HISTORY DEPARTMENT NEWS
The University of Maine

CONFERENCE CELEBRATES
200 YEARS OF MAINE STATEHOOD

by Liam Riordan

Maine’s official 200th birthday is coming up on March 15, 2020. As part of the commemoration of the statehood process, Professor Liam Riordan organized the Maine Bicentennial Conference, which was held at the University of Maine from May 30 to June 1, 2019. The multi-day program was very well attended and included scholarly panels on a diverse range of topics, two concerts, and the Maine History Festival (a community engagement event for non-academics). The celebration was co-hosted by the Osher Map Library at the University of Southern Maine and by the Maine Folklife Center at UMaine.

The keynote event began with moving remarks by Maulian Dana, the Ambassador from the Penobscot Nation, who expressed her tribe’s conflicted feelings about Maine sovereignty and its ongoing role as a colonizing power. Two distinguished historians, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich (emeritus, Harvard University) and Alan Taylor (University of Virginia), served as keynote speakers, reflecting on the place of Maine in their work as well as their approaches to research and writing. Both have written notable books on Maine in the statehood era: A Midwife’s Tale and Liberty Men and Great Proprietors, respectively. These landmark contributions to the history of Maine and early America are highly recommended.

Scholarly panels at the conference examined many topics, from Wabanaki relations with the state of Maine to French speakers in the Saint John Valley, the Maine–Missouri Crisis, early folk music in Maine, and the contest over public lands from the statehood era to the present. Faculty from five departments at UMaine served on panels, and conference organizers were especially...
NOTES FROM THE CHAIR
by Stephen Miller

Hello, Alumni. We are back with another newsletter. This is my fifth as chair of the History Department and hopefully we have completed enough now that you can expect that we will continue doing this for years to come! Some of you have reached out with letters, visits, and gifts. On behalf of all the faculty and our students, we thank you.

As most of you know, every spring, we honor our undergraduate and graduate students who excel in the history program at our Phi Alpha Theta induction and awards ceremony. This year, we inducted more students than in recent memory. It was a great ceremony. Assistant Professor Mark McLaughlin, the head of our Department Life Committee, played emcee and welcomed a number of family and friends. He also introduced as the event’s speaker, one of our Alumni, John Baldacci, who served as Governor of Maine from 2003 to 2011. Governor Baldacci came to Orono in the 1970s and then returned in the 1980s to finish his degree. As he joked, he was a non-traditional student before it became “a thing.” At a time when the Humanities often feels like it is under attack, Governor Baldacci reminded our students how valuable it is to be trained to critically think, write, research, and understand the importance of the past. He discussed the Banking Crisis of 2007–2008 and the fight for healthcare in the United States and reminded us that we can learn from the successes and the failures of our not too distant history—lessons which seem forgotten in today’s political climate.

One of the awards that we presented went to Daniel Soucier, now Dr. Soucier. Dan received the Frances Robinson Mitchell Scholarship. Mrs. Mitchell came to the University in 1942. Two years later, in the midst of the Second World War, she left to enlist in the United States Marine Corps. Mrs. Mitchell remained passionate about history her entire life and in 2006 established this scholarship to help support graduate students researching American history. Sadly, Mrs. Mitchell passed away last summer, but her legacy lives on through this award, her family, and her other contributions to the community.

Among our many honorees was Collin Soucy, who received the Ronald F. Banks Scholarship. Charlotte Mickeline and Brianna Ballard received the Caroline Colvin Scholarship, which honors a distinguished historian and the first woman to chair a department at the University of Maine. The Nancy R. Johnson Memorial Prize in Ancient History was awarded to Julia Everitt. Matthew Ryckman won the the Roger B. Hill Scholarship; Dakota Gramour, the Laurence Evans ‘51 Fund award; and Lydia Elwell, the Charles J. Dunn Trust Award. Among our graduate students, Ann Morrisette was honored with the Noide Lectureship, and Darcy Stevens won the Ipsen-Weiner Memorial Scholarship.

The Department of History requires all of its students to research, write, and present a capstone project. In their end-of-the-year outcome assessments, students often write that this experience is one of their most rewarding at the University of Maine. This year, students chose a number of fascinating projects ranging from the internment of Japanese in Western Canada during World War II to the British decision to remain neutral in the American Civil War, and from the impact of technology on clothing manufacture in the nineteenth century to the history of General Electric in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. At the ceremony, we honored Dakota Gramour, Aidan Morrill, and Jeanne Martin for their outstanding senior theses. We have put some of the posters created for these theses up in Stevens Hall.

I want to again thank everyone for their support of the History Department at the University of Maine. Whenever you are in Orono, please stop by the office to say hello, take a look at the capstone posters, and please consider coming to next year’s awards ceremony!

About this Newsletter: This newsletter was produced by Eileen Hagerman, a doctoral candidate in history at the University of Maine. She takes responsibility for any errors, omissions, or other shortcomings it may possess.
thankful for the terrific research presentations by history professors Mary Freeman and Micah Pawling. We were also delighted to welcome back Béatrice Craig, an award-winning history professor at the University of Ottawa, who received a UMaine history PhD in 1983. A great deal of material from the Bicentennial Conference has been archived at Fogler Library’s Digital Commons and is available online. For example, abstracts of panel papers and complete video footage of the opening concert on early Maine music by the DaPonte String Quartet, the keynote event, and all seven scholarly panels. Please visit: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/me200/

We also anticipate a special state bicentennial issue of Maine History to be published in 2020 as well as a collection of essays in book form, both of which will give continued attention to the statehood process and its commemoration.

Thank you to everyone who made the Maine Bicentennial Conference a success!

MAINE NATIONAL HISTORY DAY 2019

The National History Day in Maine program had another terrific year in 2019.

State Coordinator John Taylor led a successful expansion to include preparatory regional contests for the first time (in Lewiston and Bangor). This resulted in higher quality projects at the state contest at UMaine in April, where 262 students participated from 32 middle and high schools located across the state. We also had over 70 volunteer judges and staff.

The 2020 statewide contest is scheduled for UMaine on May 2, 2020. Join us!

—Liam Riordan
MAKING SPACE, UPSETTING NARRATIVES:

Mazie Hough’s Career, Retirement, and Future Plans

Mazie Hough retired from teaching at the close of the 2018–2019 academic year after nearly three decades of working to expand the presence of women and women’s history at the University of Maine. Hough began teaching courses in both history and women’s, gender, and sexuality (WGS) studies at UMaine in the early 1990s, developing a variety of new courses and serving as associate director of the women’s studies program from 1992 to 2014 and as director of WGS from 2014 to 2016. During that time, she also produced a body of scholarly work related to reproductive politics, much of it geographically rooted in Maine with a strong emphasis on women from marginalized communities.

Originally from Falmouth, Massachusetts, Hough moved to Maine in the early 1990s, when her husband, Paul Schroeder, took a job in reference at Fogler Library, after which they “couldn’t imagine moving.” Shortly thereafter, Hough decided to pursue her PhD in history at UMaine, around the same time that the department had just hired its first women’s history faculty—Marli Weiner and Paula Petrik.

Reflecting on the expansion of women’s history since that time, Hough now asserts, “I don’t think that you can successfully approach any topic without including women and gender.”

Hough’s interest in history evolved during a prior career in juvenile justice. After earning a BA in English literature from Swathmore in 1970, she worked for the Department of Youth Services and, later, for the Juvenile Law Reform Project. She was also active in the women’s movement and perceived her work through a feminist lens. This blended perspective sparked an interest in history when Hough read about a 1698 infanticide case in western Massachusetts and questioned the verdict. Eventually, she realized that “it was history that possessed the stories [she] was most interested in,” and she began to hone her skills as a historian at the graduate level. Her dissertation relied on case records from the Good Samaritan Home for unwed mothers, but her post-graduate work increasingly shifted toward justice, especially changes in Maine’s criminal justice system with respect to issues of sexual assault and infanticide in the late 1800s.

Hough’s interest in the intersection of women and justice also shaped her academic service work. As a doctoral student, she served as a staff associate for what was then called the Women in the Curriculum (WIC) Program. Spurred to action by WIC speaker Meredith Tax (Bread and Roses, Boston) to collect the stories of early women’s movement activists, she also helped establish the Feminist Oral History Project, which gathered stories of Spruce Run, a battered women’s program in Bangor and one of the first in the United States. Additionally, Hough collaborated with Kim Huismann (Sociology), Carol Toner (Maine Studies), and Kristin Langellier (Communication and Journalism) to pursue a feminist study of Maine’s new refugee population. This became known as the Somali Narrative Project.

As a professor, Hough’s training in feminist pedagogy steered her away from a teacher-student hierarchy. She preferred to “de-center the classroom” and “create space were students felt comfortable sharing their thoughts and disagreeing with one another in a respectful way.” She also enjoyed inspiring an interest in local history by assigning work that required the use of archival sources from Fogler Library’s Special Collections. Hough was so committed to this aspect of her teaching that she helped put together a collection of student articles for Fogler and for the Bangor Public Library.

While she will miss teaching, Hough looks forward to devoting more time to the Maine Humanities Council board, returning to playing the piano, and traveling. Forever an activist, she has also “vowed to put time into the coming election.” Her primary goal, however, is to continue her Maine-focused research, including her book on shifts in Maine’s criminal justice system in the late nineteenth century and, possibly, some research on the infanticide case that first captured her historical imagination. Hough “love[s] finding sources that amplify or upset our current historical narratives” and has no intention of stopping anytime soon. While she will keep her office for another year to continue working with WGS and history graduate students, her absence will no doubt be felt. Still, we are grateful for the many years of hard work that she put into the History Department as well as the WGS program and the University of Maine.
FACULTY UPDATES

Mary Freeman was named one of two finalists for the Society of American Historians 2019 Allan Nevins Prize for her manuscript, “The Politics of Correspondence: Letter Writing in the Campaign Against Slavery in the United States,” which she is revising for publication. She also presented an essay detailing Maine’s historical relationship to slavery and abolitionism at the Maine Statehood and Bicentennial Conference and the annual meeting of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic this summer.


Michael Lang was appointed a fellow at the Schusterman Center for Israel Studies at Brandeis University. He spent the summer at the Institute and in Israel studying the history of Zionism.

Ngo Vinh Long went to Porto, Portugal, to attend a conference entitled, “The Role of Culture, Knowledge, and Ideas in Modernization and Sustainable Development,” which was held on July 18 and 19 at the Great Hall (Salão Nobre) of the Reitoria Universidade do Porto (the rectory, or administrative building, of the University of Porto).

Elizabeth McKillen returned from her 2017–2018 sabbatical and published the following: “Reverse Currents: Irish Nationalist and Suffragist Hanna Sheehy Skeffington and U.S. Anti-Imperialism, 1916–24” in Eire-Ireland (Fall/Winter 2018); “The Socialist Party,” in the second volume of Opposition to War: Encyclopedia of United States Peace and Antivwar Movements (ABC-CLIO, 2018); and a review of Women’s ILO: Transnational Networks, Global Labour Standards and Gender Equity, 1919 to Present by Eileen Boris, Dorothea Hoeltker, Susan Zimmerman, eds., in Labour/Le Travail 82 (Fall 2018). She also had two other journal articles accepted for publication, gave a department symposium on Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, and organized and participated in a thought-provoking panel with PhD candidate An Nguyen and recent University of Maine PhD recipient Amy Smith on subaltern anticolonial activists and U.S. foreign policy for the New England Historical Association Conference in April.


Stephen M. Miller, this spring, published an article, entitled “British Surrenders and the South African War, 1899–1902,” which appeared in War and Society. He has also had another article, “Edgar Wallace’s War: Reporting and Making the News in South Africa, 1898–1902,” accepted for publication in the South African Historical Journal. He is currently working on two book projects. The first is a manuscript, which examines the career of Field Marshal George S. White, a veteran of the Indian Rebellion, Second Anglo-Afghan War, Third Anglo-Burmese War, and the South African War. The second is an edited collection entitled, Queen Victoria’s Wars, a project that brings together thirteen leading military historians to discuss British imperial conflicts between 1857 and 1902.

Liam Riordan, this past year, gave presentations about his research on Loyalists (those who opposed the American Revolution) at conferences hosted by the German Historical Institute and Re:work International Research Center (Berlin, June 2018), the American Historical Association (Chicago, January 2019), and the Eighteenth Century Seminar at Princeton University (May 2019). He also participated in community discussions across Maine, from Falmouth to Eastport and Madawaska, about the state bicentennial, and he joined a panel at the Organization of American Historians (Philadelphia, April 2019) on comparative statehood commemoration in Maine and Missouri. This was in preparation for the Maine Bicentennial Conference he organized at UMaine (May 30–June 1, 2019).
THE PLACE OF SOIL

A Brief Look at Cody Miller’s Research (and Other Adventures) in Southern Appalachia

This spring, Cody Miller completed his PhD in history with a concentration in American environmental history. His dissertation, entitled “‘When We Develop and Agriculture That Fits This Land’: Soil Conservation, Landscape Change, and the Making of Agroecological Knowledge in the Appalachian South, 1930–1955,” examines the ways in which community-based agroecological knowledge evolved and impacted the landscapes of southern Appalachia in the early-to-mid twentieth century. Co-chairing his committee were Richard Judd and Micah Pawling.

Originally from Virginia, Miller graduated from Virginia Tech with a BA in history in 2010 and moved to Maine to begin an MA program in history in the fall of 2011, transitioning into the history PhD program in 2013. Miller says that he was primarily drawn to UMaine by the opportunity to work with Judd, whose scholarship emphasizes the historical contributions of common people to environmental conservation. Another important factor for Miller was the History Department’s regional focus, which further imbued within him an appreciation for the “power of place.”

Since 2011, Miller’s interests shifted significantly. Initially, he was interested in what he refers to as “the gendered dimensions of urban forest conservation in Boston.” Then, he became interested in “cultural debates over the shift to capital-intensive agriculture in New England.” Eventually however, he turned his gaze homeward and found his interests gravitating toward soil conservation in southern Appalachia. From there, his work took an increasingly interdisciplinary turn, traversing the boundaries of environmental and agroecological history, food systems, and sustainable development, all of which were bound together by a keen interest in soil. “I became fascinated by Appalachian soils due to the many different vantage points they offer,” Miller said. “Soils gave me the opportunity to explore conservation, forestry, agroecological change, political economy, development, and soil science, but I was equally struck by the sociocultural dimensions of soils that related to sense of place, identity, and terroir.” Soils allowed Miller to “understand the dynamism of the Appalachian environment . . . from the ground up.”

In order to work more closely with his region of interest, Miller decided to pursue a second MA in Appalachian Studies with a concentration in Sustainable Development at Appalachian State University (ASU) in Boone, North Carolina, while wrapping up his dissertation. He also began working for ASU’s Department of Sustainable Development, teaching both introductory and upper-level history courses, where he places sustainability within the historical context of various American social movements. He is currently developing “place-based teaching modules” with an environmental history focus for the Sustainable Development Teaching and Research Farm in Ashe County, North Carolina, where he works alongside faculty and students to explore the socio-ecological dimensions of the farm.

While Miller enjoys teaching at ASU and is glad to be back in the region of his birth, he is grateful for the guidance and training he received from his committee members and other faculty mentors at UMaine. From Judd, he learned how to pursue his passion for writing environmental history “from the bottom-up” and received hours of invaluable research advice. From Pawling, he gained crucial skills and strategies in community-based research. And from Michael Lang and Nathan Godfried—all on his PhD committee—he gained an appreciation for “the power of ideas and the importance of labor, respectively.” Finally, Miller sees all of his professors at UMaine as “direct catalysts” in shaping his approach to teaching and research and sees his time at UMaine as having well prepared him for an interdisciplinary field.

For the time being, Miller plans to continue teaching at ASU. When he isn’t in the archives or the classroom, you might find him rotating pasture with his colleagues on the farm or taking in the scenery, music, and culture of southern Appalachia. He and his wife, Heather, also hope to return to Maine soon to reunite with old friends and colleagues and share with their son the natural beauty of their home away from home. If you’re interested in connecting with Miller about his research, environmental history, or interdisciplinary teaching, you can reach him at millercp3@appstate.edu.
GRADUATE STUDENT UPDATES


Elisa Sance has been working as an instructional designer at the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning at UMaine since July 2018. In April 2019, she was invited by the Franco-American Center to present a paper, entitled “‘The war has taught us the need of a more united people, speaking one language, thinking one tradition, and holding allegiance to one patriotism—America’: Consequences of WWI on Education in the Saint John River Valley.” She was also invited to write “Public Schools and Ratepayers in Late Nineteenth Century New Brunswick: A Linguistic Divide?” for the Acadiensis blog this August.

Hannah Schmidt undertook a research trip to Deerfield, MA, in August where she explored source materials housed at the Historic Deerfield Memorial Libraries for research relating to the attack on Deerfield in 1704 and the subsequent captivities that took place. Hannah is also beginning a project for the Bangor Commission on Cultural Development for which she will be expanding a database of the locations of various art installations, historic memorials, and places of cultural importance around Bangor. This database will eventually be developed into a map by the Bangor GIS Office.

Emma Schroeder received a 2019–2020 research fellowship from the Consortium for History of Science, Technology, and Medicine for which she traveled to Columbia University, the Rockefeller Archive Center, Yale University, and the University of Toronto. A Rockefeller Archive Center research stipend and a Charles J. Dunn graduate research grant also supported her trip. Along with fellow graduate students An Nguyen and Lucretia Grindle, Emma will travel to San Francisco in November for the National Women’s Studies Association annual conference. Emma and An will speak on a panel, entitled “Transnational Activism and Relational Citizenship,” and attend “Politics of Sisterhood: Reconceptualizing Hierarchies of State Power Along Imaginary and Physical Borders,” co-organized with Lucretia and Mazie Hough.

An Nguyen presented a paper, entitled “The Vietnam War and Women’s Social Movement in Southern Vietnam (1968–75),” at the International Conference on War and Social Movements at the City University of New York in May. Additionally, H-Net published her critical review of Olga Dror’s Making Two Vietnams: War and Youth Identities, 1965–1975” (Cambridge University Press, 2018). (View here: https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showpdf.php?id =53615.) Nguyen is currently in Vietnam conducting interviews with urban intellectuals and religious leaders on their participation in the various South Vietnamese urban antiwar movements during the Vietnam War as part of her dissertation research.

UNDERGRADUATE SPOTLIGHT: JENNIFER MUNSON

Since beginning her undergraduate career at UMaine in 2016, Jennifer Munson, a history major and Maine studies minor, has had an article, “The Dieppe Raid: Avoidable Disaster or Lesson in Amphibious Assault?” published in the 2018 issue of the Armstrong Undergraduate Journal of History and had a research note, “Publicity and Tourism: The Maine State Government’s Response to the Great Depression,” accepted for publication (date TBD) in the journal Maine History. She has also served as an intern for the Maine State Library where she digitized magazines related to Maine tourism. Munson is most drawn to nineteenth- and twentieth-century U.S. and Canadian history as well as wartime propaganda and tourism, but her interest in history, more broadly, stems from the fact that it allows her to approach subjects from a wide variety of angles. Above all, she appreciates the challenge of interpreting the past. She credits her history coursework at UMaine with showing her “there are so many ways to dig deeper within a research project” and that “there is no limit to what you can research.” No doubt, her work with her advisor and intellectual historian Michael Lang has helped to instill this within her.

Munson’s love of research should guide her well in her future plans, as she would like to eventually teach and research at the university level or obtain employment as a researcher at a library or museum. As such, she intends to pursue an MA and possibly a PhD in history to help her reach these goals upon completion of her BA in May 2020.
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If you enjoyed this newsletter or value the work being done by the History Department to help the University of Maine fulfill its mission as a land-grant institution while raising its profile at home and abroad, consider making a contribution. Donations can be made online through the following website: http://umaine.edu/history/

You can also contact the History Department through the following:

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