

UNIVERSITY OF
WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

CLIO'S CLIPBOARD

History Department News

History Club sets Fall 2016 Movie Series

The History Club begins another academic year with hopes of expanding student membership and engaging students in a range of new activities.

If you are interested in joining the club, please contact Emily Grover (grovee83@uwosh.edu) for further information.

The Club's Fall 2016 Movies Series will consist of the following films (all screened in Sage 1210 at 6:30):

- Sept. 20: *Even the Rain*
- Oct. 4: *Gabriel Over the White House**
- Oct. 12: *Face in the Crowd**
- Oct. 18: *Elizabeth*
- Oct. 26: *Being There**
- Nov. 2: *War Room**
- Nov. 9 : *Bound for Glory*
- Nov. 15: *Phoenix*
- Nov. 30: *Pirates of the Caribbean*
- Dec. 6: *Dr. Zhivago*

*screened in conjunctions with the Political Science Department and its student organization

Professor Rensing earns tenure and promotion

By impressing her History Department and Women's and Gender Studies colleagues and administrators at UW Oshkosh with her publications, her strong record of teaching and service to the university and community, Assistant Professor Susan Rensing has earned tenure. She has also been promoted to the rank of associate professor. Congratulations Dr. Rensing!

Welcome back!

After a long break from publication, *Clio's Clipboard* marks its return with this special "Back to School Edition." To help ring in the new academic year, we will use this occasion to catalog some of the great work History Department faculty, staff and students have been doing over the past year. May it serve as inspiration for another great year going forward!

Professor Kim Rivers recognized with major university honor

On Opening Day 2016 Professor Kim Rivers was recognized with one of the University's most coveted awards when she was named a John McNaughton Rosebush Professor. Rivers won the award by demonstrating excellence in teaching, professional achievement and public service. Rivers joins Professor Mick Rutz, the recipient of the 2015 College of Letters and Science Excellence in Global Education Award and Professor Stephen Kercher, named Edward H. Rudoy Professor of History last year, among a long list of History professors who have been recognized recently for their work at UW Oshkosh.



Dr. Rowland shares expertise in public venues



No stranger to the public spotlight, Senior Lecturer Tom Rowland was invited to introduce a production of *All is Calm – The Christmas Truce of 1914* at Appleton's Performing Arts Center in December and was interviewed on the local



cable access program *It's Your Law* in May. The latter appearance can be viewed on YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q9ibsqPVs5k.

Students in history classes present research at Spring UW System Symposium

Peter Twiss, William Wasielewski, Aaron Krebsbach and Dylan Juza—students in several of Dr. Kercher’s recent U.S. history classes—presented research at the UW System Symposium in April at UW Stevens Point. Twiss shared his insights on Dr. Leo Koch’s fight for academic freedom in the early 1960s, Wasielewski spoke about the career of socialist and labor organizer Adolf Germer, and Krebsbach and Juza assessed the struggles documentarian Emile DeAntonio encountered when he filmed *The Weather Underground* in 1975. The experience of presenting research at a conference proved extremely rewarding for all four students. Students interested in presenting their research at the next UW System Symposium are encouraged to ask historians in the department about how they can get involved.



(Clockwise from left: William Wasielewski, Aaron Krebsbach and Dylan Juza, and Peter Twiss)

Students and alumnus recognized at Spring Banquet



(Left to right: Jamie Heberer, Andrew Mannenbach, John Schuh and Jonathan Salmela)

The 2016 Spring Banquet afforded the Department the opportunity to recognize a distinguished alumnus and several of its most accomplished students. The Department of History presented three awards to outstanding students: the Donner Monteith Award (to Jamie Heberer), the Braatz-Starr Award (to Andrew Mannenbach) and the C. Kevin Hanson Award (to Jonathan Salmela). The Department of History presented Dr. John Schuh with its Distinguished Alumni Award. Schuh, who graduated from WSU-Oshkosh with a BA in History in 1969, is capping a long and productive career in academia by directing the Emerging Leaders Academy at Iowa State University.

Recent alumni pursue graduate studies

A number of recent graduates from the Department of History are pursuing graduate study. Anna Lukyanova is pursuing her doctorate in history at the University of North Carolina. Danielle Schneeberg is a student at UW Milwaukee’s Public History program. Devin Venden is starting his program of study at UW Madison’s well-regarded School of Library and Information Studies. And Amanda Roberts recently accepted an offer to join the Historical Administration program at Eastern Illinois University.

UW Oshkosh Department of History

Contact us at historyoffice@uwosh.edu or at 920.424.2456

Chair Stephen Kercher can be reached at kercher@uwosh.edu or at 920.424.7158.

Please be sure to check our website: history.uwosh.edu

Follow us on Twitter @UWODeptHistory

Jeffrey Pickron's students engage the past with oral history

Over the past three years, UWO students enrolled in Lecturer Jeffrey Pickron's Quest III history courses have been quietly making valuable contributions to the history of the state by recording the stories of Wisconsin farmers and members of the local university community. The hundreds of oral history interviews his students conduct will soon be available to researchers and members of the general public in the University Archives. "Having worked on many of my own oral history projects," Pickron relates, "it's exciting for me to teach students about oral history methodology. In these courses students not only learn history, they DO history. Preserving the experience of a fifth generation Wisconsin farmer, for instance, is important historical work and something students here can be proud of."

"Working in oral history is something I've done since I was an undergraduate. During my first semester at the University of Texas, I was hired for a work-study job transcribing interviews for a major oral history project on the 1988 presidential elections. Sitting in a quiet office, I listened to dozens of interviews through a headset and tried to type them out as quickly as I could. Although a couple of the interviewees were well-known political figures, I was most absorbed by the interviews with regular citizens who felt compelled to work on a particular campaign at the local level."

"In graduate school I continued my oral history work when I was hired by the Pennsylvania State Historical Society to conduct interviews with African Americans from the anthracite coal region. State museums had long excluded the important contributions of the African American community. Through many interviews, the stories of African American coal miners and other local people corrected this flawed and incomplete narrative."

"When I came to UWO in 2004, few people spoke about one of the most significant events in the university's history, Black Thursday. During this 1968 civil rights protest, 94 African American students protested and were expelled from the university. Years later Black Thursday had been virtually erased from local historical memory and the racial problems it exposed had too often been ignored. In 2006 and 2007, Stephen Kercher and I conducted over 100 interviews with many of the participants in Black Thursday. These interviews provided the basis for a public reckoning with that history. Today I am heartened to find that many of my students know about Black Thursday and that a historical marker hangs at the site of the protest in Dempsey Hall."



"Oral history has the potential of broadening and improving historical knowledge beyond the 'Great Man' view of history. I suppose this is what I've always liked most about oral history: it is democratic. Everyone can be an important historical subject. And, with

some training, anyone can begin to preserve the stories of their family, schools, churches, clubs and neighborhoods."

"Yes, for many students the thought of conducting an hour-long interview with a farmer or university administrator can be intimidating. But practice and preparation make it easier. And, when a student learns about the hardships her grandfather suffered after losing the family farm during the Great Depression, and she chokes up recounting it, you see the value in the work. Making a connection with our past and uncovering and preserving these experiences: this is important work. And there is so much more to be discovered."



Alumni: please donate your memories to the campus stories oral history project

One of Jeffrey Pickron's Quest III classes this fall is collecting oral histories of former students of Wisconsin State University-Oshkosh/University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. If you would be willing to be interviewed by one of Pickron's students and thus add to the Campus Stories Oral History Project, please indicate your availability at oralhistory.uwosh.edu. And please help us spread the word about this unique opportunity to involve alumni in the sesquicentennial celebration of our university.

Historians help interpret Bayeux Tapestry

This spring Professors Kim Rivers and Franca Barricelli served on the planning committee for an ambitious public history project that aimed to inform the university community and the general public about the multilayered meanings of the 11th century Bayeux Tapestry. After a to-scale (230'-foot) replica of the tapestry was installed in Dempsey Hall, a two-day lecture series that featured faculty expertise in history, art history, Medieval English literature, Norse literature, Victorian Medievalism, French literature, Norman and Saxon military history, and astronomy ensued. Rivers and history lecturer Kevin Boylan used the Tapestry to elucidate the history of the Norman conquest of England. Educational workshops for area high school teachers and students and a banquet featuring student presentations of their semester-long Bayeux Tapestry-related projects helped round out a unique opportunity for UWO to examine an important historical artifact from many disciplinary perspectives. "All in all," Rivers says of the venture, "it was tremendous fun to work with other faculty on campus and to see so many people from the community attend." "It was wonderful," Barricelli adds, "to see the amount of interest it generated among students, campus personnel, and community members."

(Professor Franca Barricelli [top] helps oversee the tapestry's installation and Lecturer Kevin Boylan [bottom] discusses the Norman invasion)



Alumnus profile: Ethan Rueckheim



Shortly after graduating with a History degree in December 2014, Ethan Rueckheim moved to Minneapolis with neither a job nor any professional contacts. He accepted a position as a bank teller with a local community bank and after six months was promoted to its Internal Audit Department. "When the time finally came for an interview [for that position]," Rueckheim explains, "my degree helped immensely! I was able to speak to the skills that I had developed in school and really explain that a degree in history is more than memorizing dates and facts. Being able to feature the skills and perspective of a history student can be a huge bonus in an interview." Looking back, Rueckheim believes that the "skills stressed in the [History] program are skills that can be applied to almost any career field....In my current career...it is important to be able to communicate succinctly in writing. A large portion of my job is corresponding with department heads to set up our planning meetings and providing them with detailed plans for their upcoming audit. The nature of how a history paper is written lends itself well to a career where you research and present

facts. Beyond writing, being a history student prepared me by sharpening my critical thinking skills. In audit everything that you put on paper must have documentation supporting it. I try to treat my research at work much like I would treat writing a paper for a history class." A few years removed from UWO and now earning a good paycheck in "the real world," Rueckheim has some advice for students currently majoring in History at UW Oshkosh: "The hardest part about entering the job market is that many positions are not posting specifically for history majors. Many of you will find yourselves sifting through job postings trying to find something that sounds interesting and can pay the bills. The biggest thing is to look at the skills section of these job postings. You will find out very quickly that the skills you have are in demand in a variety of fields....[O]ne of the only ways to help put the 'value' of the degree into context for many people is by explaining the skills that you acquired during your study."

Students and alumni: stay in touch!

Have some news to share in the next issue of *Clio's Clipboard*? Please contact the Department of History at historyoffice@uwosh.edu.

Current students, alumni, and current and former faculty and staff are encouraged to join the Department's Linked In group: UW Oshkosh History Department Alumni, Faculty & Students.