FROM THE CHAIR

October 2013

Dear History Alumni,

The History Department has continued to thrive over the past year. Our newest faculty recruits have been contributing their talents and energies to Furman in a variety of ways, while more established members of the department have been serving the institution in several leadership roles. We have added some exciting new courses to our already extensive offerings, including histories of sport, medicine, and women’s wartime resistance. We are also busy with our travel study programs: right now, in the Fall 2013 semester, Savita Nair is introducing Furman students to the history and culture of India, while David Spear is exploring various manifestations of a “United Europe,” from the Roman empire to the European Union. In the spring, I will be taking students to Edinburgh as part of a program that combines academic coursework with internships, and in May, Carolyn Day and Marian Strobel will be leading a program to the western front of the First World War.

One of the highlights of this past year was a gathering of promising young historians from nine universities across the Carolinas. In March 2013, the History Department hosted the annual conference of our regional chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the national history honor society. Thirty-seven undergraduates presented papers on topics ranging from the Crusades to the Cold War, with focuses on China, India, Europe, and North America. The standard was high, and Furman students acquitted themselves well. Dr. Paul Anderson, of Clemson University, gave an inspiring plenary address on the personal meaning that the study of history has held for him. Most members of our department were involved in moderating paper sessions and adjudicating awards, though special thanks are due to Jason Hansen, Lane Harris, and Steve O’Neill, whose organizational work made this conference possible. I would also like to thank our alumni, whose generous contributions to the Alumni Fund enabled us to host this conference, and to provide a standard of hospitality that impressed our visitors.

Alumni support has been important in many other ways, too. Your contributions allowed us to recognize the achievements of two of our talented seniors, Brent Anderson and Anastasia Spratley, who received History Alumni Awards for Excellence at the 2013 awards ceremony. The Alumni Fund has supported visiting speakers, department social events, and has helped to pay for student assistants who work here in the office. Much of what we do would be impossible without you.

Please send us your news, and don’t forget to drop by the department to say hello if you are in the area. We enjoy catching up with our alums and learning about the many interesting directions that your lives have taken since completing your study of history at Furman.

All the best,

John Barrington
I worked with Dr. Carolyn Day this summer on her research into the life of Princess Amelia, the youngest daughter of King George III of England. Amelia was an invalid for much of her life; she died relatively young, at age 27, after many years of suffering from various complaints. At the time (early 1800s), many doctors believed a change of climate was beneficial for the treatment of multiple conditions, especially consumption. Amelia’s doctors recommended she go to a sea resort town, and as a result she was away from her family, who stayed at Windsor, for long stretches of time. Because of this separation, many letters were exchanged between Amelia and her family and among members of the family about Amelia and her illness. Dr. Day’s focus is on Amelia’s own professed experience as an invalid and her family’s perspective of her illness from the outside, so these letters were essential evidence in building that story. My job, then, was to continue the work she had begun in transcribing these many letters.

The biggest challenge I faced was working with paleography. Late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century handwriting, like our handwriting today, was highly variable. Some of the letter-writers had lovely, neat penmanship, while others were much more difficult to read. Most of the letters I dealt with were written by Amelia and her older sister Mary, who was a companion to Amelia for much of the last years of her life. Both of them had handwriting that I had to get used to before reading became easy. The more I read, though, the more I found that it really did get easier. I depended less and less on the extremely zoomed-in photos of the letters and often could read from photos of the whole page by the middle to end of the summer. I felt like I really gained a skill from that learning process and was quite proud of myself for how much I had improved.

In addition to that skill, I enjoyed the chance to see “behind the scenes” of professional academic research. I had done my own small research projects for course papers, but I had no real idea of how academic writers went from idea to manuscript. Working with Dr. Day has exposed me to the inner workings of all that, and I feel more confident going into my own research now.
This summer I had the opportunity of working on a research project centered on a manuscript written by Dr. Erik Ching in the History Department. This manuscript, titled “Remembering the Civil War in El Salvador: Memoir, Testimonial and the Narrative Battle,” explores and compares the ways in which distinct groups of Salvadorans choose to remember and perceive the brutal civil war that raged in their country for eleven years in the 1980s.

The value of this project for me personally should not be understated. As a result of my work this summer I have gained invaluable experience in the research process, and have improved upon various skills and abilities that define that process. I learned a great deal about using online resources to access outdated or defunct websites. I also gained experience in reading a large work critically, analyzing first person accounts, finding trends that link them, and then synthesizing my findings into a written argument, which I found to be the most rewarding aspect of my research. I have never been so immersed in a research project, and I was able to see just how much time and effort goes into an academic work of that caliber.

I feel particularly fortunate in that my summer research was so perfectly aligned with the aspect of history that most interests me. I had long been interested in the history of Latin American social movements, but my spring semester in Santiago, Chile, provided me with an intimate understanding of how a nation’s history of social upheaval can grow to shape the daily lives and perceptions of its people for generations to come. Approaching my summer research on El Salvador from such a unique perspective allowed me to find a level of meaning in my work that I couldn’t have anticipated. Even the drudgeries of sorting through defunct websites and poorly organized blogs felt worthwhile because I was reading the firsthand accounts of a people fighting for change in a society that was constructed since the colonial era to maintain a status quo of injustice and inequality. This project not only fueled my interest in the power of collective action in Latin America, but also provided me with a comprehensive understanding of the research process and its rewards.
As Furman history majors, we were afforded the opportunity to intern for Cobb Landmarks and Historical Society (CLHS) in Marietta, Georgia, this past summer. CLHS is dedicated to the preservation of Georgia’s historical homes and institutions, especially those found in Cobb County.

The nature of our internship was to research the businesses that were located on North Park Square in Historic Marietta during the years 1911 and 1935. Those dates were chosen because they exemplified rapid change in America and, in particular, Marietta Square. We were to write a paper and present our findings to the CLHS Board of Trustees at the end of our internship.

Initially, the biggest challenge of our internship was lack of guidance. Shortly after we started, the executive director lost a key employee from an already small staff and was unable to support two inexperienced, rising sophomore history majors. This forced us to become more independent and assertive in seeking out guidance from other sources, a lesson that will serve us well as we navigate historical research at Furman and beyond.

While the facts we discovered about the history of Marietta were interesting, experiencing the research process through this project was invaluable. In addition to utilizing historical source books, we got “creative” and contacted a member of the CLHS Board of Trustees, Cathy Pleak Brown, who we knew to be a 1973 Furman graduate. Mrs. Brown helped us to narrow the scope of our search and took us to the courthouse to learn how to pull land deeds. We contacted Amy Reed of the Marietta History Museum who showed us various primary source documents from their archives. The research librarians in the Georgia Room of the Marietta Library provided guidance and assistance with accessing and utilizing microfilm to view 1911–1935 print advertisements; one can learn a lot from looking at ads, as they reflect the fashion, economic status and culture of a given period. Our research “creativity” continued as we met with present-day businesses owners on the Square who were often able to give us bits of historical knowledge that had been passed down. In some cases they were able to fill in gaps—where there was previously a roadblock in the primary sources, we now had a lead.

Our summer internship definitely proved to be enriching and invaluable to our education. Learning to think outside of the box, getting creative, and being assertive in seeking out guidance in the scope of research has proven to us that there is much more to the process than searching on Google!
A VIRAL HOLOCAUST

By Julia Pafford

In the summer of 2012, I did research with Dr. Jason Hansen as a Furman Advantage Research Fellow. The topic I studied was, at first glance, an unorthodox combination: You Tube and the future of Holocaust remembrance. At its core, this project was focused on the question of how modern technologies, like You Tube, might change the ways in which we conceive of and interact with the past.

The advent of the internet has revolutionized the way historical information is broadcast. In the past, transmitters of history, like museums and monuments, were created by professionals and vetted by committees. Today, a moderately computer-savvy layman can put together a video in an hour, upload it to You Tube and get millions of “hits.” There are two important points to keep in mind when thinking through the ramifications of this change: Firstly, today’s people, especially young people, are increasingly more reliant on the internet for their learning than on physical educational spaces, like museums or libraries. Secondly, You Tube is democratizing the way we transmit and receive information. Taken together, these two points mean that people are spending more time learning through a medium that lacks an institutionalized fact-checking apparatus.

My part in this undertaking was to watch Holocaust-related videos, to document how they were received by reading viewers’ comments and to find out from video “authors” how, why and with what sources they created their projects. It was at first unorthodox to do research with the History Department and yet study the present. Working on this project, however, made me think about my major in a way I never had before. Prior to this experience, if I were asked why I chose to make the History Department my home at Furman, I would have replied, “Because I like history more than anything else that I have tried.” Now my answer would also emphasize history’s importance and relevance. As I learned through this project, history is much more about the present than it is about the past. Historical narratives inform our understandings of ourselves, and, in turn, our present-day understandings and perspectives inform the way we write history. Only time will tell how exactly You Tube’s “democratization” of information will affect popular conceptions of the past. My conception of history, however, has already changed.
Democratizing Knowledge in Japan
By Wendy Matsumura

I spent my sabbatical year at Doshisha University, located in the old capital of Japan, Kyoto. As a scholar of modern Okinawa, I was apprehensive about making Kyoto my home, but the opportunity to work with Dr. Tomiyama Ichiro, the author of Modern Japanese Society and the Okinawan People, the first book I had ever read about the region, was simply too good to pass up. What I did not know before getting to Kyoto was that Dr. Tomiyama had an ongoing study group, the “Tuesday Club” that had continued for over 10 years, even through his move from Osaka University to Doshisha. The name “Tuesday Club” was somewhat deceptive, as it actually met weekly on Wednesdays every semester. During my time there, scholars passing through Kyoto from the United States, Britain and Korea attended single sessions. Scholars from other universities in the Kansai region, as well as graduate students, undergraduates, research fellows, activists and independent scholars who regularly attended formed the core of the group. The success of the “Tuesday Club” can be attributed to its longevity and the maintenance of a listserv that allowed people who had left the university or had not attended for years to freely drop in on any session as their schedule allowed. It was an egalitarian community of learners and teachers of the type that French philosopher Jacques Ranciere celebrated in his The Ignorant Schoolmaster. Much of my sabbatical was spent preparing for the “Tuesday Club,” thinking about its importance as a space of learning outside of the institutional bounds of the university, attending its sessions or talking to friends that I had made through it. Ironically, I was able to discover in Kyoto, a globally recognized educational capital with 37 excellent institutions of higher learning, a space that collapsed the distinctions between teacher and student, expert and amateur, in order to create opportunities for intellectual creativity, risk-taking and genuine exchange that I believe are the main goals of scholarly activity in the first place.

Secrets No More: The National Security Archives’ Online Database
By Marian Strobel

The National Security Archive (NSA), an independent non-governmental research institute and library at George Washington University, regularly collects and publishes declassified documents acquired through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The fascinating website appeals especially to students of recent American history. It combines investigative journalism with documents on timely topics of international importance. Such compilation makes for stimulating reading, be it for the advanced researcher or the casual observer. Recent postings on the NSA archive include significant entries on “Kissinger and Chile: The Declassified Record,” “CIA confirms Role in 1953 Iran Coup,” and “Disreputable If Not Outright Illegal; The NSA versus Martin Luther King, Muhammed Ali, Art Buchwald, Frank Church, et al.” Especially highlighted on the website are many instances of Cold War tensions. Clicks of a reader’s computer mouse takes one ever deeper into archival territory, where one can gain access to photocopies of original government records, some of which were once top secret and many of which contain redactions of still classified material. Included as well are links to other related websites; these provide a virtual cornucopia of data on American foreign policy and may give credence to those who distrust the machinations of our statesman and of our intelligence establishment.

For an easily accessible link to the NSA archives, see: http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/index.html.
Witnessing History in the Middle East

By Cengiz Sisman

Last year, during my sabbatical and parental leaves, I spent most of my time in my home country, Turkey. Living a year in one of the "middle eastern" countries was a historical and educational experience for me since the entire region had been on fire due mainly to the so-called Arab Spring and its subsequent events. After two years of popular protests against the secular or religious dictatorships in such countries as Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and the loss of thousands of lives on the streets, those nations’ citizens came to realize that a constitutionally-guaranteed liberal democracy came at a high cost. It was disillusioning to observe that neither the Western powers nor most of the Middle Eastern people were prepared to have full-fledged democracies in the region anytime soon.

Amidst these commotions, Turkey had its own "spring" for a somewhat different reason. There had already been deep resentment among the mostly secularized citizens against the pro-Islamic government that had been in power for the last 12 years. Recently, especially because of the government's rising authoritarian tendency, the country has been torn between pro-government and anti-government camps. Both camps legitimized their demands by arguing that they have the support of a majority of the population.

The set of events in May 2013 was the straw that broke the proverbial camel's back. The anti-government protests were sparked by outrage at the municipal decision to build a shopping mall in one of the most famous parks in Istanbul. It was indeed one of the few green places left in the aggressively urban city. Subsequently, similar to the Occupy movement, supporting protests and strikes took place across Turkey protesting a wide range of concerns, at the core of which were issues of freedom of the press, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, the government's encroachment on Turkey's secularism, corruption, favoritism in governmental investments, and excessive and unplanned urbanization. I participated in and witnessed some of those protests in the early days, and even smelled the tear gas launched at the protesters by police. It was a disturbing experience in terms of seeing the limits of freedom in the Middle East. Unfortunately, the chaos still reigns in the region.
A CONVERSATION WITH CAROLINE VEREEN SEXTON AND TED VEREEN
A FATHER-DAUGHTER STORY

By Courtney Tollison

In October, I had an enjoyable conversation with Caroline Vereen Sexton ’10 and her father Ted Vereen ’84 about the ways in which their Furman history majors shaped their professional lives.

Caroline is the newly appointed executive director of the Spartanburg County Historical Association (SCHA). After Furman, she earned an MA in Public History at the University of South Carolina. In her role at the SCHA, she oversees a museum and three historic sites. She also curates exhibits, plans educational programs and special events, and is involved with fundraising and membership.

Ted is responsible for the sales of technology products and services for a computer engineering firm in Greenville. He is responsible for managing relationships, identifying existing and prospective customer needs and solutions (hardware, software, and services), presenting the firm’s product set and services, and overseeing the implementation of solutions.

CT: How did your Furman history major prepare you for the roles you are in now?

Caroline: The relationship between my history major and my career is directly apparent. At Furman, I learned to look beyond dates and facts to ask questions about history. Why does this matter to us? How did the lives of the people who lived in these historic homes, for instance, compare to our lives today? My job is to help educate the public about the history of Spartanburg County. In my job, I use the artifacts we have at the museum and the historic homes to bring those questions to light for the public.

Ted: I have two vantage points on this question: communication and perspective.

My first job out of college was as a marketing representative for IBM. IBM looked for individuals with strong presentation and good writing skills. In my 12-week class with Dr. Lavery during my senior year, we read 12 literary pieces, wrote 12 papers, and had 12 oral presentations. That sort of rigorous process helped me develop a confidence with communicating with others and prepared me well for life in general but certainly for anything to do with sales.

My history major also gave me a perspective on humanity. History is a bit like psychology, in that it focuses not only on the what but why. So I ask: why do people do what they do? How do people respond? How do people handle situations they are faced with? When compared to colleagues with technological backgrounds, I was better prepared for the people side of it. I probably take a longer-term view. Instead of rushing to the obvious, I tend to step back and strive to achieve some kind of understanding.

CT: What advice do you have for current history majors?

Caroline: Get out there and try new things, especially things that scare you. This will help develop a better sense of what direction to go in. I engaged in several internships, and these helped me to create a path for myself and identify what I am passionate about. On a practical level, the skills I learned helped prepare me for graduate school and the skills I learned in grad school prepared me for my job.

Ted: I have hired a lot of people, and I look for the skills I cannot teach: is this person smart and motivated? Do they have good people skills? History is excellent preparation for the needs of life and business. I would caution against pigeon-holing one’s self by thinking there are only a limited number of career paths a person with a history major can take.

CT: Ted, you were student body president during your senior year at Furman. Did you feel your knowledge of history enhanced your leadership skills?

Ted: I was student body president when Dr. Shucker was serving as interim VP for Student Affairs. When you are young, you lack experience. History can be a substitute of sort for that lack of experience. When you think about what kind of leader you want to be or what kind of employee you want to be, you can look to history for models, styles, and perspective.

CT: Thank you both!
The History Department is saddened to announce the passing of Jim Smart, professor emeritus of history, on October 13, 2013. In addition to serving 28 years in the History Department between 1967 and 1995, Jim also served in a variety of important university-wide rolls, including, but not limited to associate dean and president of the local chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Upon Jim’s retirement, then Dean A.V. Huff described him in an article in the Furman Magazine as “a person of deep Christian faith, a devoted husband and father, a superior teacher, a caring colleague and a friend of students, Jim Smart exemplifies the best of the Furman tradition.”

We feel that the best honor we can pay Jim is to draw upon the memories of one of his former students, so with the permission of the Smart family, we share a portion of a letter that Brad Bechtold ’88, psychology alumnus and current director of Continuing Education at Furman, wrote to one of Jim’s family members upon learning of Jim’s passing:

I am very saddened by this news. Jim was like a father to me in recent years. He was my first term Freshman HST 11 professor (1984) and was such a delight to listen to as he retold the story of Modern Western Civilization with such passion, as my hand ached with writing cramps from attempting to scribe every word.

In fact, I enjoyed him so much that I also took HST 25: Mexican/Latin American History with him, as a sophomore, and sat again in amazement as we studied everyone from Christopher Columbus to Pancho Villa to Octavio Paz’s “labyrinth of solitude”—and even though I knew I would likely make another C+.

I will never forget a visit I made to campus several years after graduation (1992) and he spotted me in Furman Hall and said, “Hello, Brad!” I was blown away, but not surprised as I knew he loved all of his students, even the average ones like me.

Jim was a man of character, values and great courage, and I will miss him dearly.

Please let Bonnie know that all of you are in my prayers and that Jim is seated nicely in Heaven now, likely reading a great novel, writing and reflecting on those who love him so dearly.
HISTORY MAJORS AND CAREERS
A LOOK AT THEIR LIVES SINCE 1995

Increasingly, students and parents ask us: “What can I do with a history major?” In order to provide an accurate answer, we did some research into the actual careers that our majors are pursuing. With help from the Alumni Office, we were able to find information on the careers of almost 600 majors who have graduated since 1995. Here is the result of our analysis of their current occupations.

As you can see, our majors end up in a wide spectrum of careers. History really does open doors.

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<th>CAREER</th>
<th>NO OF GRADUATES</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
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<tr>
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<td>11.70</td>
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<td>Management</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Military and Protective Service</td>
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<td>Healthcare Practitioner or Technician</td>
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<td>Media and Communications</td>
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<td>4.41</td>
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ALUMNI NEWS

C. Daniel Atkinson (‘01) is married to Amanda Mosely Atkinson (‘04, English major). Their daughter Nora Kay Atkinson was born on April 23, 2012, and they are expecting a son in September 2013.

Melanie D. Barton (‘84) is now serving as executive director of the SC Education Oversight Committee in Columbia.

Sidney Bland published an article titled “Alice Paul: Finally Getting Her Due” in the Fall 2012 issue of The Clarion, The Women’s Suffrage and Political Issues Chapter of the American Political Item Collections. She has also been named to the board of directors of The Edith and Theodore Roosevelt Pine Knot Foundation of Keene, Virginia.

Will Glenn (‘07) graduated from Charleston School of Law in 2012. He started working as an associate attorney at the Leinster law firm this fall.

Monica Handa (‘07) is now an associate at Cochran and Owen, LLC in Vienna, Virginia.

Robbie Higdon (‘94) is working form Clemson University as a program assistant in the Department of Teacher Education and coordinating the Clemson Summer AP Institute for Teachers.

E. Jens Holley (‘81) has been elected vice-chair of the United Methodist Church South Carolina Conference Commission on History and Archives.

Bruce Kleinschmidt (‘74) graduated from law school in 1978, library school in 1991, and now expects to be ordained a Catholic priest in 2016 after he finishes his masters of divinity.

James Knarr completed his PhD in history from Texas Christian University in 2009 and published his first book, Uruguay and the United States, 1903–1929, with Kent State University Press last year.

Ashley Carroll Leyba (‘05) is a PhD candidate in history at the University of California-Berkley. She is also a peer mentor with the Christopher and Dona Reeve Foundation.

P. Brandt Shelbourne (‘86), after graduating, married Pamela Burton, an ’86 English major. Their oldest child, Rachel, is a Furman University Hollingsworth Fellow and will graduate this year (2013) with a major in history and English.

Joe Waters (‘05) is currently vice president of the Institute for Child Success in Greenville. He leads the Institute’s research efforts in social impact finance, including ICS’ exploration of the feasibility of using Social Impact Bonds to scale and sustain early childhood home visiting interventions. His is a small research and policy organization focused on the success of all young children, pre-natal to age 5.
A CALL TO ACTION: PARTICIPATE IN THE “HISTORY ALUMNI CAREER ADVICE AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAM”

As many of you know, each year in the donation sheet, we ask if you would be willing to “let us put any of our majors in touch with you for the purpose of internships, shadowing or career information.” We have received many responses from you and have created some valuable contacts for our majors and soon-to-be graduates. Your advice and guidance has proven invaluable. We want to draw upon your vast experiences to help our majors by enhancing this program and creating a larger and more robust database of contact information and careers. We are tentatively naming this the “History Alumni Career Advice and Internship Program,” which is a little clumsy, but we’ll go with it for now. So, if you would ever be willing to be contacted by one of our majors or recent alums in regard to career advice and you haven’t responded to us in the last say five or six years, would you please do so? Either drop us an email directly to Dr. Erik Ching (erik.ching@furman.edu) or fill out that portion of the donation sheet (regardless of whether you donate or not) and we’ll compile the responses. In advance thanks so much for any willingness you can show to help our students.

DONORS

Thank You to Our Donors!

Thanks to your generosity and support, the History Department Alumni Fund has become something of a model at the University, especially in the Humanities. The fund allows us to enhance our academic offerings to our students in myriad ways, not the least of which is scholarships in recognition of meritorious work in the major. To all of you, thank you so much. [If we made any errors or left anyone out of this list, please let us know.]

Linsay Allio ’07
Dan ’01 and Amanda Moseley ’04 Atkinson
Chris Atwell ’88
Henry Barton ’49
Henry ’84 and Melanie Dodd ’84 Barton
Rick Bell ’82
Sidney Bland ’59
Ed ’67 and Martha Callison ’70 Bridges
Emily Bridges ’12
Rob Coggins ’84
Jean Perrin Derrick ’74
Robert Dreslin ’99
Roby Egan ’84
Steve Feyl ’94
Warren Fowler ’49
Tim ’88 and Jennifer Sucher ’88 Fox

Andy Foy ’00
Mike Garvey ’69
Will Glenn ’07
Ron Goodwin ’63 in Memory of Gwen
Danby Goodwin ’64
Monica Handa ’07
Brad ’97 and Catherine Heath ’12 Harmon
Robbie Higdon ’94
Baron ’75 and Betty Schepman ’74 Hill
Jens Holley ’81
Paul Hoover ’99
Jada Biddex Justus ’98
Ed Kay ’64
Bruce Kleinschmidt ’74
Jay Knarr ’02
Marion Floyd Leach ’43

Rhys Leonard ’05
Regan ’05 and Kyle Bradbury ’04 LeBlanc
Ashley Carroll Leyba ’05
Sandy Manly ’76
Reilly Morrison ’09
Chris Osborne ’06
Jeff Patterson ’92
McNab ‘11 and Kristen Marquis ’11 Reeves
Bev Roberts ’04
Brandt ’86 and Pam Burton ’86 Shelbourne
Sarah Turner Pietruszka ’04
Jim ’83 and Mary Babcock ’83 Taylor
Joe Waters ’05
Brenda Lark Whisonant ’63
Chip Wilson ’84

Erik also completed *Authoritarian El Salvador: Politics and the Origins of Military Regimes, 1880-1940* (University of Notre Dame Press, December 2013). The book seeks to explain the origins of the military regime that came to power in El Salvador in 1931 and is based on a comprehensive survey of the extant documentary record in El Salvador’s national archive.

Erik Ching recommends Kate Summerscale, *Mrs. Robinson’s Disgrace: The Private Diary of a Victorian Lady* (NY: Bloomsbury, 2012). A husband reads his wife’s private diary in Victorian England and sues for divorce based on its contents, accusing her of infidelity, although she claimed that her writings were purely fictional. The diary was read in court and created quite a stir over issues of female identity and personal empowerment within the institution of marriage.

Marian Strobel recommends David Nasaw’s *The Patriarch: The Remarkable Life and Turbulent Times of Joseph P. Kennedy* (NY: Penguin, 2013). Nasaw, the author of notable earlier works on Andrew Carnegie and William Randolph Hearst, has written a monumental biography of the patriarch and perhaps most controversial member of the Kennedy family. The story begins with the Irish roots of the clan, and proceeds to discuss the life, loves, and career of its subject. Much of what appears here is unvarnished and unsavory as it discusses the business interests, foreign policy missteps, and manipulations—both personal and political—of the founder of one of America’s most influential families.

Savita Nair recommends Ramachandra Guha (ed.), *Makers of Modern India* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011). The beloved and reviled commentator and historian, Ramachandra Guha presents nineteen Indian leaders in his openly self-conscious selection of the “makers” of India’s modern idea of the nation. Chock full of speeches and writings of more radical leaders, militant and religious nationalists, alongside refreshing and subtle perspectives on anticipated ones, such as MK Gandhi, MA Jinnah, and Nehru, Guha manages to put his finger on the pulse of the multiple competing voices of 20th century Indian political debates. He criticizes contemporary Indian leaders for having none of the imagination and intellectualism as their early-mid 20th century predecessors.