Welcome to our Newsletter!

What an adventure! This was a year unlike any other, filled with many changes and adaptations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All the same, our students have continued to succeed in all respects, making constant progress toward their academic goals. Our faculty have been busy as well, especially in adapting their teaching, mentoring, and research during the pandemic.

Inside this newsletter, you will find a note from our department head, Tammy Proctor, an update on how our students and staff have adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic, spotlights on our scholarship donors, and much more. Thank you for taking the time to read about our year, and we hope you are doing well and staying safe!

-Jonah Bibo
Newsletter Editor

Congratulations to Michael Cevering and Daniel Porter for the Undergraduate Research and Creative Opportunity (URCO) grants! Their papers, “Mormonism and Arguments for the Existence of God,” and “The Δρόμος at the Battle Of Marathon: Testing the Plausibility of the Charge,” represent the high quality of work our undergraduates can achieve!

Coming up

From Mayonnaise Desserts to Farm-to-Table, April 15th at 7:00 PM, click here to join!
Jeannie Sur and Victoria Grieve

Previous episodes can be viewed here.
A Note from our Department Head, Dr. Tammy Proctor

What to say about 2020? It was a good year to be an historian, given the echoes of the past to be found in so many of the events of the year. As I end my eight-year term as Department Head in June, I thought it might be a good time to reflect on some of those historic developments this year, both in our department and in our broader society.

The Vote

This year began with feverish planning to commemorate and examine the history of voting rights in the United States. With several big anniversaries in 2020 (National Women's Suffrage, Utah Women's Suffrage, and the Voting Rights Act), we put together a symposium on the history of struggles for the vote in the United States and challenges that continue for those seeking the franchise. Little did we know in January that our March symposium would become a series of Zoom events in Fall 2020, nor did we realize the relevance of our sessions on voting access, disenfranchisement, and voter registration. We had hundreds of participants for our six-event fall series, which touched on historic campaigns to expand access to the electoral process in the U.S. and abroad. Our last event, a roundtable, focused especially on Utah. Personally, I kept thinking back on those events in early November as I watched President Trump's challenges to the election unfold. It reminded me that history has relevant context for our lives.

The Virus

When COVID became a clear danger in March ‘20, the university sprang into action to protect our community. We pivoted all instruction to online quickly (in just a few days) and worked hard to help students finish the semester. Faculty in our department impressed me with their willingness to learn new technologies and to work one-on-one with students affected by illness, job losses, and an earthquake(!) in Utah in March. As a department, we also decided to publish a series of short videos and blog posts about the history of public health, past diseases, and vaccination in April. To view some of the videos, subscribe to our YouTube channel.

Our Alumni Survey

In late summer 2020, we launched a survey that asked our alumni to let us know how they perceived their
USU educations and the value of their degrees. We had a fantastic response rate (thanks, alums!) of nearly twenty percent, and the comments really gave us a nice snapshot of the careers and lives that our students pursue after they leave USU. From professors and lawyers to business people and government officials, our majors go into a wide variety of professions. Alumni overwhelmingly reported that they learned important skills in reading, writing, and speaking, but more importantly, they learned how to research and synthesize a lot of material into a usable form. Respondents also mentioned the important role of faculty in mentoring them, caring about their lives, and teaching them "how to think" not "what to think". Alumni also gave us some good tips about how to improve our program: more emphasis on analytical skills, especially in conveying historical information in digital and data-based form; more encouragement for internships and public history outreach; and more opportunities for students to practice history as a community.

Scholarships

Most importantly, I want to thank everyone who has supported our students with generous donations toward our scholarship funds. We launched an emergency scholarship fund for students to help them complete their degrees in spring 2020 and summer 2021, and in 2020, we also raised funds for several new scholarships. As students and their families struggle with the impact of the virus and an uncertain economy, our scholarships help insure that our hard-working Aggie students can reach their educational goals. In the last year, we have received gifts totaling more than $600,000 in support for History, Religious Studies, and Classics at USU. Thanks!

The Future

In looking to the future, I am pleased to welcome our new Department Head, Dr. Ravi Gupta, who holds the Charles Redd Chair in Religious Studies and who is a specialist in Hinduism in our religious studies program. Dr. Gupta, a native of Boise, Idaho, with degrees from Boise State University and the University of Oxford (UK), will be an excellent leader for our combined programs! For myself, I can't wait to get back to fulltime teaching in the department. I am excited to revisit courses in World History and the two world wars while also developing a new course entitled Sport: A Transnational History. I'm also finishing a book on US relief to Europe in the period during and after World War I, so I have plenty to keep me busy.

I remain grateful for the opportunity to serve the university and the college as Department Head since 2013, and I look forward to continuing to be involved in USU life as a faculty member.

Regards,
Tammy M. Proctor
Distinguished Professor of History
USU Examines the Past and Future of Voting Rights in Fall 2020

By Alyssa Hughes

Utah State University held a wonderful series of discussions marking the 100th anniversary of national women's suffrage along with other important dates in the history of voting access in the United States. Originally planned as a two-day symposium in Logan that included lectures, discussions, and student presentations, the project had to pivot to a remote format with the advent of COVID. In some ways, these discussions may have been more significant in terms of timing (before the election) and impact (in light of the Black Lives Matter and Voting Access debates of the summer).

The symposium launched in September with keynote speaker, Dr. Carol Anderson, professor at Emory University and author of One Person, No Vote. Her conversation with Dr. Marisela Martinez-Cola focused on current blocks to voting access, and how these obstacles create voter suppression systemically. She talked about how we can address these issues proactively as citizens. From an anonymous survey, one attendee commented, “Carol Anderson’s presentation was informative, impassioned, and powerfully effective.” We agree!

Next, Dr. Lisa Tetrault from Carnegie Mellon University discussed the history of women’s voting access in the United States, again with a focus on both obstacles and victories. Dr. Tetrault highlighted the role of lesser known advocates for extension of the vote and made it clear that voting "access" is not the same as voting "rights". Dr. Selina Gallo-Cruz, Associate Professor of Sociology at the College of the Holy Cross, followed with a presentation about women’s political power, questions of visibility in the public sphere, and invisibility today.

The last three events had originally been planned as two panel discussions, but in the Zoom format, they took on a slightly different form. Dr. Mona Siegel spoke about the international history of women’s suffrage after the First World War, providing a global context for the earlier presentations. Dr. Kimberly Jensen turned the conversation to more local activism by focusing on African American women suffragists and voting access in Oregon. The final event, just one week before the U.S. elections, brought together several important leaders in Utah to discuss our statewide advantages and challenges in terms of voting access today and historically.

Through evaluations we conducted, we know that people learned a lot from the different perspectives on offer:
USU Examines the Past and Future of Voting Rights in Fall 2020
By Alyssa Hughes

“I was impressed with the information regarding accessibility or lack thereof for people with physical challenges. Impressed with the ACLU activities and also that of NAACP. Very interesting that a voluntary lawyer database has been established to address intimidation of voters.”

“Voter suppression has been so successful since the 2000s because of the ability of politicians to disguise racist and classist goals as matters of voter security. We must take apart their rhetoric and show it for what it is. I'm a faculty member but I love how the talk came full circle to talking about the power of college students and their generation.”

“Dr. Anderson did a phenomenal job of engaging with the outstanding questions from Dr. Martinez - Cola. I walked away with a sense of empowerment to engage with democracy and hold it accountable through voting while also taking control through the use of civil society in holding elected officials accountable. Such a wonderful talk!”

The symposium was only possible through the generosity of our sponsors, which included Utah Humanities, Tanner Humanities Grant, Better Days 2020, Center for Intersectional Gender Studies and Research, Year of the Woman, Utah Public Radio, USU Department of History, Utah League of Women Voters, USU Women in Politics, Real Women Run, Wittenberg Institute for Public Humanities/Sciences, Votere, Utah Women and Leadership Project, and AAUW of Utah.

Thank you to everyone who was able to be part of this.

We appreciate you all!
Living through Historic Moments: COVID-19, Education, and University Life

What a year! When USU shifted to remote learning in March 2020, no one knew what to expect. It was unclear how long the educational changes would last. Remember when we were going to close for 14 days to flatten the curve? Now, a year later, we are still working to mitigate the effects of this terrible virus.

In this new world of pandemic education, students and professors faced new and unexpected challenges as the university accelerated into a new world of remote learning, and staff had to adjust all their work habits. Before the pandemic, an average Logan student’s day might involve classes in the morning, lunch in the Hub with friends, and more classes, homework, and socializing in the afternoon. When classes resumed in the fall, school days looked strikingly different.

Can You Hear Me Now?

Sitting in front of cameras in isolated settings, students interact virtually with professors and peers on Zoom calls and Canvas discussions. For many people, Fall 2020 was an entirely digital semester, where classrooms and whiteboards were replaced by bedrooms and shared screens. Classroom group discussions now took place in breakout rooms. As a result, there have been fewer students or faculty on campus during the day, and fewer opportunities for social interaction and support. While some faculty made the switch to online learning immediately, some tried to blend face-to-face and online learning in a hybrid setting. By the end of the term many classes homogenized into one hybrid format, which relied heavily on USU’s excellent Academic and Instructional Services specialists for tools and assistance.

The Research and Study Pivot

For history graduate student Dean McGuire, the pandemic brought changes that extended beyond his academic endeavors. According to Dean, COVID-19 did not greatly affect his thesis work. His research focuses on local Native American peoples, and he had already collected a great number of primary sources before the lockdown began. Dean feels on track with his thesis. One thing he emphasized was the importance of sticking to a strict work schedule. For him, this organization is key. Before the pandemic, Dean planned his schedule around in-person classes, which helped to give some natural structure to his day. Now, he must construct his work life from scratch, and says that, even in times that might have before been considered “off-days,” it is important to tell himself, “Okay, sit down and write something.”
Undergraduate Stewart Weight, a USU Senior and current president of Phi Alpha Theta agrees that its difficult because he can’t form his routine around “this is when I go to class, this is when I do homework.” Because digital and class calendars are not always in sync, Stewart says that he checks syllabi early and often to stay on track and succeed in class. Still, like Dean, Stewart has found ways to keep his research going. According to Stewart, he has benefitted as a history major during this pandemic because despite the advent of remote learning, most of the resources necessary for research are still available to him. “In a way, it has opened the door to independent work,” he says. Still, there are limitations. Stewart says that access to certain facilities like on-campus writing lab are restricted due to COVID, and Zoom or other digital sessions are not as effective as in person meetings.

Phi Alpha Theta vice-president Michaella Whitney concurs, saying that while the pandemic did limit her access to libraries and museums for research, she made an effort to get around these barriers and continue her study through other means. It motivated her to “to think of new places to find answers to my research questions.” As a result, Michaella says her academic performance has not suffered greatly. Michaella is also a history teaching major, and she did not have any clinical hours scheduled during the pandemic. She added, “it was sad to see my peers get their opportunity to be in the classroom shut down.”

**Like a Ghost Town**

While Dean’s thesis work continued largely uninterrupted, the COVID-19 pandemic brought changes to Dean’s social life in ways he did not expect. Now that the pandemic keeps most people home, Dean sees less of everybody. “It’s sort of like isolation, and [not seeing people] has affected me in a strange way. It helps you cope, to see people and bounce ideas off each other… I underestimated how much seeing people helped me out.”
Both Stewart and Michaella have had to think of solutions to the problem of social isolation. They have planned virtual events like trivia or game nights, and developed a scavenger hunt that will allow participants to get outdoors safely.

**Working Differently**

USU faculty and staff are also feeling the effects of a changed social environment. History Staff Assistant Ashley Wilcox reported, “I’m an extrovert, so one of the things I look forward to the most about my job is interacting with and helping others, and being part of events that bring people together. Working at home, the only interaction I get is through Zoom meetings and emails. I’ve learned to take time for healthy meals and go on walks, and that's helped me stay sane even while working in isolation at home. I love going to the office once a week, though the biggest difference is that campus is not as busy and you can't smile at people very easily anymore!”

Ashley finished a master’s program in Fall 2019, just before the pandemic began. As a result, she did not get the opportunity to walk at graduation or celebrate with friends. She says, “It would have been lovely to see the other students in my cohort for School Counseling—we had been going to class together for 3 years.” Ashley has noticed the resilience of our students and faculty. She was impressed by the faculty’s willingness to adapt during the beginning of the campus shutdown in March 2020, saying “Everyone was so positive and supportive of each other.”

The pandemic has also given students new perspectives on history and life. Dean says, “…we are a part of historical moments. This is ‘something I’ll talk about for the rest of my life...’ You can feel it when you live a major moment.” Michaella says, “I have always learned about pandemics... I never thought I would be living in one. Once again, human involvement shapes history in a multitude of ways.” Stewart expressed a similar sentiment: “Living through a historic time makes history come to life a little more… It’s also brought new perspectives on the importance of disease in history.”

Although the pandemic brought challenges, Stewart, Dean, and Michaella are all on track to finish their programs. Dean will pursue a PhD at the University of Nebraska, where he hopes to continue his research in Native American History. Michaella has plans to move to Wyoming in 2022 and begin teaching high school. Stewart is taking a gap year, and will then begin applying to graduate programs. Ashley continues to work for the department to keep things running. She celebrated the birth of her daughter, Amelia, in August 2020. Despite everything, students continue to learn and succeed in the History Department. As Michaella puts it, “COVID-19 hasn’t stolen any of my dreams.”

The once-busy quad is now often empty!
New Scholarships and More!

In the last year, we have received gifts totaling more than $600,000 in support for History, Religious Studies, and Classics at USU.

Here are some of our new scholarships:

- Robert & Nancy Funk Aggie Family Scholarship Endowment
- Faye & Terry Whitworth Aggie Family Scholarship Endowment
- S. Brenna Fawcett Williams and Stanley A. Fawcett Scholarship
- Peter and Linda Van Orden Aggie Family Scholarship Endowment
- Norm Jones and Cecile Gilmer Benefice
- Norm Jones Latin Scholarship
- G. Kevin Jones Student Writing Award in Mormon History
- D. Kirk Anderson & R. Edward Glatfelter Scholarship Endowment
- Leonard Webb McDonald Classics Excellence Fund

In the following pages, you will learn a bit about our generous new donors and their backgrounds, interests, and careers. You will also read about some of the recipients of these prestigious awards and how they are planning their research and putting these scholarships to good use. The Department of History thanks each of our generous donors. With your support, we will work together to continue the tradition of student success that defines our program.

For more information on scholarships and donations, contact Justin Barton at justin.barton@usu.edu
A Special Thanks to our New Scholarship Donors!

An Interview with S. Brenna Fawcett

Brenna was inspired by her father’s love of education. After he passed, Brenna believed that a scholarship would be a great way to honor his legacy. He began his career teaching high school history on the Navajo Reservation outside of Flagstaff, Arizona. Later he would go on to teach at Northern Arizona, Oregon State, UW-Whitewater, University of Northern Colorado, and Montana State, before retiring from BYU. According to Brenna, her father believed that “we could learn a great deal about our present from our past.”

Brenna also devoted much of her life to the pursuit of knowledge. She began her graduate studies and teaching career at Utah State, and then earned PhDs in Economics and Philosophy as well as a PsyD in Psychology. With her first PhD, she then taught at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, among others, and became a Chief Econometrician in Arizona. She has also started three business.

Now, Brenna hopes that she can continue to spread her father’s legacy and her love of education through her scholarship. She knows that tuition is always a challenge for students, especially for those with families, and hopes that her donation will help to ease the burden of a student of family in need.

The Department of History extends its appreciation to S. Brenna Fawcett Williams for the Stanley A. Fawcett scholarship fund! Thank You!

This scholarship is available to students at Utah State University Brigham City.

USU Brigham City | Statewide Campuses | USU

A Talk with Faye Whitworth

A few years ago, Faye and Terry Whitworth realized that it was good time to put together a scholarship. The original idea was to set up a summer internship because Faye believes that it is important to work with professionals like she did. However, once the COVID-19 pandemic began to limit the ability to directly interact with students, Faye and Terry decided to set up a scholarship.

Faye earned a master’s in history and a master’s in special education from USU and has a passion for teaching. She began her career in Ogden, and then moved to Washington where she taught for 30 years. As a student she specialized in world history, focusing on Africa and Latin America. As a teacher, she first taught sectional courses on African, Asian, and Latin American history, and these later evolved into courses on world history, geography, comparative religions, and anthropology.

Faye is excited to see the work that her scholarship will help to produce. Faye says it is fascinating to see how societies change with medicine and disease, so Brooke’s project was exciting to her.

Faye also loves to travel, and hopes to continue visiting new places once it is possible. As a closing note, Faye urges students to, when possible, “Explore the world. Go out, travel, see things. Travel in the U.S., in the world if you can. See things in a different light!”

Thank you to the Whitworths for setting up the Faye and Terry Whitworth Aggie Family Scholarship!
My research project is female infertility in the nineteenth century. My thesis is on the diary of a woman named Elizabeth Pickett Tolman who was a nineteenth-century Mormon polygamous wife who struggled with infertility. After about ten years of marriage, Elizabeth decided to pursue medical treatment for her infertility, first from a female doctor and then from a male homeopathic doctor. Thus, I will be using Elizabeth’s experience as a case study to explore the broader experience of infertility in nineteenth-century America.

The main primary source which I am working with is the personal diary of Elizabeth Pickett Tolman, in which she details her health and her efforts to receive treatment for her infertility.

Elizabeth lived during the medicalization of infertility, meaning that had she lived even a couple of decades earlier, she would not have had the option to seek medical treatment for her infertility. The nineteenth century is when the practice of gynecology began, and while Elizabeth did not go to seek treatment from someone specifically trained in that field, her doctor’s knowledge of infertility was heavily influenced by the work of “pioneering” gynecologists during this time.

This year the Whitworth Scholarship is a teaching fellowship. It allows a graduate student the opportunity of writing and delivering a lecture on a topic related to the topic of health, disease, and medicine in North American history. Additionally, they have the opportunity to lead multiple class discussions, assist with basic classroom management, and work with the instructor of the class on instruction and course design.

I am planning on lecturing about infertility in the nineteenth century, particularly the medicalization of infertility which happened in the second half of the nineteenth century. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, women had the opportunity to seek medical intervention with their infertility, something that women from an earlier generation did not. While most women who sought medical treatment still left treatment without becoming pregnant, this shift tells us a lot about the shifting expectations and attitudes regarding childbearing and pregnancy. I am looking forward to working with Dr. Seth Archer and for the opportunity to learn more about lesson development, classroom management, and alternative approaches to instruction and course design. It is an exciting opportunity to expand my teaching experience and skills.

At the end of February, Brooke gave a lecture on infertility and miscarriage in nineteenth-century America, and emphasized the changing social as well as medical ideas that in turn changed the way that nineteenth-century Americans thought about and made sense of their miscarriages and infertility.
A Special Thanks to our New Scholarship Donors!

New for 2020-21, the Norm Jones Latin Scholarship

The Norm Jones Latin Fellow assists with running the Latin Lab. The Latin Lab is a new advanced course that tasks students and professors, including Norm Jones himself, with reading and translating rare and untranslated Latin texts. Three days a week, recipients facilitate the Zoom portion of the lab so that students at home, or even some across the country, can continue to practice Latin in a new and exciting way. This year’s recipients are Jacob Hayden and Abigail Fritz! A special thank you to Norm for this generous scholarship!

Ongoing, the Norm Jones and Cecile Gilmer Benefice

The goal of the Norm Jones and Cecile Gilmer Benefice is to acknowledge and encourage both research and service among faculty and students, both graduate and undergraduate. While there are many scholarships and awards that recognize the quality of teaching and research skills, the Jones Benefice seeks to emphasize the importance of service as an equal quality that individuals at all levels of academia should strive for. Recipients are those who go “above and beyond” in their service to the department and the community.

Student recipients show a dedication to involvement outside of the classroom. For faculty, recipients are those that have put their personal projects aside to focus on vital services that help the department and community function. Norm says that the award is intended for faculty and late term students, such as second-year graduate students and senior undergraduates.

2020’s recipients were undergraduate Shelby Brown, graduate student Jonah Bibo, and faculty member Jamie Sanders. 2021’s recipients are graduate student Alec Smitten and faculty member Victoria Grieve! Congratulations!
A Special Thanks to our New Scholarship Donors!

The Leonard Webb McDonald Classics Excellence Fund

Introducing the Leonard Webb McDonald Classics Excellence fund! Jennifer and Mary Ann Ebbeler have provided a generous gift for this scholarship, which is new for the 2021-2022 year. Classics director Dr. Frances Titchener says, “The USU Classics program is honored and grateful to announce the establishment by Jennifer and Mary Ann Ebbeler of the Leonard Webb McDonald Classics Excellence Fund. The Ebbelers intend for this award to provide assistance to the classics program in multiple ways. For 2021-2022, the McDonald Classics Excellence Fund will help provide support to the Summer Intensive Greek program.”

A Talk with Norm Jones on the Life of Kirk Anderson

Kirk Anderson left the history department a fund for creating the D. Kirk Anderson and R. Edward Glatfelter Scholarship Endowment in his estate.

Norm Jones was kind enough to sit down and talk about Kirk Anderson, whom he knew for many years.

Kirk graduated from USU in the mid-70s and was mentored by Ed Glatfelter. Ed had a massive impact on Kirk’s life, and Kirk felt that he owed Ed a debt of gratitude. For that reason, Kirk dedicated this scholarship in Ed’s honor.

According to Norm, Kirk was a man of many talents and passions. Kirk loved to bicycle, and would participate in a variety of races in places like Crested Butte, Colorado. He also enjoyed gardening, and had a particular passion for heirloom tomatoes. Kirk was also a skilled worker and an “overall handy man,” and Norm termed his crafting style “Eco-craftsmanship.” Norm also told a story of a time when Kirk sold his VW van to build his wife a corral for their horses.

Kirk was also an accomplished cook who loved experimenting with food. According to Norm, Kirk was enthusiastic about all of these passions.

Kirk also had a deep love for the history department and education. After learning from Ed Glatfelter and Bob Cole, he developed a commitment to education. Kirk went into school psychology, and had a therapy dog named Spatz. Norm says that Kirk defined his career by helping students throughout Idaho and Nevada with Spatz at his side.

This endowed scholarship will keep Kirk Anderson’s memory alive.
A Special Thanks to our New Scholarship Donors!

A Talk with Bob Funk

Bob began his studies at USU as an accounting major and set his sights on law school. After a year of accounting classes and social studies electives, Bob was disappointed to learn his program had no room for classes outside of his major. Soon after, he met with Ross Peterson to talk about history and Bob’s goals. Ross told him, “They’ll teach you how to be a lawyer in law school. You need to do a lot of reading and learn how to write well.” Bob changed his major to history and pre-law (political science), and continued taking classes from Ross, Len Rosenband, Dan McInerney, Michael Nichols, and Ed Glatfelter. Doug Alder encouraged Bob to take Deductive Logic in preparation for the LSAT. Bob graduated from USU in 1988 and Nancy graduated in 1989. Bob obtained his law degree from Cornell Law School in Ithaca, New York in 1992.

Bob says that his time in the Department of History taught him how to write formally and concisely, a factor to which he credits his success at Cornell. His article on the military limitations of Japan’s Constitution during the Gulf War was published in the Cornell International Law Journal. After graduation, Bob accepted a position with Olson & Hoggan, a law firm in Logan, and he currently works as General Counsel to the Wasatch Group. Bob and Nancy love living in Cache Valley. They have given back to the University and are members of the Old Main Society, but Bob says: “This is something different. This is something that we feel is really helpful to students.” Bob is also using this scholarship to thank the USU History Department for the training, and mentoring that were so important to his career.

The Van Orden Scholarship

Peter and Linda are both graduates of USU, Peter in political science/history and Linda in business/education. Peter says that he and Linda wanted to contribute to history to encourage the development of critical thinking skills in modern society. They have regularly given to established Political Science and Food Science scholarships and, Justin Barton informed them about the opportunity to secure matching funds with the university. Peter and Linda felt that they were now able to establish a scholarship in History as well!

During Peter’s time at Utah State he had the opportunity to learn from “top-notch scholars,” such as Milton Merrill and Bill Furlong in political science, and Bob Cole, Ross Peterson, and Ed Glatfelter in history. George Ellsworth and Leonard Arrington were long-time family friends, and he credits a great deal of influence to both. Peter was also influenced by the noted political philosopher, Harvey Mansfield, Jr., with whom he studied The Federalist Papers and Tocqueville’s Democracy in America through an NEH grant. Peter went on to a 40-year career in education.

Today, Peter pursues a wide range of interests. He reads literature from all over the world, with specific interests in both Russia and medieval Europe. He studies and reads economics, political science, and history for fun, and his main interests are in American diplomacy and American intellectual history.

Peter and Linda had great experiences at Utah State. Peter says that professors allowed him to “follow his muses.” Peter and Linda hope that recipients of his scholarship will have similar opportunities.
A Special Thanks to our New Scholarship Donors!

G. Kevin Jones
Student Writing Award in Mormon History:

The History Department at Utah State University is pleased to announce the G. Kevin Jones Student Writing Award in Mormon History. This new $1000 recognition will be awarded each year to a USU student who has written and submitted an excellent paper addressing some aspect of Mormon history.

G. Kevin Jones is accomplished in law, has authored award-winning law review articles, is a popular adjunct professor in History and Political Science, and was active in the Mormon History Association for nearly 20 years as the Business Manager and Member of the Executive Committee of the Journal of Mormon History. Full Biography is available here.

2021 Writing Award Recipients


W. Mont Timmins Award: Reed Helper, “Uniting on Campus: Student Groups, Race and Rights at Utah State University.”


G. Kevin Jones Writing Award in Mormon History: Byron Pugh, “Surviving the 20th Century: Rethinking Native Americans, Settler Colonialism, and the Indian Student Placement Program.”

Thanks to all who responded to our Fall 2020 Alumni survey! We received 279 responses, and while analyzing the data, we learned a lot about our students, past and present. We had responses from over five decades of history Alumni, showing that our Aggie family tree has deep roots and has grown broad. We thank those that participated, and are glad to see our department's past and continuing success. If you have not been in touch recently, send us a note and tell us what you are doing!
The History Department welcomes Dr. Nichelle Frank!

This Fall, Dr. Frank joined our department at the Utah State University Eastern campus in Price, Utah, and specializes in Western US Environmental History. Dr. Frank earned her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in History at Colorado State University, before earning her Ph.D. at University of Oregon. Her early research focused on film and architecture, then she turned toward Environmental History during her Ph.D. program.

“I went down a road of environmental history by researching mining communities of the US West… particularly how they have grappled with the fact that their pasts have created major environmental concerns but that their pasts are often the basis for their economies once they have tapped out the mining and turned to environment- and history-based.”

Dr. Frank’s interest in environment and history dates back to her first semester of undergraduate study, and when it came time to pick a topic for her dissertation, she wanted to focus on the built environment of the US West. This, coupled with a connection to mining towns and history, formed the basis of her research.

Dr. Frank teaches general education classes in American history alongside upper division classes on women, gender, and public history. Alongside her teaching duties, Dr. Frank is working on revising her dissertation for publication, revising a manuscript for submission to a journal, and is an Applied History Fellow with the Center of the American West at the University of Colorado-Boulder.

As a teacher, Dr. Frank encourages pupils to learn more about public history. Through research and oral history projects that she assigns as part of her undergraduate and graduate courses, Dr. Frank hopes to promote community engagement in her students. Additionally, Dr. Frank participates in the university’s Empowering Teaching Excellence, Faculty Mentor-Student Mentee, and Aggie First Scholars programs.

“Though COVID-19 has restricted what might be a more “normal” first year at USU, I have still encountered an incredibly warm and welcoming community. The History Department has been supportive, encouraging, and empathetic. People have reached out to me out of the blue to ask how things are going, to set up virtual hangouts, and share resources. At USU Eastern, the faculty and staff I’ve met have been kind and positive. If this is how it is under COVID restrictions, I’m excited to see these communities—Logan, Price, and Utah at large—once the pandemic has passed.”

The Department will welcome Dr. Nathan Bracchio as a postdoctoral teaching fellow for 2021-22 at the Uintah Basin Campus (Vernal).
New Faculty, New Courses, and New Projects

HIST/RELS 4910
Religions and Politics in the Modern U.S.
with Dr. Chris Babits

An old maxim says that you should never talk about religion or politics at the dinner table. Well, this course won’t be meeting at a dinner table, so we’re going to spend a semester examining the intersection of religion and politics in the U.S. from the turn of the twentieth century to today.

Religion and Politics in the Modern U.S. emerged from my long interest in these intertwined topics. Until recently, I felt like many Americans were reticent to discuss religion and politics, particularly if they knew family members and friends had different opinions. With the rise of social media, though, it’s clear that we’ve been dying to engage with each other all along! My hope is that HIST/RELS 4910 will be a space unlike social media – a space where we respectfully engage with each other on controversial topics.

The course covers historical and contemporary issues dealing with religion and politics, mostly in the U.S. in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and is open to students of all religious and political affiliations.

HIST/RELS 4910
New Testament,
with Dr. Eliza Rosenberg

This course is designed to provide students with a general introduction to the collection of writings known as the New Testament (i.e., of Christian Bibles). In addition to reading the biblical texts themselves, the course is intended to introduce students to literary-historical methods of biblical research and scholarship. We will explore the New Testament texts in the context of their emergence: that of a fast-paced, urbanized, and rapidly changing world marked by empire, slavery, resistance, philosophical diversity, cultural exchange, and religious conflict and confluence. We will also consider what the texts have to say about their own composition and their role in this dynamic landscape.

Intro biblical studies courses are part of the discipline's core curriculum, and we'd been hoping for a long time to integrate regular offerings.

I want students to gain a fuller understanding of what the texts say. People are so focused on meaning that the rush past a lot of content. This course will provide tools, methods, and perspectives that will prove useful in many intellectual endeavors.
New Faculty, New Courses, and New Projects

The Certificate in Global Peacebuilding is a new program led by Tammy Proctor (History), Patrick Mason (Religious Studies), and Colin Flint (Political Science).

The Global Peacebuilding Certificate is a 21-credit program designed to supplement a student’s major. By going through the certificate program, students will gain a deeper understanding of the causes of violent conflict and efforts to build peace, while building practical skills in peacebuilding praxis that will help prepare them for a wide range of careers in government, law, business, and non-profit organizations.

In recent years employers, state legislators, and university administrators have all emphasized the importance of graduating from college not only with theoretical knowledge but also marketable skills. George Lopez, who is one of the most prominent peace studies experts in the country, has said that “Peacebuilding is the new global citizenship skill for the 21st century.” We know that USU students care about making a positive impact on the world—both locally and globally—and this certificate was created to give them a set of tools for doing so.

Students can expect fascinating classes, passionate professors, and to have their minds blown (or at least expanded significantly). They’re going to learn about the world, past and present, and be exposed to some of the most harrowing and heroic stories that humanity has to offer. There’s a lot of darkness in the human condition, but also a lot of hope. One of the reasons we created this as a peacebuilding program rather than a conflict studies program is because we want to focus on what students can do to make the world a better, more peaceful, and more just place. That requires careful analysis of the problems, but also a focus on effective, practical, and innovative solutions. The program caters to anyone who cares about making the world a better place.

If you would like to support our internship program, please get in touch with tammy.proctor@usu.edu

Dr. Tammy Proctor, History
Dr. Patrick Mason, Religious Studies
Dr. Colin Flint, Political Science
New Faculty, New Courses, and New Projects

Select Faculty Publications, 2020-21:


New Faculty, New Courses, and New Projects

Emeritus Projects and Releases

Our professors emeriti are still hard at work researching, writing, and publishing! Here is a look at some recent and upcoming projects from our honored emeriti:


**Charles Prebish** is currently working on “The Generations of Buddhist Studies,” a project focused on “biographical reminiscence” of Buddhist scholars. He is also co-editing a "festschrift" volume honoring the work of Steven Heine called "The Theory and Practice of Zen Buddhism," with Professor On-cho Ng of the Pennsylvania State University. Finally he continues as Co-Editor of the *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* ebook project and Routledge World Religions book series.

**Bob McPherson** published *Traders, Agents, and Weavers* in early 2020 with the University of Oklahoma Press (pictured), and in December published *Traditional Navajo Teachings: A Trilogy* with Perry J. Robinson. Finally, Bob is working on the preservation of the 100-year-old Oljato Trading Post in Monument Valley. He is “working with the Utah State Historical Society and a number of tribal entities to restore the post, make it a visitors’ center, and have it serve as an economic exciter for the community.”

**David Rich Lewis** recently completed an essay titled "Bernard DeVoto's Utah" for a 2021 special issue of *Weber: The Contemporary West,* part of a larger multiyear set of programs celebrating the 125th anniversary of DeVoto's birth. Lewis continues as a member of the Utah Board of State History, and to work as general editor on a new Utah history textbook with 18 other historians.

**Norm Jones** continues to write and think about Lord Burghley and the Elizabethan age. He has been working on the *Heroica Eulogia* manuscript. He has recorded a number of talks for a range of groups, including one on the Reformation for the AP Daily, and remains involved in national conversations about General Education.

For the latest on faculty, emeriti, students, and staff, visit our web page: [Department of History | USU](#)

Visit our social media sites! Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram: @usuhistory
Welcome our new Department Head, Dr. Ravi Gupta

Past Travels and Future Goals, a talk with the upcoming department head Dr. Ravi Gupta:

Beginning in July 2021, Ravi Gupta will take over from Tammy Proctor as department head of the Department of History. Ravi was kind enough to sit down for a Zoom discussion about his recent travel to India before the pandemic and his goals as department head.

In March 2020, just before international lockdowns began as part of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Gupta, alongside Ms. Emily Perry, and Dr. Michael Sowder, took a group of 20 students to India. This was a diverse group filled with students from religious studies, yoga studies, history, English and environmental studies. For many who took the trip, it was a journey of many firsts; first time out of the United States, first time to a non-western country, or first time to Asia. They spent five days in an ecovillage in southwestern India, where they focused on yoga and a village life based on Hinduism but rooted in sustainability. From there, they traveled to Jaipur, a city of maharajas full of beautiful history and architecture. While in India, Dr. Gupta and his group saw a variety of environments, from lush forests and fields to dry deserts. Just before they left, the group visited...
Welcome our new Department Head, Dr. Ravi Gupta

the Ajanta and Ellora caves, the oldest of which are two thousand years old.

Ravi says that everyone returned home safely and satisfied, but that the return trip carried extra weight due to the pandemic. On March 15th, Dr. Gupta received a message from USU that all travelers needed to return immediately. Luckily, they were already boarding the plane. The next day, flights from Europe to the United States were shut down, but Dr. Gupta and his group were able to make it home. Ravi says for that reason, he and his group “were even more grateful for their experiences,” and that “trying to figure out what was going on in the world made [travel] more exciting.”

More recently, Dr. Gupta was in Provo for a semester at the Maxwell Institute at Brigham Young University, while working on a new Hinduism textbook for the Oxford University Press. He felt that a new textbook is necessary because there are few texts that cover the breadth of Hinduism while remaining accessible to students, and Dr. Gupta hopes to balance both qualities. He is also working on new studies in Hinduism and Ecology, with questions like “What can Hinduism offer [in regard to ecology], and what are the roadblocks that need to be examined and discussed?” He is publishing his first article on the topic soon.

As department head, Dr. Gupta is looking forward to “facilitating his colleagues, so that they can do the best work possible.” He’d like to get rid of roadblocks, and that’s why he decided to take up the job in the first place. Over the past 7 years, Dr. Gupta has come to love this department, in part because “…the department is friendly, and colleagues spend time joking and laughing as much as they spend time seriously discussing history and religious studies and classics.”

Dr. Gupta says that Tammy has been an amazing department head, and Ravi is only taking over because the department is so functional and healthy due to her work. “It will be a pleasure to build upon what she has done. That’s an easy thing to do.”

Dr. Ravi Gupta is the Charles Redd Endowed Chair and Professor of Religious studies.