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# Historically Speaking

Virginia Tech Department of History

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## From the High Chair...

So what's going on in the department these days?

**Retirement...** With regrets but best wishes we are sending off to retirement our distinguished Sino historian, Young-tsu Wong, at the end of the Fall semester. It is no exaggeration to say that over his many years with us (and well before my time), he has astounded his peers with his scholarly production, at times seemingly a book published every year. Of course, we could not actually read many of them since they were in Chinese, but they won him a prestigious university award for research in 1994, a very rare achievement for a non-scientist. He has also been a warm and cheerful colleague.

### History Alumni/ae Advisory Board...

We had a very successful first meeting of the History Department Alumni/ae Advisory Board on November 1-2 (to coincide with the College of Arts and Sciences Social Sciences Alumni/ae Reunion and the Virginia Tech-Pittsburgh football game—we won't talk about that). On Friday afternoon, a number of the faculty presented our own "sound and light" show on recent department activities. These included the exciting new initiatives in instructional technology (online courses and U.S. History modules);

the graduate program; the interdisciplinary Area Studies Masters program with History, Foreign Languages, and Geography; Professor Shifflett's 'Virtual Jamestown' project, etc. I believe the board members were quite impressed by the high-tech dimension of our programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels and the limitless potential for the future. Then we ushered them off to the official college reception, followed by a sit-down dinner at the Alumni Hall with members of the History department and invited guests. The next morning we gathered them together for a business breakfast. The discussion was very fruitful, with the board members sharing ideas from the 'real world' and offering suggestions on various topics, including the PhD proposal and fund-raising. I ran into a few of them at the football game that night—it was as cold in the stands as the Hokies were on the field. So, I officially declare the first meeting a success, and I am hoping to invite the group back to campus in the Spring or Fall. If any of you are interested in joining the board in the future, please let me know. We are looking for a few good people.

### Issues which command our attention....

As you all know, we are experiencing a serious budget crisis in higher education in



Glenn Bugh  
Chair

*"A department is like a living organism, changing over time to meet new demands in our profession."*

### Continued from the High Chair...

Virginia right now, and it threatens the quality of our many diverse programs in the History Department. The university has been forced to increase the tuition, but this measure will only stanch the wounds inflicted by the budget shortfall. We will almost certainly have to make some tough decisions about our courses and staffing for 2003-2004. At the same time, we are in the transitional year of restructuring: on July 1, 2003, we will belong to the College of Liberal Arts (CLA). I wish I could report that we are moving smoothly towards the implementation of this new college, but in truth, the pace has been a bit fitful. However, I am optimistic that the nagging details will all be worked out. We still face the enormous student demand inspired by the Board of Visitors' mandate to require every Tech student to satisfy a competency level in U. S. History. We have received some funding support from the Provost to hire three instructors for this year to teach some large lecture classes, but this allocation is woefully inadequate, and we are worried about the message it sends concerning our 'service' role in the university. We are currently investigating the possibility of using the SOL scores from high school to meet this competency requirement, but many details are as yet unresolved. If approved, it will have an enormous impact on reducing student demand for U.S. History courses, and perhaps allow us to return to some normalcy

in our instructional mission. Finally, we have sent forward our PhD proposal for a unique collaborative doctoral program in digital history and geography. It is being evaluated at the next level. Stay tuned.

**At the crossroads...**In many ways a department is like a living organism, changing, evolving over time to meet new demands in our profession. Likewise, faculty change, some grow older and settle into a comfortable pattern of successful careers; others, new faculty, arrive with enthusiasm, dreams, and an agenda of their own. It is all about facing the future, and how we respond to change (*metabole* for the Greeks), to change which seems to swirl about us at electronic speed and move us in directions we could not have predicted. We are at a crossroad. Which path, then, is the right one for us? A tough question, no easy answer, but whatever is decided it should be to a future of shared goals, not of isolation and balkanization, and bolstered by a healthy dose of humility and humor. Life cannot be scripted out, like a novel or a movie; requires flexibility, pragmatism, and most of all, humanity. Perhaps we don't have to all traverse the same path, perhaps it is enough to know that what we do, each and every one of us, has value and purpose, and demands our respect as we honor difference.

Glenn Bugh  
Chair

### Spotlight ...The History Advisory Board

The History Department has initiated the creation of a History Alumni/ae Advisory Board. The mission of the new History Advisory Board is to advise the department on curricular plans for the future, inform us as to what the 'real world' is doing, and to help raise money for the department's programs, especially for its international and PhD initiatives. We understand that one has to spend money to make money. So, we view the creation of the Advisory Board as an investment for the future, a special reconnection with our alums, and a sense of shared responsibility.

The History Advisory Board members are: McRae C. (Mac) Banks ('73), Department Head & Harry G. Stoddard Professor,

Department of Management, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA; David and Kathy Bertoti from Boyertown, PA; Earnest Randolph ('67), Director - Telecommunications Policy, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.; Christian Henneke ('89), Environmental Lawyer from Richmond, VA; Janine Hiller ('79), Professor of Admin., Finance, Insurance and Business Law, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA; Kenneth Noe ('81), Professor of History, Auburn University, AL; Ron Rordam ('79), Vice-Mayor of Blacksburg, Blacksburg, VA; Philip Sh... ('72), Commissioner, Virginia Dept. Transportation, Richmond, VA; Michael Snyder ('91), Vice President, Snyder and

**Alumni Board continued...**

Associates, Blacksburg, VA; Debra Young ('83), Program Manager, Q-Bit Corporation, Palm Bay, FL.

After the weekend was over, one of the board members had a difficult time returning home. It took Kenneth Noe almost ten hours to get from Roanoke Regional Airport to his home in Auburn, Alabama—a trip that typically takes about four hours. A mechanical problem caused USAirways to cancel a noon flight to Charlotte. So they brought in a chartered bus from Lynchburg to drive the passengers to Charlotte to make

their connections. However, when the bus driver got to Charlotte, he didn't know how to get to the airport. A passenger had a cellphone and made a call to get directions. Things got worse. When Noe got to the gate he discovered the airline had given his seat away. After much debate he received another seat and made his connection. From Atlanta he drove home to Auburn. "When one plane has to cancel, that sets the domino effect....there wasn't much difference between riding a bus and flying, except I didn't get any peanuts on the bus..." he said.



Present at the first History Advisory Board dinner were: (front row) Kenneth Noe, Debra Young, McRae Banks, (back row) Christian Henneke, David Bertoti, Kathy Bertoti, Ron Rordam

**Faculty in the News**

**Linda Arnold** has recently published with the oldest bar association in the western hemisphere a catalogue to small claims and arbitration proceedings in early nineteenth century Mexico: *Juzados constitucionales (1813-1848). Catálogo de los Libros de Juicios Verbales y Conciliatorios del Contaminamiento de la Ciudad de México que se custodian en el Archivo Histórico del Distrito Federal*. Mexico City: Ilustre y Nacional Colegio de Abogados de México, 2001. She also published an article on military justice in Mexico during and after the Mexican/American War, "Casimiro Ramos no quiso morir." *Boletín, Archivo General de la Nación* (México). Cuarta Serie. (Otoño 2001): 123-139. This past summer she gave a paper on early national Mexican military justice at an international conference on political culture in Mexico, "Legalidad virtual: la justicia militar, 1821-1835." Coloquio Internacional, La Cultura Política en México, 1808-1835. UNAM, México City, July 2002. She has continued to coordinate a collaborative research project by Virginia Tech students who have and continue to transcribe newspaper coverage of the Mexican/American War, accessible on line at: <http://www.majbill.vt.edu/History/arnold/USMxWar/timeswebpage.htm>.

**William C. Davis:** "Professionally since last spring I have done three Civil War theme cruises on the Mississippi Queen, a month-long promotional tour in April for my new political-social history of the Confederacy titled *LOOK AWAY!*, and

lectured in Houston and Austin, TX, at Longwood College in Farmville, at the Smithsonian, Hilton Head, Albany, NY, New Orleans, the US Naval Academy, and Wilmington, NC. I have done some interesting interviews, including the G. Gordon Liddy and the Oliver North Shows and am doing a PBS TV interview show "Books of Our Time" with the dean of the Massachusetts School of Law later this month. Later fall appearances include Williamsburg, Knoxville, Washington and Lee, Atlanta to receive the Richard B. Harwell Award for Civil War History, Richmond, and the Lincoln Forum at Gettysburg. Far more interesting—though not quite professional--was going to London in July for the entire new season of Shakespeare plays at the recreated Globe Theatre."

**Tom Ewing** received a Humanities Summer Stipend to conduct research in Russian archives and libraries on the topic of sex-segregated schooling in the postwar Soviet Union. In June, he presented a paper on this topic to the Berkshire Conference on the History of Women. His article, "Personal Acts with Public Meanings: Suicide by Soviet Women Teachers in the Stalin Era," was published in the April 2002 issue of the international journal *Gender & History*. His book, *The Teachers of Stalinism: Policy, Practice, and Power in Soviet Schools of the 1930s*, was published in September. In October, he made a presentation, "Expanding Boundaries: Global History on the World Wide Web," to the Digital History Seminar

**Faculty in the News continued...**

organized by the History Graduate Student Association. Also in October, his article, "Russian History in Global Perspective," was published in *Newsnet*, the newsletter of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies. In November, he presented a paper, "Soviet Educational Psychology and the Scientific Study of Gender in the 1920s," to the Annual Meeting of the History of Education Society.

**Young-tsu Wong** first came to town in August, 1971. He and his wife Sylvia have enjoyed 30 wonderful years at Virginia Tech. Their two boys, Walter and Virgil, grew up here happily and did well in school. Almost all of Young-tsu's academic works were completed in Blacksburg. He will teach one course at Taiwan's Zhongzheng University beginning in February 2003, and take the opportunity to travel to Mainland China to complete his big book on Chinese cultural history from the 16th to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

We will miss your smiling face and your courses in Japanese and Chinese history. Best wishes to you and your family.

**Tom Howard's** book, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Foundation of the Modern World* has been published by M.E.Sharpe, Inc. as a volume in their edited *Library of Franklin D. Roosevelt Studies*. He recently participated in a roundtable discussion on "Rethinking Atlantic Worlds" at the annual meeting of the North American Conference on British Studies in Baltimore. Professor Howard has also developed a new more global approach to nineteenth and twentieth century Africa in his restructured course on Africa in the Modern World. The course includes a Service-Learning option that enables members of the class to work with African students on campus.

**Ann La Berge:** "I presented a invited paper entitled "Medical Statistics at the Paris School: What was at Stake?" at a conference "Quantification dans les sciences médicales de la santé: perspective historique et sociologique" at the Muséum Claude Bernard in Saint-Julien-en Beaujolais, Oct. 23-26. The conference was organized by the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris and McGill University in Montreal. It was supported by the Mérieux Foundation in Lyon. Other news: I was invited to be a

member of the editorial advisory board of the Bulletin of the History of Medicine, commencing in January 2003."

**Sarah E. Mitchell**, Visiting Assistant Professor for 1992-1993, is currently completing her dissertation entitled "Changing Perceptions of the Conjoined Body: A Social and Cultural History" for her doctoral degree from the University of Southampton. She presented a paper at the History of Science Society meeting in Milwaukee, WI in November 2002, entitled "Exhibiting Monstrosity: The 'Original' Siamese Twins and their 1829 World Tour". She has also been awarded the William H. Helfand Fellowship in Early American Medicine, Science and Society to conduct research at the Library Company of Philadelphia.

**Marian Mollin** presented a paper at the Oral History Association's annual meeting in San Diego this past fall. The paper, "Communities of Resistance: Women and the Catholic Left," is drawn from her book *Actions Louder Than Words: Gender, Protest, and the American Radical Pacifist Movement, 1940-1970*, which is under contract with the University of Pennsylvania Press.

**William Ochsenwald** gave interviews on current affairs in the Middle East to the Voice of America world service, CBS Radio National News, KTAR Radio (Phoenix, AZ), ABC Radio National News, and WFIR (Roanoke). He participated in the "With Good Reason" public radio program in Roanoke on the anniversary of September 11, 2001. He was recognized by public radio in Roanoke during the week of August 5-9 for his research on Middle Eastern history. Dr. Ochsenwald is completing work on the sixth edition of his widely-used textbook, *The Middle East: A History*, which will be published next year by McGraw-Hill.

**N. Larry Shumsky** has been asked to be the book review editor for H-Urban, and also has been appointed to the H-Urban Board of Directors.

**Patricia Tracy** is an adjunct professor for a semester. She was at Tech as Coordinator of Women's Studies in 1989-91, also a member of the History Department, but otherwise



Young-tsu Wong  
Retires Fall 2002

spent most of her career at Williams College in Massachusetts. Dr. Tracy recently decided to settle down permanently in Blacksburg and is very happy to be teaching part-time in the Department. (She is also now a licensed real estate agent.) Her current research work is a biography of a woman painter from the early 19th century who lived near Worcester, Massachusetts.

**Peter Wallenstein** published a book this fall, *Tell the Court I Love My Wife: Race, Marriage, and Law--An American History* (Palgrave Macmillan/St. Martin's Press). This past summer, an essay of his--"Interracial Marriage on Trial: Loving v. Virginia (1967)"--appeared in *Race on Trial: Law and Justice in American History* (Oxford University Press). He presented papers this year at meetings of the Organization of American Historians (in April), the Policy History Conference (in May), and the Southern Historical Association (in November).

**Virginia Tech Center for Innovation in Learning (CIL) Awards Grant to Faculty Members...**In the spring 2002 four faculty members in the History Department were awarded a nearly \$40,000 grant from the Virginia Tech Center for Innovation in Learning (CIL). Professors **Marian Mollin, Dan Thorp, Kathleen Jones, and Mark Barrow** received the competitive grant to work on an exciting, collaborative project that

seeks to enhance our introductory U.S. history classes with the latest digital technology. The goal of the project is to leverage these new technologies to promote active learning, critical thinking, and student engagement, even in large-enrollment survey courses. More specifically, this faculty team is creating a series of online, problem-solving units that explore key ideas and issues in American history. Each unit contains an introductory essay followed by a set of carefully selected images and documents organized around a compelling historical question.

This is the second major CIL grant given to members of this award-winning team. In 1997-1998, Professors Jones, Thorp, and Barrow began the U.S. History Online project with the creation of 12 online modules, which have since been successfully tested in a variety of classroom situations. This year's grant finances release time for the four faculty members to construct an additional 8 modules. Also included in the module design team are **Andrea Grove**, a doctoral student in the Instructional Technology program, and **Jeremy Boggs**, a master's student in history. The U.S. History Online project is part of a larger departmental effort to provide our undergraduate majors and graduate students with the skills they need both to critically consume and to construct digital history. These skills will give them a strong competitive edge in the job market.



CIL Group, L-R: Daniel Thorp, Marian Mollin, Kathleen Jones, Andrea Grove, and Mark Barrow.

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*"The goal of the project is to leverage these new technologies to promote active learning, critical thinking, and student engagement, even in large-enrollment survey courses."*

## 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Brian Bertoti "Innovative Perspectives in History" Graduate Student Conference, April 4-5, 2003

The Brian Bertoti "Innovative Perspectives in History" Graduate Student Conference, held on the campus of Virginia Tech, provides aspiring historians an invaluable opportunity to present their research in a constructive and cordial academic environment. Graduate students from any discipline are encouraged to submit papers that contribute to our exploration of "innovative perspectives."

We welcome topics from a variety of fields including: United States/Canada/Latin America; Europe/Russia; Africa/Middle East; Asia/Pacific Studies. Topics within these

fields can include, but are not limited to, transatlantic studies, race, class, and gender studies, global studies, comparative studies, digital history projects, and science and technology studies. We welcome papers from other disciplines including geography, anthropology, area studies, political science, interdisciplinary studies, and literature.

Our speakers this year are:

**Dr. Ruth Schwartz Cowan**, distinguished professor of the History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Cowan is the author of *A Social History*

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*"The Innovative Perspectives in History Conference provides aspiring historians an opportunity to present their research."*

**Graduate Conference continued...**  
of *American Technology* and *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open hearth to the Microwave*.

**Dr. Grace Elizabeth Hale**, associate professor of history at the University of

Virginia. Dr. Hale is the author of *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*.

For more information contact Jeremy Boggs at [jeremyboggs@vt.edu](mailto:jeremyboggs@vt.edu)

## The Second Annual Brian Bertoti Golf Tournament

The Second Annual Brian Bertoti Golf Tournament, arranged by Robert Teagle in Gloucester County, Virginia, raised nearly \$1,000 for the graduate student history conference in the spring, 2002. Robert Teagle received his M.A. in history in 1997 at the same time Brian was a graduate student and they were close friends. Thank you, Robert, for your dedication to the conference and Brian's memory.



Brian Bertoti

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## Other News...

**Ellen Brown, Graduate Student:** Over the summer Ellen gave a talk for the New River Historical Society (Radford Chapter) about Mary Draper Ingles and Susannah Smith Preston, and a talk and public exhibit in Chilhowie (*The Art Place*) entitled "Chilhowie, A Good Place to Call Home."

She published an article in the *Journal of Social Sciences* entitled "Virginia Tech in the 1890s: Getting Ready for the Electrical Age." In addition, *Smithfield Review* has accepted another of Ellen's articles for future publication entitled "What Really Happened at Drapers Meadows: The Evolution of a Frontier Legend," to be out in the spring of 2003.

**Phi Alpha Theta** inducted new members on November 11, 2002. Students invited to join Phi Alpha Theta must have a 3.1 GPA in major, 3.0 overall GPA and 12 hours of history completed. The new members are Jessica Aaron, Nicholas Demsak, Matthew Hodgson, Jonathan Noyalas, Jana Pruitt, Amy Seay, Jonathan Smith, Michael Steier, Joshua Thumma, Jonathan Tyler.

**Janet Francis, Academic Advisor for the Graduate and Undergraduate Program**, was co-recipient of the 2002 Provost's Award for Excellence in Advising.

*Congratulations!*

*"Phi Alpha Theta, History's Honor Fraternity, inducted new members on November 11, 2002."*

**Alumni Corner...**

**Arthur Matson** ('64) received his doctorate of psychology from Antioch New England Graduate School.

**Jay Moore** ('67) was appointed by Governor Warner to the board of the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

**Bruce Davis** ('69) emailed Dr. Thomas Howard after visiting the Virginia Tech website. He writes "I took a number of courses with you; the ones I remember are: Age of Revolution, History of England, History of Modern England...and wrote a paper on Orwell's 'The Road to Wigan Pier.' All the courses were very good. After Tech, I did 4 years in the navy...." Professor Davis went on to receive his M.A. and Ph.D. in French Literature and has taught at Knox College in Illinois since 1982.

**Treva Carter** ('73) is Marketing Manager at SFCS. SFCS is a full-service architectural, engineering, planning and interior design firm that specializes in the design of retirement, higher education, healthcare, and government facilities nationwide. "It's been exciting to join the firm who was on the design team for Torgersen Hall and who is designing the Alumni Complex now. The research techniques and perspective I learned as a history major at Tech have served me well in my marketing career. My most influential professors were Dr. Tom Longin and Dr. Dyson, although I remember other professors with fondness as well. I was the first person to graduate with an honors degree in history at Tech. I served on the faculty committee that developed the program, then went through it myself. My thesis was on school desegregation in the Roanoke Valley, my home area. I have chosen jobs in advertising and later marketing which allowed me to stay in the Roanoke area, so my in-depth study of the area for my thesis gave me good background information on some of the people I later dealt with in the business world. My thesis is still noted on one of VT's websites, I believe."

**Judy Mullen** ('74) received an M.A. in history and information science from the University of South Florida and was awarded the Linda Brakeall Outstanding Student Service Award. Her current position is the

adult services librarian at the Manatee County Central Library, FL.

**Andrew Baskin** ('76) is an Associate Professor of General and Black Studies at Berea College, Berea, KY. Dr. Neil Shumsky was the most influential professor for him at Virginia Tech. "Recently, at commencement, I received the Elizabeth Perry Miles Award for Community Service from Berea College for my service to the community. In addition, I am the editor of *The Griot*, the official organ of the Southern Conference on African American Studies, Inc. The journal is published twice a year."

**Thomas Perry** ('83) was unanimously elected chairman of the national advisory board for the J.E.B. Stuart Birthplace Preservation Trust, Inc.

**Philip Williams** ('88) is the Deputy Chief, U.S. Probation Office in Roanoke, Virginia.

**Ted Farmer** ('91) was awarded Adjunct Faculty member of the Year for 2002 from the National College of Business and Technology.

**Edwin Parry** ('91) was promoted to lieutenant commander and awarded the Navy Marine Corps commendation medal.

**Damon Runion** ('94) was promoted to managing principal with Oracle Corp.'s Federal Civilian Consulting Organization in Reston, Virginia.

**Carmody Gaba** ('96) graduated from the American University, Washington College of Law in 2000.

**Jason Tice** ('96) is the Owner/Manager of Wireless Zone, an authorized retailer for Verizon Wireless in Blacksburg, Virginia.

**Jonathan Fisher** ('98) is an attorney and counselor at law in Dublin, Virginia.

**Edward Maggio** ('99) received a J.D. from New York Law School in June, 2002 and was accepted to Oxford University to work on a post doctoral degree in law and criminal justice.

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*"The research techniques and perspective I learned as a history major at Tech have served me well in my marketing career."*

*Treva Carter*

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*"I took a number of courses with Dr. Howard...all the courses were very good."*

*Bruce Davis*

*Historically Speaking*

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.majbill.vt.edu/  
history/index.html](http://www.majbill.vt.edu/history/index.html)

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## Attention Alumni!

**Did you know...**there are many different ways to give to your favorite programs at Virginia Tech, including the Department of History. Most people know about making cash donations, but there are other methods to give that may better suit your financial situation. You may be surprised to learn what kinds of gifts Virginia Tech accepts, and how you can avoid some taxes you thought you would have to pay. For more information about giving stock, receiving income in exchange for your gift or making a

donation through your estate plans, please contact Connie Talbott, the Director of Development for the College of Arts & Sciences, or one of our gift planning professionals at (800) 533-1144.

**Let us know** what you are doing and where you are located. Return this form or email your update to us. Our address can be found on this page of the newsletter or you can simply email [jafranci@vt.edu](mailto:jafranci@vt.edu)

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Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

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