Dear Alumni and Friends,

It was another year of transition, of distinction, and of reflection. I would like to share with you an update.

Following last year’s external review, the department has engaged in a process of renewal including a faculty retreat and a series of studies and discussions of our procedures and self-governance structures. We emerged all the stronger.

Vicki Caron, the Diann G. and Thomas A. Mann Professor of Modern Jewish Studies in both the History Department and the Jewish Studies Program, retired (see separate article on page 2). L. Pearce Williams, who taught in the department for many years and served as chair, passed away this winter (see separate article on page 4). Meanwhile, four new faculty joined our department this year: French historian Paul Friedland (Bowdoin), U.S. cultural, consumer, and labor historian Lawrence Glickman (University of South Carolina), scholar of twentieth-century African-American history Russell Rickford (Dartmouth) and modern Chinese historian Victor Seow (Ph.D. Harvard). Penny Von Eschen (currently at the University of Michigan), a historian of U.S. cultural and foreign policy, will join us in fall 2015. John Barwick, a historian of China, served as a postdoctoral fellow, Molly Geidel (U.S. foreign relations) was Visiting Assistant Professor, and Kristin Roebuck, a historian of modern Japan, will join as a postdoctoral fellow in fall 2015.

The department marked another year of prizes and achievements. Edward Baptist was awarded two book prizes for his *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (2014): the Organization of American Historian’s 2015 Avery O. Craven Award in Civil War and Reconstruction studies and the 2015 Sidney Hillman Prize for Book Journalism. Ernesto Bassi was chosen by one of Cornell’s most outstanding students, 2015 Merrill Presidential Scholar Alyssa Schuster, as the faculty member who has made the most significant contribution to her education while at Cornell. Duane Corpis won the 2014 Smith Book Award of the Southern Historical Association for his *Crossing the Boundaries of Belief: Geographies of Religious Conversion in Southern Germany, 1648-1800*, which he wrote while a member of the department. Durba Ghosh won a 2015 Faculty Award for Excellence in the Teaching, Advising, and Mentoring of Graduate and Professional Students from the Graduate and Professional Students Assembly. Sandra Greene was a fellow at the National Humanities Center. Isabel Hull was Director’s Guest Fellow at the Institut für Kulturwissenschaften (IFK) in Vienna. Julilly Kohler-Hausmann was a fellow at Princeton’s Institute for Advanced Study. Camille Robcis won the 2013 Berkshire Conference of Women Historians Book Prize for her book,
P rofessor Vicki Caron, the Diann G. and Thomas A. Mann Professor of Modern Jewish Studies in both the History Department and the Jewish Studies Program, retired from the Department at the end of the fall semester 2014. One of the leading scholars of Jewish history in modern Western Europe, Vicki is known for her meticulous archival research and her incisive, balanced and independent historical judgment on subject matters that often tend to be clouded by researchers’ emotional biases.

Vicki has written two massive, highly acclaimed monographs on French Jewry (Between France and Germany: The Jews of Alsace-Lorraine (Stanford University Press, 1988) and Uneasy Asylum: France and the Jewish Refugee Crisis, 1933-1942 (Stanford, 1999). Reviewers of both volumes repeat the same praise for Vicki’s detailed and scrupulous research, her nuanced interpretation, her attention to complexity, her emphasis on the openness of even difficult historical situations, and her balance. Critics hailed her first book as “a great service to historiography” and “a fine analysis.” Reviewers similarly praised Uneasy Asylum as “splendid,” “exhaustive,” and “a superb piece of scholarship.” Vicki is now completing a monumental study of anti-Semitism in Roman Catholic writings and organization in France since the nineteenth century. It promises to be as rock-solid and definitive as the first two.

Vicki enjoys a high profile in her field: the author of twenty articles, a frequent presenter at conferences and researcher at institutes throughout the world, board member of Jewish History and French Historical Studies, and winner of fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies (among others). But she is not just a superb historian. Her courses at Cornell were very popular and filled an important area of high student interest: she taught several different courses on the Holocaust, on Anti-Semitism, but also on social-historical matters, such as immigration, and on intellectual history (“Modern Jewish Thought”).

Vicki is known as a precise, careful, and caring professor. She lavishes a great deal of attention and reflection on her students, and they appreciate that and thrive from it. She has been an active mentor and advisor, including in Jewish Studies, and she continues even in retirement to advise students and to serve on the committees of graduate students. In all of her interactions, she brings the same strong devotion to learning and questioning, the same humane interest in her students and colleagues, and an infectious sense of irreverent humor. Fortunately for all of us, she is staying in Ithaca, and continuing her research and writing--in fact, asked how her life will likely change in retirement, she replied, “Actually, hardly at all.”

I am a historian of early modern and Revolutionary France. For much of my academic career, I have been interested in the intersection of sovereign authority and representation, power and spectacle. More recently, I have been exploring the rise of sentimentality in 18th century Europe and its relationship to the rhetoric of humanism. I am presently working on two different projects.

The first focuses on a rising squeamishness and self-consciousness about the killing of animals in the 18th century and growing call for more “humane” forms of slaughter. The second traces France’s relationship with its Caribbean colonies from 1794, when the French hoped to export their Revolution to the West Indies and declared the abolition of slavery, to 1802, when Napoleon sought to re-enslave those French citizens who had been freed eight years earlier.

I teach classes on a range of subjects related to the cultural, political, and intellectual history of France (and Europe more generally) from the 16th to the 19th century. Some of the courses I have offered or will be offering are: The French Revolution, The Enlightenment, France in the Ancient Regime, Animals in the Age of Humanism, the History of Capital Punishment in Europe, and Race and Slavery in France and the French Caribbean. My most recent book is: Seeing Justice Done: The Age of Spectacular Capital Punishment in France (Oxford University Press, 2012; paperback, 2014).
Lawrence Glickman


I am currently researching and writing a book tentatively titled, *The Free Enterprise System: A Cultural History*, which explores the complicated history of this phrase. I am excited about this project because I believe it sheds historical light on our present political condition and because it is always fun to examine the history of a concept that seems familiar and obvious but which is, upon close examination, complex. I was particularly struck by a Gallup Poll in the 1940’s which revealed that only three in ten Americans understood the meaning of free enterprise, especially since Gallup never provided a definition or explained what the minority who knew what the phrase meant thought it was. I have several other research projects on the back burner including a study of trans-Atlantic radicalism in the nineteenth century, with a focus on James Redpath, the Scottish-born, American journalist, abolitionist, labor advocate and anti-colonialist; sports radicalism in the 1960s and 1970s, and the transformation of American liberalism from the 1870s through the 1940s.

I am a historian of African-American political culture after World War Two, with a particular focus on social movements, black transnationalism, and the Black Radical Tradition. I recently completed a book titled *We Are an African People: Black Power and Independent Education From 1965*, due out this fall from Oxford University Press. The book is an intellectual history of black nationalist and Pan Africanist institutions in the heyday and denouement of the Black Power era. I am now working on a book about the role of my native Guyana (South America) in the political imaginary of African-American radicals in the 1970s. I am also preparing an article titled “Black Power as Educational Renaissance: the Harlem Landscape,” for an edited book about education and the social geography of Harlem. Future projects include a co-edited book about the politics of the black nationalist resurgence of the late 1980s and early 90s. An article I recently completed, “Black Power and Education for Liberation,” will appear this fall in the program of a special Black Power exhibition at New York City’s Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

I am the author of *Betty Shabazz: Surviving Malcolm X*, the biography of Malcolm X’s late widow. I am also the co-author, along with my father and Stanford linguist John Rickford, of *Spoken Soul: The Story of Black English*. I teach classes on social movements, labor, and political culture. I play soccer whenever I can. One of my favorite quotes is from Amilcar Cabral: “Hide nothing from the masses of our people. Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories.”
Victor Seow

I am a historian of modern China and East Asia with broad interests in issues of energy, science and technology, the environment, industry, labor, and state power. At the heart of my varied interests is a larger concern with the interplay between the social and the material under the conditions of industrial modernity. My work has focused so far on major sites of Chinese industry—from coal mines to automobile cities—and I seek to locate these places of production within the wider context of China’s revolutionary twentieth century and the challenges of the industrial age.

I am currently writing a book on the political economy of carbon energy in East Asia. Tentatively titled “Carbon Technocracy: East Asian Energy Regimes and the Industrial Modern, 1900-1957,” it contends that coal was central both to Chinese and Japanese experiences with global industry modernity and to the emergence of transwar technocratic regimes. Few would contest the claim that coal played an essential role in the great transformations of the modern age. It powered mass industrial manufacturing, long distance transport by rail and sea, and urban expansion on an unprecedented scale. In so doing, it gave rise to the sociotechnical assemblage we still inhabit today. Yet coal did more than rebuild the material foundations of human society. It also allowed for new kinds of politics. “Carbon Technocracy” examines how coal served as a site for the articulation of statist development, economic nationalism, and technological governance in East Asia in the first half of the twentieth century.

I ground my inquiry in Fushun, the “Coal Capital” of Manchuria, which once boasted East Asia’s largest coal mining operations. Through the history of the Fushun Colliery, I explore how Chinese and Japanese states and their subsidiaries, which had at different times extended control over this site, participated in the co-production of calorific and political power. I pay particular attention to the meanings and importance ascribed to energy as a factor of production and as a necessity for modern life, as well as to persistent ideals of securing access to cheap and endless supplies of energy resources. To numerous Chinese and Japanese businessmen, engineers, scientists, soldiers, politicians, and technocrats, Fushun and Manchuria promised a solution to the energy crises of their times, and there they experimented with new extractive technologies of scale that would reshape that vast landscape. On a more general level, “Carbon Technocracy” attempts a retelling of the region’s modern history through the perspective of energy. We cannot, I argue, understand contemporary East Asia and its recent past without considerations of carbon.

At Cornell, I have enjoyed teaching courses that survey the history of China and East Asia from the late imperial to modern periods (“Understanding Modern China” and “Introduction to Modern Asian History”), as well as seminars on the history of energy (“Energy in History”) and on the study of modern Chinese history (“Approaches to Modern Chinese History”). I look forward to offering courses on the history of Chinese communism, East Asian environmental history, and the history of industrialization and deindustrialization in the not-too-distant future.

In Memoriam: L. Pearce Williams by H. Roger Segelken and Barry Strauss

L. Pearce Williams ’49, Ph.D. ’52, who taught the history of Western civilization and the history of science to four decades of Cornell students, died in February in Ithaca. He was 87.

An authority on 19th century English scientist Michael Faraday, Williams was the John Stambaugh Professor of the History of Science Emeritus and a popular lecturer for the Western Civ (HIST 151) class. Williams’ 1965 book “Michael Faraday, A Biography” won the Pfizer Award for best book in the history of science that year. He served as Chair of the Department of History. He helped start the Program in the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology, becoming co-director in 1984.

Many alumni remember Williams as a great teacher, a powerful presence with a booming voice and overflow enrollments. Williams’ perennial exhortation to incoming freshmen, “The Notorious Note-Taking Lecture,” was inspirational, and his Western Civic lectures were sparkling. He had a flair for the dramatic, which no doubt came naturally, since he grew up in a vaudeville family. He played touch football with passion.

Williams started out as a chemical engineer and then, influenced by the Cornell historian of science Henry Guerlac he changed his major and became a historian. He said that he studied what he did because it was beautiful. Williams is survived by his wife of 65 years, Sylvia Alessandrini Williams, four children and numerous grandchildren.

A politically conservative voice among Cornell faculty members in the turbulent 1960s and ’70s, Williams regularly dispatched letters to editors (especially the Cornell Daily Sun and Ithaca Journal) that left no doubt about where he stood on a range of issues, according to his family. They request donations, in lieu of flowers, to “Pearce’s second home,” the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections in Kroch Library.
Student Awards and Prizes

Undergraduate News:
Announcing Honors Students and Award Recipients among our May graduates, Class of 2015

2015 Honors
Alexander Gulbrandsen: Cum Laude
John Handel: Summa Cum Laude
Rose Hanson: Magna Cum Laude
Ryan Isenberg: Magna Cum Laude
Rebecca Jakubson: Cum Laude
Daniel Marshall: Summa Cum Laude
Kiran Mehta: Summa Cum Laude
Julia Moser: Magna Cum Laude
Gretchen Stillings: Cum Laude

2015 Department of History Student Awards:

Chalmers, Messenger (Undergraduate)
Awarded to an undergraduate with the thesis giving evidence of the best research and most fruitful thought in the field of human progress and the evolution of civilization during some period in human history or during human history. Three awards given in 2015.
John Handel, Daniel Marshall, and Kiran Mehta

DeKiewiet, Cornelis W.
Awarded to two outstanding history majors (juniors) who have demonstrated unusual promise and excellence in the field.
Zihao Liu and Aurora Rojer

Duniway, Clyde A. (Book Prize)
Awarded to one student, who is deemed to be the best history/government student in the College of Arts and Sciences graduating with the respective majors.
Kiran Mehta

Lang, Bernard and Fannie
Awarded for best senior honors thesis in US History or American Studies.
Daniel Marshall

Litchfield, Anne Macintyre
Awarded to two outstanding women seniors majoring in history.
Christina Zhang and Rose Hanson

Lustig, George S.
Awarded to the outstanding senior who intends to continue the study of history at the graduate level.
John Handel

Marcham, Frederick
Awarded to a student who excels in seminars and/or tutorials, and who is active in extra-curricular activities (for example: politics, athletics, or involvement in the larger Ithaca community).
Justin Pascoe

Tyler, Moses Coit
Awarded for the best essay by a graduate or undergraduate student in the fields of American History, literature, or folklore.
David Fischer

West, Bernard E.
Awarded competitively to the most promising undergraduate research scholar specializing in American history.
Daniel Marshall

Graduate Student Job Placement/Awards 2014-15

Job Placement

Post-Doc fellowships:
David Blome — 3yr Post-Doc, Stanford University
Rishad Choudhury — 2yr Post-Doc, Harvard Academy for International & Area Studies
Vernon Mitchell — 2yr Post-Doc, Washington University, St. Louis
Trais Pearson — 1yr Post-Doc, Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard
Taomo Zhou — Post-Doc, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Fellowships/Awards

Messenger Chalmers dissertation award:
Gregg Lightfoot and Amy Kohout

Social Science & Humanities Research Council 2 yr fellowship:
Osama Siddiqui

Social Science Research Council:
Nick Bujalski, Matts Fibiger, Kyle Harvey, Matt Minarchek, Osama Siddiqui

Fulbright:
Adrian Deese, Kyle Harvey, Josh Savala

Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship:
Brian Cuddy

ACLS Robert Ho Fellowship for Buddhist Studies:
Jack Chia

DAAD Fellowship:
Fritz Bartel

Luigi Einaudi Dissertation Research Fellowship:
Nick Bujalski

Reppy Institute Fellowship:
Matts Fibiger

D. Kim Foundation:
Sookyeong Hong

Cold War Fellowship:
Sean Fear

Center for Khmer Studies:
Matt Reeder

Sage Diversity Fellowship:
Al Milan

Hu Shih Fellowship, East Asia Program:
Jason Kelly, Chris Tang

C.V. Starr Fellowship, East Asia Program:
Alex-Thai Vo

Tenure-track positions

Tom Balcerski — tenure-track position, Eastern Connecticut State University (starting Fall 2015)
Taran Kang — tenure-track position, Yale/NUS (starting Fall 2015)
Soon Keong Ong — tenure-track position, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (starting Fall 2015)

Other academic positions

Amy Kohout — 2yr Visiting Assistant Professor, Environmental Humanities, Davidson College
Marie Muschalek — Research Associate, Freiburg University, Germany

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL GRADUATES!!
This year has marked the fifth anniversary of the Cornell Undergraduate Historical Society (CHS) and its journal *Ezra’s Archives*. The group now has a history of its own and is poised to pass the torch to a new generation of young leaders. Senior presidents this year were Michael Shyer ('15, History), who spent the spring semester abroad, and Rose Hanson ('15, History), along with co-president Julia Krupski ('17, ILR). All have been very active in coordinating the group’s activities, enhancing and managing its budget, and overseeing both the production of the journal and the peer advisor program, which pairs underclass students with upper-class advisors.

In addition to the journal and peer advising, the Society hosted several successful events, including two dinners with new Cornell History faculty, Larry Glickman and Victor Seow, as well as a lecture by Eric Jenkins-Sahlin on the first female civil engineer in the United States, Cornell alumna Nora Stanton Blatch (1905), and her Chinese classmate, Hu Dongchao (1905). Social media chair Zoe Jackson ('16, History) began *Ezra’s Little Archives*, a Tumblr for CHS members to share tidbits of historical research, and the club is excited to watch it grow.

CHS leadership also held intensive training workshops for its peer advisors and editors of *Ezra’s Archives*. Thanks to the hard work of twenty-five undergraduate editors, this year’s journal includes five articles of undergraduate historical research from students at universities and colleges around the country. It features a reflection from CHS founders Maya Koretzky ('13, History) and Andrew White ('12, History), and a historical perspective from Corey Ryan Earle ('07), an expert on Cornell’s history. In addition to the print version of the journal, with its special cover design commemorating Cornell’s 150th year, *Ezra’s Archives* was also published online through the Cornell University Library for the first time in its history. We will all miss the graduating seniors who have been active and enthusiastic members of the Society over the years. Recipients of CHS graduation cords this year include Grace Gorenstein, Ryan Isenberg, John Handel, Thomas Livingston, Hannah McKinney, Gretchen Stillings, Michael Shyer and Rose Hanson.

Several of our graduating seniors also wrote honors theses this year, among them Rose Hanson, Gretchen Stillings, John Handel, and Ryan Isenberg in History, and Grace Gorenstein in Economics. Sincerest congratulations to all of them and we look forward to following their lives and careers. Several younger members have been very active this year, especially Julia Krupski, who has been elected Club president for next year, John Hall ('17, History), Kevin March ('16, History), who will be the vice president of club affairs next year, and Samantha Reig ('17, Psychology), next year’s vice president of *Ezra’s Archives*.

The future of CHS is in good hands and will continue in its mission to “educate and foster appreciation for historical topics and methodology with the undergraduate student population and the community at large.” Interested in joining or learning more about CHS, or in becoming a peer advisor or an editor of *Ezra’s Archives*? You don’t have to be a History major to participate, just bring your passion for history. Contact CHS at cornellhistoricalsociety@gmail.com.


Cornell historians also had a presence in multi-media and outreach activities, and historical organizations. Maria Cristina Garcia was named president of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society while Judith Byfield was named Program Chair of the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians. Sandra Greene was elected by the Council of the American Historical Association to the Board of Editors of the American Historical Review. Ed Baptist and Louis Hyman (ILR) prepared to co-teach a second iteration of their popular MOOC (Massive Open Online Course), “American Capitalism: A History.” Tamara Loos was invited by Tony Award winning director, Bartless Sher, to serve as historical consultant for his revival of Rogers and Hammerstein’s, The King and I, currently at Lincoln Center. Jon Parmenter was accredited as a historical expert on the Iroquois in a case expected to be argued before the Supreme Court of Canada eventually. John Weiss delivered briefings on topics concerning the current political situation in Sudan to US ambassadors and their staffs.

Our faculty members serve Cornell outside the department. Ed Baptist is House Professor/Dean of Carl Becker House. Meanwhile, several of us continued as directors: Fred Logevall as both Vice-Provost for International Affairs and Director of the Einaudi Center for International Studies, Barry Strauss as Director of the Program on Freedom and Free Societies, and Eric Tagliacozzo as Director of the Comparative Muslim Societies Program. Mostafa Minawi directs Cornell’s Ottoman and Turkish Studies Initiative.

We hosted our second Merrill Family Visiting Professor, Douglas Egerton, a distinguished US historian who taught a course on the U.S. Civil War. The professorship, made possible by the family of the late Philip Merrill ’55, brings a notable historian to Cornell for one semester each academic year. Olin Library recently dedicated its first named faculty study and is about to dedicate two others, all in memory of Cornell historians: Frederick Marcham (whose was the first study) as well as Edward Fox and Michael Kammen.

Claire Perez recently joined us as the department’s Communications Assistant. Claire is helping us expand our digital presence. Follow us on Twitter @CornellHistory.

We very much hope that some of our former students will make it to Ithaca this year and we look forward to seeing you personally. In the meantime, let me thank all of you for your continued interest in and generosity toward the department and its students. We are more grateful than we can say.

Alumni contributions made possible three special events this year. Barbara Ransby, Professor of History and Director of the campus-wide social justice initiative (University of Illinois-Chicago), gave the annual Carl Becker Lectures on the subjects of biography and historiography, public history and the uses of memory as well as “Black Lives Matter” past and present. H. W. Brands, Professor and Jack S. Blanton, Sr. Chair of History (Texas-Austin) gave this year’s LaFeber/Silbey Lecture, on “The Reagan Enigma,” thanks to several generous alumni and friends including David F. Maisel ’68. Renowned historian of the Haitian Revolution, Laurent Dubois (Duke) gave the annual Harold Seymour Lecture in Sports History on “The Hijab on the Pitch: the Global Politics of Women’s Soccer,” thanks to George Kirsch ’67. Alumni funds also made possible graduate and undergraduate student research at home and abroad as well as many other lectures, seminars, and programs for individual classes. We thank all of you.

Barry Strauss
Bryce & Edith M. Bowmar Professor in Humanistic Studies
Department Chair
Books by Faculty