justice civile en Corée coloniale.” The second was a lecture given at the Gakushuin University Research Institute for Oriental Studies, with the title “Shokuminji shita ni okeru kankoku no kanshū hō no kōsei: higakushi teki no kōsatsu (The Construction of Korean Customary Law during the Colonial Period: a Comparative Perspective),” on June 18, 2008. The lectures, given in French and Korean, were both simultaneously translated into Japanese. On January 9, 2009, Dr. Kim gave a presentation at the Modern Japan History Workshop held at Waseda University under the title “The Invention of Tradition” in the East Asian Context: Japanese Colonialism and Korean Customary Law.”

During the last year, Dr. Kim organized two panels at major conferences. The first was a panel at the American Society for Legal History Conference held on November 14-16, 2008, in Ottawa, Canada, titled “Customary Law as Handmaid to Modernity: Surveys of Customs in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century China, Japan, and Korea,” with the participation of Tahirih V. Lee (Florida State University College of Law) and Jérôme Bourgon (Institut d’Asie Orientale, France). She also presented a paper titled “‘The Invention of Tradition’ Revisited:

The Construction of Customary Law in Colonial Korea.” She organized another star-studded panel at the Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference held on 26-29 March 2009 in Chicago, titled “Civilizing Forces of Civil Law: Concepts, Courses and Comparisons.” The participants included such distinguished international scholars as Jérôme Bourgon (Institut d’Asie Orientale, France), Dimitri Vanoverbeke (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium), William Kirby (Harvard University), John Haley (Washington University), and Tom Ginsburg (University of Chicago). Dr. Kim’s own paper was titled “Rethinking ‘Customary Law’ in a Comparative Context: The Civil Judicial Process in Colonial Korea.”

Other conference papers Dr. Kim presented during 2008-2009 include “Judicial Independence in a Colonial Context: The Evolution of Japan’s Legal Policy in Colonial Korea” at the Association for Asian Studies Japan Conference held in Tokyo, Japan, June 2008, and “Coordination of Laws and Judicial Systems in the Japanese Colonial Empire” at the Midwest Conference for Asian Studies, October 2008, Northfield, Minnesota.

She is currently working on a book manuscript on customary law and East Asian legal history. She remains an Active Member of the Minnesota Bar.

### Jeff Mullins

Dr. Jeffrey Mullins specializes in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century cultural and intellectual history, with an especial focus on the interaction of concepts of agency, on the ground social reform movements, and prevailing views of race. This spring,

at the University of Minnesota, he presented a working paper on racialized notions of appearance in the nineteenth century. In the oncoming year he expects to present his research in at least three different venues. In addition, he will be offering a new graduate seminar on American Social History.

### **Peter Nayenga**

As in the last couple of years, Dr. Peter Nayenga has been involved in the following related activities: teaching various African courses; participating in the SCSU Senior-to-Sophomore program; directing the African Studies program; working in conjunction with the Center for International Studies (CIS), Ethnic Studies Department, and Multicultural Student Services (MSS) to prepare a number of students who went to study at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), South Africa; and being Chair of the department.

The highlight for Dr. Nayenga, though, during academic year 2008/09, was the receipt of a 30-year Service Award from SCSU. Appointed a faculty member in the Fall of 1977, Dr. Nayenga, together with the late Dr. Amde Habte (Mass Communication), became the first Africans to be employed by SCSU. He is grateful to SCSU administration, especially former President Charles Graham, the late Dean Louise Johnson, the late Dr. Robert Becker, and my colleagues in the “old” History Department (especially the late Dr. David Overy who was Chair of the department) for giving him the opportunity to work at SCSU. For anyone who has been in the crowded History job market will fully understand when Dr. Nayenga notes that he was lucky

to get this offer. He particularly appreciates the fact that not only did SCSU offer him the job, but the institution also helped him to get his work visa from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

On a professional level, he continued working on his long-range projects, namely: “The Transformation of Busoga, Uganda, 1800-1939” and “The Immigrant Experience.” To collect data for both projects, Dr. Nayenga engaged into the following activities: he made several trips to conduct research at the famous Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison; attended a mini-conference focusing on “Africans in the Diaspora” at Howard University, DC, between 10/16-20/08; attended (5/21-25/09) the “Twegaite (coming together for a common purpose) Convention” which focused on the cultural, historical, and economic challenges facing Busoga region (Dr. Nayenga’s research area), Uganda; and made a research trip (7/21-28/09) to Michigan to interview individuals that are central in his research project “Immigrant Experience” and consulted with scholars at the African Studies Center of Michigan State University, one of the oldest and leading centers in African Studies in the USA.

### **John Philip Ness**

In addition to his assignments teaching Asian history, Dr. John Ness is the director of the East Asian Studies (EAST) program at SCSU. Although housed in the History Department in the College of Social Sciences, EAST is a university-wide program sponsoring speakers, workshops, study abroad programs as well as offering students a multi-disciplinary minor in East Asian Studies.

This year, Dr. Ness also served as the department’s assessment coordinator. He worked with the department to implement the university’s assessment program.

Dr. Ness’ areas of research interest continue to be early modern China, specifically the role of the southwestern frontier region (modern western Hunan, Yunnan, Guizhou provinces) during the Ming period (1368-1644). He will deliver a paper at the upcoming Northern Great Plains History Conference, “Responses to the Confucian Civilizing Mission on the Chinese Southwest Frontier during the late Ming and early Qing 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries.”

### **Maureen O’Brien**



*Archeological dig coordinated by Dr. Maureen O'Brien in France, Summer 2008*

Over the past year, Dr. Maureen O’Brien published a book chapter that was based upon a conference paper she delivered in Athens, Greece in 2007. The chapter, “Bereft of King, Prince, and Law: Episcopal Patronage of La Chaise-Dieu in the 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Centuries” appears in *From the Remote to the Recent Past: Selected Essays from the 5th International Conference on History*, edited by Kenneth E. Hendrickson and Nicolas C. J. Pappas (Athens, Greece: Athens Institute for Education and Research, 2008). This chapter focuses on La Chaise-Dieu’s relationship with its ecclesiastical neighbors. Dr. O’Brien

also co-authored the Introduction to *Lives of Monastic Reformers, I: Robert of La Chaise-Dieu and Stephen of Obazine* (tentative title) which is forthcoming from Liturgical Press in Spring 2010. In addition, Dr. O'Brien has organized a session titled "Early Christians: Martyrs, Preachers, & Monks" for the 44th Annual Northern Great Plains History Conference, October 14-17, 2009. She will be delivering a paper in this session titled "Casadéens Monks: Auvergnat Expansion—Within and Beyond." This paper will examine those characteristics that made these remote and regional monks appealing beyond their original realm of influence and which helped pave the way for their abbey, La Chaise-Dieu, to become an international center for monastic reform.

### **Mary Wingerd**

Dr. Mary Wingerd recently completed a major reinterpretation of early Minnesota history that positions the multicultural society formed by Native people and Europeans as central to understanding the politics and economy of state building. Titled *North Country: The Making of Minnesota*, the book will be released by the University of Minnesota Press in early 2010.

In addition to her teaching duties, Dr. Wingerd also directs the graduate program in public history and the Powerline Oral History Project, which entails collecting interviews from Central Minnesotans who were involved in the power line controversy of the 1970s. She also has served on several panels and public forums over the past year and will deliver the keynote address for the Northern Great Plains History Conference, to be held at St. Cloud State in October, 2009.

## **NEWS FROM EMERITI FACULTY**

### **Ken Czech**

Dr. Ken Czech, a former member of the History Department Faculty, was named Secondary Education Social Studies Teacher of the Year for Minnesota by the Minnesota Council of the Social Studies (MCSS). Dr. Czech accepted the award at the MCSS Spring Conference at Mystic Lake, Shakopee. His latest book, *Hunting Trips in the Land of the Czars: Sportsmen Afield in Old Russia, 1870-1935*, was published by Woodbine Publishing, Los Angeles. An earlier book, *Hunting Trips in the Land of the Dragon* (2004), has been translated and published by Editorio Solitario of Madrid (2007).

### **Cal Gower**

Dr. Cal Gower, who retired in 1989, has spent some of his time since then doing research on and writing about some of his relatives. Currently, he is working on a manuscript about his maternal grandmother and his mother. Both of these women had the first name "Elio," hence the title of the biography is "The Two Elios."

In addition, Dr. Gower has been crafting a second biography at this time; it concerns his late wife Alma, whose name serves as the title of this work. Alma grew up in St. Cloud and Waite Park and spent most of her life there. She taught classes in Social Science and History for several years at SCSU. She was a foundling who overcame all manner of adversities in her life including child abandonment (at the age of two or three days) and loss of her first husband in an automobile accident when she was twenty-eight years old.

### **Ed Pluth**

Dr. Ed Pluth is enjoying retirement and keeping busy with a variety of indoor and outdoor activities. He has continued his interest in historical matters by attending conferences, researching and reading. Last fall, he attended the Northern Great Plains History Conference in Brandon, Manitoba and chaired a session on Native American History and this spring he drove to Omaha for the Missouri Valley History Conference meeting. He also served as a judge for History Day in March 2009. Dr. Pluth is currently researching the issue of loyalty in Todd County during World War I. For persons interested in the history of United States and Middle East connections since 1776, he recommends "Power, Faith and Fantasy" by Michael Oren.

### **Richard Rothaus**

Dr. Richard Rothaus is currently owner of Trefoil Cultural and Environmental. Trefoil assists clients with archaeological and historical surveys, palaeoenvironmental studies, preservation planning and management, and compliance issues. There are numerous state and federal laws and regulations to protect cultural resources, and Trefoil helps clients navigate those rules and complete the necessary studies. When cultural resources are discovered, Trefoil provides clients with possible construction and project alternatives to protect those resources. For example, Trefoil recently has done several archaeological surveys in the Red River Valley where levees are to be constructed, and cataloged historic homes in one neighborhood threatened by floods this Fall. The job is a rewarding mix of fieldwork, archival research, writing, and management. He continues



to serve as Consulting Archaeologist for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, and is still pursuing interdisciplinary academic research in Greece, Turkey and Oman.

Dr. Rothaus adds, “I would not be where I am today without my time in the history department and the College of Social Sciences at St. Cloud State University. Working with good faculty and students taught me as much as I ever taught anyone. Some quality mentoring from senior faculty and non-traditional students really helped me explore my own career and personal goals in a successful manner. I’m glad to still be in the neighborhood of St. Cloud State, and I’m still working with students, just in a different venue.”

## ALUMNAE/ALUMNI NEWS

### **William Floersheim, (B.S., 2008)**

Mr. William Floersheim is currently teaching social studies at Buffalo High School.

### **Beverly Knudsen (B.A. 2006, M.A. 2008)**

Ms. Beverly Knudsen is in a new position in 911 Communications with the Kandiyohi County Sheriff’s Office at the Law Enforcement Center in Willmar. It has been an interesting experience and she really enjoys her work. Her field training includes: radio operation; ride-alongs with First Responders/Paramedics, Sheriff deputies, Willmar police, and the fire department; observing civil process/records; and jail bookings. No two days are the same! Ms. Knudsen’s schedule allows her to continue serving as an adjunct for the History Department this fall and she has also been asked to teach a

section for Communication Studies in the spring.

### **David Laliberte (M.A. 2008)**

The McFarland-Society for American Baseball Research recognized Mr. David Laliberte’s article, “Myth, History and Indian Baseball: An Unexpected Story of the Game in Minnesota” as one of the best articles or papers this year on baseball history or biography. His piece addressed the experiences of Ojibwe children who attended the St. John’s Industrial School during the late nineteenth century. In many cases, government officials compelled Native American parents to send their children to these boarding schools. At St. John’s, some students played on baseball teams and Laliberte argued that baseball became one of many tools used by Ojibwe children to survive and retain their identity. Along with a \$200 cash reward, Mr. Laliberte’s article will be published in a forthcoming issue of the Society for American Baseball Research’s *Baseball Research Journal*. Mr. Laliberte worked as an adjunct instructor in the department in the Spring Semester 2009 and will teach again this fall.

### **Robert R. Laven (B.A. 1979, M.A. 1985)**

Mr. Robert Laven has authored a book dealing with American Civil War History, published by PublishAmerica Press. *The Last Troops of Autumn: A Military History of the Seventh Wisconsin Volunteer Regiment: 1861-1863* is not only a military history but it is the story of the struggle to make sense of war and the sacrifice that must go with it.

### **John Paul (B.A. 1998, M.A. 2002)**

Mr. John Paul is a full-time faculty member in the Social and Behavioral Sciences Department at Manatee

Community College. The college has three campuses in the Sarasota, Florida region and has a student population of 11,000. Mr. Paul enjoys teaching courses in Western Civilization I and II.

### **Renee Vetsch (B.S. 2006)**

As a member of the Peace Corps, Ms. Renee Vetsch is teaching English to students in China. She is currently working for the International Cooperation and Exchange Office at Chongqing Technology and Business University. She teaches 7 sections of Oral/Spoken English, with 3 of the sections designed for English majors and 4 designed for non-majors.

### **Dean Williams (M.A. 2009)**

Mr. Dean Williams completed his M.A. Thesis titled “James Wilson’s Prescription for Citizenship in a Modern Republic” in June of 2009. Having moved to Philadelphia to complete his research and writing, Mr. Williams currently has internships at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and the Independence Seaport Museum. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania is one of the nation’s most important special collections libraries, with close to twenty million manuscripts and printed materials. He assists with processing the Chew Family Papers, which include the papers of Benjamin Chew, attorney for the Penn family in Pennsylvania during the colonial period. As such, Benjamin Chew was involved in the creation of the Mason/Dixon line and the Easton Treaty. The collection includes over 400 linear feet of archival matter. At the Independence Seaport Museum on the Delaware River, he is exposed to the collections that focus on seafaring; including shipbuilding, trade, and the USS Olympia, Admiral Dewey’s flagship in the Spanish-



American War. Mr. Williams works in the library/archive, which includes papers from individuals such as Commodore John Barry, considered the father of the U.S. Navy, as well as the records of area shipbuilders and other nautically-related materials.

## REFLECTIONS ON MY EXPERIENCE AT ST. CLOUD STATE



*by Michael*

*Mwenda*

*Kithinji, M.A.  
2005*

I am an assistant professor of history at the University of Arkansas, Fort Smith and originally I come from Kenya. I have travelled a long academic journey to get to my current position. I received my bachelor's degree in Education, History and Swahili language from the University of Nairobi (Kenya) in the year 2000. After a short stint working in Kenya, I felt an urge to expand my intellectual horizons by pursuing graduate studies in the United States, where I would get access to world-class educational facilities and thus be in a position to move up on the academic ladder. Despite the initial difficulties of adjusting to a new culture and environment, I have never regretted my decision to come to the USA. Through persistent hard work and assistance from committed professors, I have made great strides academically. In a period of six years, I have received a Master's degree from Saint Cloud State University (SCSU) and a Ph.D which I completed this year from Bowling Green State University in Ohio. I owe this

achievement to the History Department at SCSU, a department which treated me very well after my arrival in January 2003.

Before coming to America, I had explored various universities where I could pursue graduate studies. One of the several universities on my short list was SCSU. I became more attracted to the university when I sent inquiries to the History Department and received positive feedback from the Chair of the department, Dr. Peter Nayenga and then graduate coordinator, Dr. Marie Kim. I immediately concluded that the History Department at SCSU was the right place for me to pursue my graduate studies. After submitting a formal application, I was admitted and was lucky to be awarded a graduate assistantship that included a partial tuition waiver and a stipend. My reaction was that I would not let this great opportunity slip away. Upon receiving the good news, I started serious preparations for my journey to America. I cannot forget my arrival at Minneapolis/St. Paul airport on the chilly evening of January 16, 2003. Although I was wearing warm clothing, I felt a severe wave of cold wind splash my face once I ventured outside the airport. It then dawned on me that I had landed in a completely different environment from the one that I was used to in Kenya. It, however, did not take long before I adjusted to the new surroundings of St. Cloud, which became my abode for the next two years.

While at SCSU, I had my most memorable moments in the History Department where I found members of faculty and staff who were willing to assist me in all ways. I am especially grateful to Ms. Janice Schlangen, the Office Manager, who made my experience at SCSU pleasant. More importantly, I had a chance to interact

and learn from a group of dedicated professors who introduced me to the intricacies of historical research. At SCSU, I undertook a wide range of courses in African, European and America history, which widened my cognitive and intellectual skills and prepared me for the rigors of doctoral studies. I always tap into the knowledge that I gained at St. Cloud to help me prepare and teach courses in African History, World Civilizations, Modern World History, African American History and European History. As a specialist in African History, I credit Dr. Peter Nayenga for instilling in me critical skills of historical analysis and interpretation that enhanced my comprehension of African history, and conception of the complexity of African cultures and societies. I also had remarkable experiences from other professors such as Dr. Richard Lewis, who introduced me to the history of Russia and Dr. Richard Rothaus, who via his historiography class, taught me about the art of historical thinking and advanced research techniques.

I benefitted from the inspiration and advice of various members of the history faculty including Dr. John Ness, Dr. Jeffrey Mullins, Dr. Marie Kim, Dr. Mark Jaede, Dr. Betsy Glade, and Dr. Robert Galler. Outside of the History Department, I cannot forget Dr. Thomas O'Toole and Dr. Geoffrey Tabakin, whose insights and perspectives were valuable in helping me understand several aspects on Africa. As a famous African proverb says, "it takes a village to raise a child." The professional advice that I received from the History Department and the personal commitment of various professors at SCSU was crucial in preparing me for Ph.D studies and subsequently for a career as a history professor.

*History Day Awards*

## History Day 2009!

by Ms. Mary Johnson

History Day is a program which encourages middle and high school students to explore a historical subject related to an annual theme. The 2009 theme was “The Individual in History: Actions and Legacies.” Students could work as individuals or as groups to complete an exhibit, performance, documentary, website, or paper. At the competition, they competed in either the junior or senior division, and they competed either as an individual or as a group in their respective category. There were 224 students and 147 total entries. Of these, 50 entries advanced to State History Day on Saturday, May 2 at the University of Minnesota.

The SCSU History Department, along with the College of Social Sciences, and the College of Education, sponsored the coordinator and the interns in their efforts to assist students and teachers throughout the History Day experience. Since October, the interns and coordinator have provided students and teachers with assistance in a variety of ways. They collaborated with members of the Library staff to host Library Days for students to come to SCSU to do research for their projects. The interns each worked with students in a particular school on a weekly basis providing guidance on research, analysis of information, and completion of an exhibit, performance, documentary, website, or paper. They coordinated the regional History Day competition at SCSU on Saturday, March 28, and

recruited Social Studies Education majors, along with community members, as judges.

History Day Coordinator, Ms. Mary Johnson, and History Day Interns, Bethany Kuklok, Michelle Kuseske, and Aaron Johnson, participated in the Community Engagement Celebration and Expo held at Atwood on Wednesday, April 8, 2009, from 9 to 11 a.m. They displayed a poster which explained their community involvement, four student History Day projects, and a slide show with pictures of students at the regional competition. History Day was awarded the “Best Academic Connection” at the Expo. This award was for the project that demonstrated the best connection between the experiential component and the course.



## SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The faculty and staff of the History Department take special delight in congratulating the following recipients of the History Department scholarships for the 2009-2010 academic year:



*Edward Solberg visited with former Scholarship Winners on 10/16/08*

### **Calvin, Elio, and Alma Gower Scholarship**

Bethany Kuklok

### **James A. and Muriel Grunerud Scholarship**

Michael Howe

### **Edward Solberg/The Prudential Foundation Scholarship**

Kyle Craig

Jeffrey Demuth

Erin Eden

Steve Fligge

Adam Freeh

Todd Froberg

Bethany Fuller

Michael Grundhoefer

Michael Howe

Bethany Kuklok

### **Drew Roser Memorial Scholarship**

Luke Gramith

### **Alton C. and Haidako H. Wolfer Scholarship**

Jacob Rogers

## COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES DEAN'S LIST 2008

### Dean's List—Spring 2008

Allen, Grant E.

Freeh, Adam M.

Garber, Michelle A.

Gramith, Luke W.

Kneip, Lucas J.

Kuseske, Michelle L.

McKee, Eden M.

Martin, Timothy R.

Ocariz, Javier E.

Ochoa, Walter

Peterson, Jacob R.

Schmitt, Kyle H.

Stepanek, Diana W.

Strong, Christopher J. G.

Thompson, Teri L.

### Dean's List—Fall 2008

Beacom, Erica L.

Freeh, Adam M.

Froberg, Todd D.

Garber, Michelle A.

Gramith, Luke W.

Grundhoefer, Michael J.

Howe, Michael D.

Kuklok, Bethany A.

Kuseske, Michelle L.

Schmitt, Kyle H.

Slupske, Katherine M.

Strong, Christopher J. G.

Zimny, Edward J.

## HISTORY GRADUATES 2008

The History Department extends its best wishes for a bright and prosperous future to the graduates of 2008:

### Spring 2008

#### Bachelor of Arts

Buczek, Michael A.  
Canfield, Bryan C.  
DeYoung, Jesse L.  
Johnson, Tyler B.  
Koepke, Crystal R.  
Kurz, Robert S.  
Marcattilio-McCracken, Ry  
Olson, Daniel M.  
Olson, Erin A.  
Reetz, Raquel S.  
Ries, Andrew J.  
Toenjes, Ashley M.  
Watson, Cory R.

#### Bachelor of Elective Studies

Campbell, Haven D.

#### Bachelor of Science

Cutinella, Lindsay J.  
Dovenmuehler, Erich S.  
Doyle, Michael J.  
Field, Romona F.  
Floersheim, William B.  
Hammers, Adam J.  
Hanenburg, Roy A.  
LaPointe, Aaron M. J.  
Larson, Jonathan A.  
Lumley, Mark L.  
Lura, Audra K.  
Mayernick, Jason M.  
Olson, Erin A.  
Peterschick, Jason L.  
Stock, Adam J.  
Voigt, Alex G.

#### Master of Science

Schmidt, Kimberly A.

### Summer 2008

#### Bachelor of Arts

Carstensen, Alexandra E.  
Jordan, Edward C.  
Stepanek, Diana W.

#### Master of Arts

Anderson, Matthew W.  
Knudsen, Beverly L.  
Ottinger, Matthew H.  
Plank, Tami K.  
Terry, John R.  
Timmerman, Jay M.

### Fall 2008

#### Bachelor of Arts

Blint, Jill A.  
Cilmi, Cabdicasiis I.  
Erickson, Matthew D.  
Gimm, Daniel J.  
Jorgensen, Mary C.  
Martin, Timothy R.  
Nikodym, Barrett L.  
Thielman, Sean K.

#### Bachelor of Science

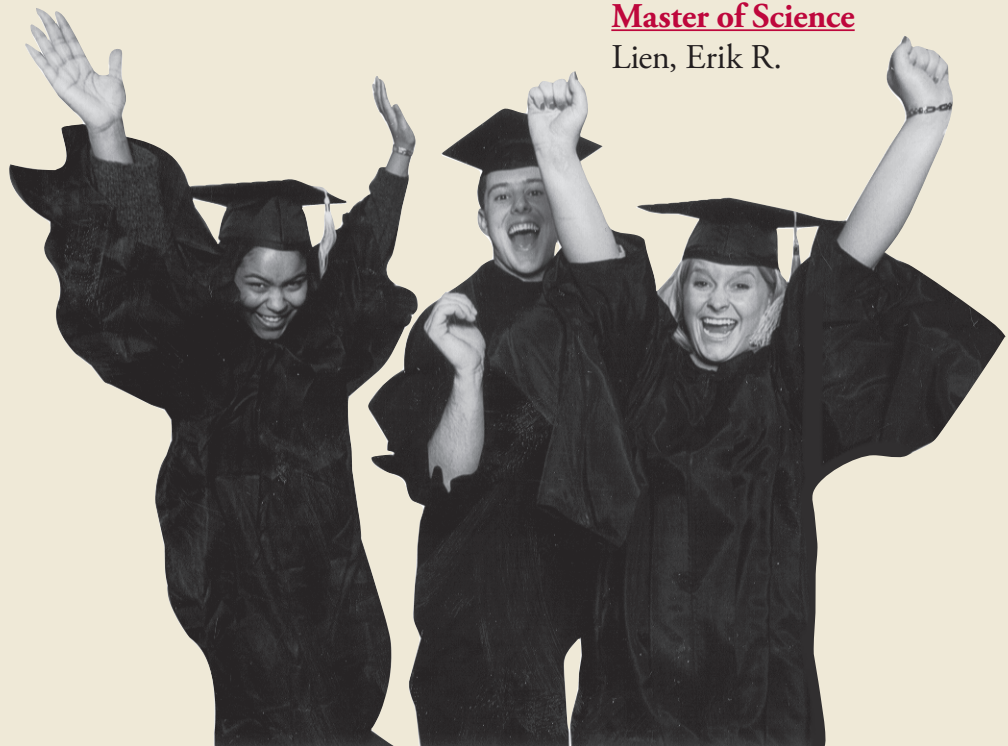
Bogue, Jennifer M.  
Hadley, Joshua D.  
Hope, Nykolas B.  
Kieffer, Andrew D.  
Lien, Mandy M. L.  
Riha, Christopher M.  
Sauer, Keely K.  
Waltzing, Joshua E.

#### Master of Arts

Laliberte, David J.

#### Master of Science

Lien, Erik R.





## We Would Like to Hear from You !!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Degree and year received \_\_\_\_\_

Current Duties and Activities \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information and Comments

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