

# History Happenings

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# Letter from the Chair

*By Aram Goudsouzian*

This past spring, after a literal half-century here, Walter “Bob” Brown retired from the Department of History. If you are reading this newsletter, chances are good that you know him. And if you know him, he probably touched your life, in one way or another.

As many people testified at his reception in April, Bob is a brilliant teacher. Most of us have never met anyone as widely read, as intellectually curious, as appreciative of humanity in all its beauty and tragedy. Just as important, he is a man of exceptional grace, a true gentleman who cares for all those around him. For most of his long career, he advised our undergraduate students. He did not just help them choose courses – he was a true mentor, forging personal bonds with the young and old, men and women, gay and straight, black and white.

Bob saw a lot of change over fifty years. The city and the university are not the same, and neither is our department. In many ways, we are stronger than ever. As you will read about in some of the articles that follow, our professors are first-class scholars with national and international reputations. We write books with the best publishing houses, win prestigious awards and grants, and get invited to give lectures, appear on documentaries, write popular articles, and present on conference panels around the world. Our graduate program produces talented scholar-teachers who are landing tenure-track jobs in an ultra-competitive environment. Our undergraduates thrive in courses with innovative and award-winning teachers who promote high standards.



*Dr. Walter “Bob” Brown with many of his undergraduate and graduate students at his retirement party in May 2015*

And yet, we face new challenges.

Institutions such as the University of Memphis face new financial burdens as state legislatures pull back funding for higher education.

Meanwhile, the Internet is full of stupid articles about the “death of the humanities,” reflecting some ignorant

thinking about what goes on in our classes or the value of our

degree. In fact, as business leaders attest, our economy demands skills such as critical thinking, effective written communication, and knowledge of human cultures and values – the exact skills taught in history classes! Humanities majors, moreover, succeed over the long term in ways that far surpass most other majors.

The great task before us is to make history come alive for our students. We want them to see how the study of history is not simply a recitation of past events, but rather a dynamic process that shapes how we consider our own world. When we teach them to think, really think, about that document, we are teaching them to place ideas in conversation, to smash past provincialism or ignorance. When we teach them to stop and rewrite that sentence, we are teaching them that they have a voice, and it matters.

And so, as a department, when we look to the future, we also need to look to the past. We need to look at people like Bob Brown, who devoted his life to the highest ideals of our profession. Our students matter.

Our alumni matter, too! Please email me at [agoudszo@memphis.edu](mailto:agoudszo@memphis.edu) with any ideas, criticisms, or reflections on your own experience with the Department of History. I would love to hear from you.



*Dr. Aram Goudsouzian, Chair  
Department of History*

# The Making of Imperial Japan

*An Interview with Dr. Catherine Phipps*



*Dr. Catherine Phipps, associate professor of East Asian history at the University of Memphis.*

**Duenas-Vargas:** Your book is a fascinating study of Japan's transformation from a largely self-sustaining economy into an expansive empire. What led you to focus on trade to develop such a convincing story?

**Phipps:** I originally wanted to do a project on late-nineteenth century connections between Japan and China. Envisioning that I'd be able to recreate human and economic networks across the East China Sea, I targeted ports in southern Japan that I thought might have had strong Chinese ties. Despite this deliberate effort to move away from established narratives about Japan's relationship with Euro-American countries, however, sources pointed me exactly where I didn't want to go: much of Japan's maritime activity involved the Western presence in one way or another.

I turned my attention to the port city of Moji and its significant coal trade. Not completely letting go of my resistance, however, I realized that there was more to the story. Moji was part of a little-known subsystem of ports, which I call "special trading ports," that had not yet been studied in either English-language or Japanese scholarship. I decided to elucidate Japan's transition from semi-colony to empire by way of Moji, the most successful of the special trading ports. Methodologically, I used my training in

**(Phipps, con't):** in historical geography to think about Moji and the special trading ports across multiple spatial scales. These spatial scales comprise the three sections of my book. The first part examines Japan's incorporation into the modern world order (global to national). The second moves to examining Japan's shifting port hierarchy and the competitive establishment of Moji (national to local). Finally, I consider Moji role during Japan's first modern war and its position with the end of the unequal treaties (local to global.)

**Duenas-Vargas:** The penetrations of Western trade in countries such as China and Japan differed from that which occurred in other world regions in the nineteenth century. In particular, the Western nations imposed the treaty port system in these two countries. What are some of the main features of the treaty port system? And why did the system have such different outcomes in each country?

**Phipps:** The treaty port system is the overarching system in which the special trading ports operated and thus forms the basic framework for my discussion. This system is also what made Japan a "semi-colony," so although not directly colonized, Japan lost full sovereignty in the 1850s. The most common images of the Western arrival in East Asia are of the Opium War in China and the appearance of the American commodore Matthew Perry with his menacing "black ships" off Tokyo's coast. Through warfare (in China) and gunboat diplomacy (in Japan), the Western powers—particularly the Americans, British, Dutch, French, and Russians—essentially forced China and Japan to join the Western world order on terms that were unfavorable to them. This inequality was embodied in the so-called "unequal treaties," which required China and Japan to open ports (the "treaty ports"), grant rights of extraterritoriality, and concede tariff autonomy, among other things. The unequal treaties threw both countries into chaos. China, an expansive, ethnic empire in its own right, had a difficult time accommodating these new circumstances. Moreover, the Western nations, eager to expand their trade in opium for products like tea, silk, and porcelain, focused their attention on China

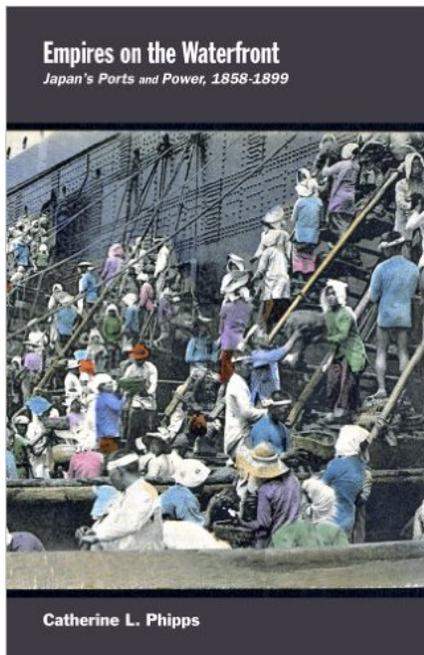
**(Phipps con't):** The unequal treaties threw both countries into chaos. China, an expansive, multiethnic empire in its own right, had a difficult time accommodating these new circumstances. Moreover, the Western nations, eager to expand their trade in opium for products like tea, silk, and porcelain, focused their attention on China. Japan, a much smaller and more centralized country, had more room to maneuver. Not only were their markets less well known, the Japanese had ten years to watch what was already happening in China and work to minimize the impact Western informal imperialism might have on them.

**Duenas-Vargas:** The “Special Trading Ports,” designated by the central government, ameliorated the restrictions imposed by the treaty port system, and led Japan to develop prosperous trading paths. The importance of these Special Trading Ports is enormous. Can you elaborate on this?

**Phipps:** As I mentioned, I discovered the special trading ports when conducting research on the port of Moji and its coal trade. Importantly, the special trading ports led me to think about what the unequal treaties did not do, a question not often asked. The answer is that they didn't prevent Japan from opening ports on its own or from conducting foreign trade outside the designated treaty ports. This left Japanese leaders significant room to operate their own international trade and begin building their own commercial, military, transport, and information networks, all with the legal sanction and tacit support of the treaty powers. In the end, Japan was able to turn the treaty port

system to its own advantage, in part by making use of extensive British shipping networks to conduct trade throughout East Asia. Within a couple of decades of the unequal treaties, the Japanese began using the treaty port system to launch their own imperialistic activities in the region.

**DV:** During the period of your study, coal was the most important commodity exported, enabling Japan's



**(DV con't):** transition from a self-sufficient economy to an international one. How did this happen?

**Phipps:** It's really interesting to me that people often talk about Japan as a country that doesn't have any natural resources. What they really mean is that Japan doesn't have oil. It did, however, have an abundance of coal, the very resource keenly sought during the age of steam. So, at a pivotal moment in the nation's history, the Japanese had a valuable commodity to sell and it was in high demand. The buyers were the Western powers, especially the British, who dominated East Asian waters with their steamships and had established coaling stations in ports like Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Singapore. The Japanese sold to these locations while also establishing coaling ports along the Japanese archipelago. Japan's treaty ports—Hakodate, Kobe, Nagasaki, Niigata, and Yokohama—sold and loaded coal, but so did some of the special trading ports, which were technically closed to foreigners but not their ships.

**Duenas-Vargas:** The focus of your study is the city of Moji, which went from a small town to a major international port in a decade. What were the conditions that enabled Moji's remarkable rise?

**Phipps:** A coal industry insider once wrote, and I'm paraphrasing here, that the railroad (which carried coal from regional mines to the port) is Moji's father and the port construction company (which created the harbor and docks, enabling coal to be loaded and shipped) is its mother. Moji is the product of this union between port and rail. If Moji is a living being, then coal is the blood that makes the limbs and body move. He continued: “Coal is Moji's life, it was born of coal, and the rapid progress and prosperity it has attained is due only to coal.” As this quote demonstrates, coal was essential to Moji's rise, but it alone was not sufficient. The port city's development also relied on its strategic location, timing, and dogged effort at the local level. Within a decade of its establishment, Moji was operating as a major coaling station, a waterfront contact zone, a key military hub for Japan's war against China (1894-95), and a hotspot for gathering news from the frontlines. By the start of the twentieth century, when my book ends, Moji is known internationally as an industrial city and one of Japan's major seaports. Its prominence lasted until Japan's empire was brought down in 1945.

**Duenas-Vargas:** thank you for your time and congratulations for such a fine work.

# Memories of a Massacre

*By Beverly Greene Bond and Susan Eva O'Donovan*

The shooting started late Tuesday afternoon. Soon mobs of angry men were swarming the streets, leaving a trail of mayhem and terror in their wake. For three days, floating crowds of armed men wreaked havoc on their city. They broke into the homes, rifled through and stole from citizens' property, reduced countless churches and schools to smoking rubble, raped women with appalling impunity, and murdered many more, including a sixteen year old girl, who found herself trapped between a burning home and a bloodthirsty mob. No formal charges were ever brought against any of the men who did the burning, murdering, raping, and pillaging. But enough brave survivors came forward to testify in the aftermath, that we now know that at least forty-six people died over the course of those three days. We also now know that it was a bloodbath that would help reshape a nation.



"Scenes in Memphis, Tennessee, during the riot," 26 May, 1866, *Harper's Weekly: A Journal of Civilization*.

The massacre we described above took place 150 years ago and very close to home. In fact, it happened within a few miles of the University of Memphis. It erupted in south Memphis in May 1866. If this shocks you now, you can be assured that the reports that flooded out of our city a century and a half ago shocked a war-weary nation even more. With the Civil War scarcely a year over and peace a still fragile commodity, news of the death and destruction visited on Memphis stunned a country that until then had been content to let their president broker his own version of Reconstruction. To be sure, rumors and reports of violence had been circulating up out of the former Confederacy ever since war's end. Brought forward by former slaves, horrified eye witnesses, and the military officers who had been charged with overseeing the transition from slavery to freedom, accounts of former slaveholders treating the newly freed as if they were still slaves, inflicting savage beatings, withholding wages, destroying schools, and denying the benefit of law to anyone who dared object had become a regular staple in the national press. But with each new account, concerns mounted among Americans. They wondered if the war was in fact over; they wondered if their sacrifices had been for naught. They began to question President Andrew Johnson's policies, the terms of which allowed former Confederates to regain control over legal, civil, and political institutions while leaving former slaves all but defenseless in the face of people who wanted nothing more than to restore black Southerners to previous positions of servitude. Indeed, to many Americans, Johnson's sympathies rested far too much with the former Confederacy, a phenomenon that deeply disturbed those who had supported the Union through four hard years of war. The violence that swept through Memphis in May 1866 seemed to confirm these fears. If Memphis was any indication, Reconstruction as imagined and enacted by President Johnson was a failure. The country's precious but tentative peace was in jeopardy.

Determined to staunch what many Americans feared would be a renewal of open hostilities, Congress quickly dispatched a delegation to Memphis to investigate the events that had rocked the city in May. Arriving three weeks after the shooting subsided, they hurriedly set about conducting 170 interviews, gathering testimony from dazed victims, witnesses, city officials, and military personnel. After concluding their work, the delegation confirmed what a nervous nation feared: “the proportions of what is called the ‘riot,’ but in reality the massacre, proved to be far more extended, and the circumstances surrounding it of much greater significance, than the committee had any conception of before they entered upon their investigation.”

Those of us who specialize in the history of emancipation and Reconstruction have long been aware of the significance of the Memphis Massacre. For generations, we have grappled with the legacy of Reconstruction violence, considering its sources, its meanings, and its consequences. We have long understood how bloody confrontations like the one that unfolded in Memphis could – and did – have far-reaching effect. What happened in Memphis in May 1866 was as much a national event as it was a local event. The same holds true for the large-scale violence that swept New Orleans just two months later; Camilla, Georgia, in 1868; Colfax, Louisiana, in 1873; and Hamburg, South Carolina, in 1876 (to name just a few). That Memphis was the first of these brutal encounters, and that the mobs who swarmed the streets deliberately sought out black veterans, their families, and their community institutions, lent the attack special saliency. What did it mean for peace when Union soldiers were once again falling before white southerners’ guns? What did it mean for peace that women and children were being made once again to run for their lives? What did it mean for peace that federal authority was being so vehemently and publicly flaunted by an enemy the nation thought it had already vanquished?

To a country that dreaded the prospect of resuming war, the events of May 1866 seemed to provide incontrovertible proof that simply declaring the Confederacy, and with it slavery, dead was insufficient. If freedom was to be universal, more needed to be done to project freedom’s chief beneficiaries: those four million black men, women, and children who until recently had been held in slavery. Black southerners needed more than the 13th Amendment. They needed a legal and political structure that would shield them from wanton violence and would enable them to own and hold property without fear of losing it to a thief in the night. They needed to know that their churches and schools could stand unmolested and that the contracts into which they entered as workers would be honored and enforced. They needed to participate in the making and enforcing of law. They needed to vote. Faced with the unsavory prospect of continued carnage and war, which is what the Memphis Massacre seemed to foretell, Congress and the nation agreed to act, and they acted fast. Within a matter of months, federal lawmakers had begun drafting and passing a series of laws that we now know remade the nation in fundamental and foundational ways. Not least of these new and radical measures were the 14th and 15th Amendments, which, respectively, ensured to every citizen due process of law and guaranteed voting rights to every adult male regardless of “race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” The mob that terrified Memphis for those three days in May did not get what they wanted. Rather than turning back the clock to an era when slavery reigned, that murderous mob unwittingly turned the clock forward. For in striking out at soldiers, women, children, churches, and schools, their actions pushed the nation into laying what became the legal and political groundwork for who we are today as a nation.



*Drs. Susan O'Donovan and Beverly Bond, associate professors of African American history at the University of Memphis. They are also the project directors for Memories of a Massacre: Memphis in 1866.*

But curiously, despite the revolution that was Reconstruction, this is a history that has been kept out of sight. There are no markers that reflect events in Memphis in May. No statutes honor the fallen. No parks mark where bodies dropped or buildings burned. No part of Fort Pickering has ever been designated a national historic site. There are no museums like those at Antietam, Gettysburg, and Manassas. The absence of this history is more than a local problem. It is a national problem. Unlike the Civil War, which has enjoyed large and sustained public attention for well over a century, Reconstruction is a cypher. As Kate Siber explained in a recent article published by the National Parks Conservation Association, of the 409 historical units currently operated by the National Park Service, scores of which memorialize the Civil War, “there isn’t a single one dedicated to Reconstruction.” Arguably one of the most transformative moments in our past remains shrouded in silence: an untold chapter in Memphis history, an untold chapter in Tennessee history, and an untold chapter in American history.

But that silence is about to break. We have set about to bring the Memphis Massacre to light. Working in partnership with the National Park Service, the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area, Humanities Tennessee, the University of Memphis, and many other community, academic, and private partners, we have organized an exciting series of events designed to illuminate what was, at its core, a collective and often violent debate about freedom’s meaning. Starting in February with a wreath-laying ceremony hosted by LeMoyne-Owen College to commemorate the May 1866 destruction of Lincoln Chapel and culminating in a two-day, academic symposium in May, our goal is to situate Memphis and its tragic fault lines in what was a much larger and more tumultuous story. Scholars have long viewed Reconstruction as a critical national turning point. We see our program as a long-overdue starting point, one that will launch an enduring conversation about Reconstruction and its legacies.

Of course, it is hard to generate a lively public discussion in the absence of discussants, and so we urge all of you reading this article to consider attending one or more of our commemorative events. There is a lot to choose from. We will be offering book talks, public lectures, traveling exhibits, and of course, our May symposium, all of which are free and open to the public. If you are a teacher or know a teacher, we have something for you too. In April, we will be offering a workshop that will focus on teaching Reconstruction’s history with primary sources. Detailed information about each of these events and many more is available at our website: *Memories of a Massacre: Memphis in 1866*. You can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter (#memphismassacre1866), and the Memphis Massacre blog. Please join us in a first-of-its kind educational event. Help us illuminate a part of our past that has been carefully and deliberately concealed. Help us shatter a silence. Help us make history as we talk history.

COMMEMORATION OF THE 1866

# MEMPHIS MASSACRE

EXPLORING SLAVERY, EMANCIPATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### February 3

LeMoyne-Owen College  
Dr. Bobby Lovett (Professor Emeritus, TSU)  
**Hallowed Grounds of African American Education**  
Metropolitan Baptist Church, 11:00 a.m. (free and open to the public; contact fem\_ajanku@loc.edu)

### March 17

Rhodes College “Communities in Conversation”  
Dr. Stephen Ash (Professor Emeritus, UTK)  
**The Memphis Massacre: The Race Riot that Shook the Nation One Year After the Civil War**  
Hardie Auditorium, Palmer Hall, 6:00 p.m. (reception at 5:30 p.m.)

### May 20–21

University of Memphis History Department, Academic Symposium  
**Memories of a Massacre**  
Scholarship speakers: Robert Sutton, National Park Service

For a complete calendar of events and a list of our collaborative partners, visit [memphis.edu/memphis-massacre/](http://memphis.edu/memphis-massacre/) or call (901) 678-3376.

The Memphis Massacre Commemoration Project is sponsored by the University of Memphis’s History Department with funding from the University of Memphis’ College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Communication, African and African American Studies Program, Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change, and Marcus Orr Center for the Humanities; Rhodes College’s History Department and Communities in Conversation; the West Tennessee Historical Society; the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area; Humanities Tennessee; Ronald and Marianne Walter; Dr. Charles Crawford; and the National Park Service.



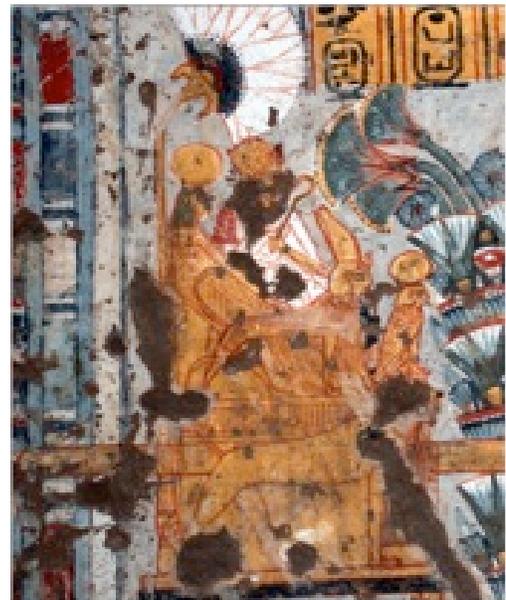
# Daily Life in Theban tomb 16 in Luxor, Egypt

*By Suzanne Onstine*

Since 2008 I have directed the research concession for archaeological work in Theban tomb 16, that of an ancient Egyptian man named Panehsy and his wife, Tarenu, as well as at least 100 other individuals who used the tomb after its original occupants were long dead. The tomb was cut into the limestone hills of ancient Thebes and painted with vibrant scenes from the couple's life and the afterlife. For about 1000 years after their death during the reign of Ramesses II (ca. 1250 BCE) the tomb was reused by other Thebans as their burial place as well. This tradition of reusing existing tombs was common, and in this aspect the tomb is not unique. Unfortunately these secondary burials and their original contexts are rarely studied very carefully, and are often in a bad state of preservation due to looting over the last 200 years. In addition to documenting the original structure, one of our main research goals is to address this secondary use material; through the careful collection and analysis of human remains and grave goods, we are gaining some new insights into the lives of people in Egypt after the New Kingdom.

The original structure was carved into the hills of a section of the Theban necropolis now called Dra abu el-Naga, on the west bank of modern Luxor in southern Egypt. It is a modest tomb of 2 rooms arranged in a T-shape. They are decorated in vibrant colors depicting the couple worshipping the gods as well as some scenes from their personal/professional lives. Panehsy was the overseer of chanters of the offering table of Amun; in one scene he is depicted at the head of a procession of priests carrying sacred vases out of a temple pylon.

This probably represents the Ramesside façade of Karnak temple across the river. Panehsy was also a priest of Amenhotep I of the forecourt; Amenhotep I was the first king of the 18th dynasty – a couple hundred years before Panehsy lived. The king was deified after his death in an unusual incarnation as an oracle. The statue image of the god was carried through the villages on a palanquin borne by priests like Panehsy. Villagers would ask the statue questions or address prayers to it in hopes the god would answer. Panehsy and the other priests then interpreted the messages from the god for the people. A scene of the divine king in his carrying chair is a focal point of the tomb, and other images of Amenhotep and his wife Ahmose-Nefertari are prominently featured, (figure 2).



*Figure 2*



*Figure 1*

Other scenes include agricultural vignettes. Harvesting grain, felling a tree, plowing a field are all subjects that would have been part of daily life, and are here elevated to a wish for the afterlife that all the owners' estates and material wealth join him in the afterlife. Humor is present in a scene where an overloaded donkey opens his mouth to bray as a worker threatens him with a stick, prodding him onward.



Figure 3

Fire has damaged a great deal of the second room's decoration, but we can still make out the deceased couple being tended to by the tree goddess and the sem-priest who make offerings on their behalf to cause them to live again in the afterlife. The first 3 years of the project focused on creating facsimile drawings of this room and the first through digital epigraphy methods – basically tracing using a Wacom tablet and Photoshop. Using Photoshop to manipulate photos brings out details otherwise difficult to see; checking drawings against the actual wall in varying light conditions reveals many details that can be added to the facsimile drawing. For publication purposes this is an important step, as the photographs alone will not reveal the full extent of the decorative program.



Figure 4

From the rear of the tomb there is a winding sloping passage that leads to what I believe may be a shaft for the original burial. This passage is about 40 meters long and when I first visited the tomb it was filled with evidence of modern looting. Broken mummified body parts and linen bandaging from the mummies were strewn everywhere. I decided it was necessary to do something to conserve and study these remains, so in 2011 began the clearance of passage. Meter by meter we have uncovered the bodies and artifacts associated with the secondary burials that occurred between the 21st dynasty and the Ptolemaic period – about 1000 years. I have been able to date the material based on diagnostic artifact styles and names of people preserved on shabti figures, the servant statues Egyptians placed with their burials to help carry out tasks in the afterlife.

The bodies of these individuals have suffered greatly from looting in modern times. It is likely that the tomb was looted in several phases, the most recent of which happened between the 1960s and 1980s. Several scenes were cut out of the walls and the coffins and bodies were smashed apart to look for small objects of resale value. Ancient Egyptians included amulets



Figure 5

and jewelry on the bodies of the deceased to protect and adorn the corpse. These small items can be easily sold on the art market as they are rarely specific enough to trace to any specific tomb or person. Auction houses and Ebay are full of these small items – scarabs, amulets, beads, etc. – many of which came from a situation exactly like this one. In order for the looters to get at the material the corpse must be unwrapped and in the process are broken into pieces. The coffins of this time period were largely made of cartonnage – linen impregnated with plaster and then painted – which is not terrible strong when being manhandled by looters. These coffins are beautiful and distinctive when intact and can be found in practically every museum with Egyptian material.

Even though this situation is not ideal, we can use the opportunity to examine the remains using various techniques. Visual observation is our best tool, and because the bones are exposed, not wrapped and encased in coffins, we are able to measure and assess bones to determine age and sex, as well as look for evidence of pathologies. Additionally, the project owns a portable x-ray machine which we have successfully used to x-ray a number of individual pieces, revealing a range of pathologies and interesting aspects of the mummification process. When the analysis of material is complete, we can create an overview of demographics and general health concerns for the Thebans in the 1st millennium BCE. We will also have a better idea of the diversity of mummification and funerary practices in this region, which is one of the richest archaeological areas in the world.

**If you are interested in Egyptology check out these upcoming events!**

Tuesday, March 15: Thirteenth Annual Legacy of Egypt Lecture by Stephen Vinson, "The African-American Reception of Ancient Egypt, 1939-1987," Rose Theatre South Lobby (Room 115)

Friday, March 18: Egyptology Graduate Student Association Presents Liz Cummins, "Sex in Ancient Egypt," Fountain View Suite

Ancient Egypt Family Day Event, Coming Spring 2016

## A Journey through Landscapes of Nationalism

*An Interview with Dr. Andrei Znamenski*



*Dr. Andrei Znamenski, professor of Russian and Eurasian history at the University of Memphis.*

**Duenas-Vargas:** You took two research/conference trips last summer. Tell us about them.

**Znamenski:** It has already become a tradition that each year you interview me about my summer research trips.

**Duenas-Vargas:** Well, I am glad to be your "soundboard" again.

**Znamenski:** For your next newsletter, we should reverse the roles and allow me to interview you on what you accomplished in Colombia, where you spent the whole semester last year.

**Duenas-Vargas:** All right, but, for now, I am putting you on the spotlight.

**Znamenski:** Sounds good with me, but only on one condition. There will be a major thread that will run throughout our conversation. Do you mind?

**Duenas-Vargas:** I don't mind. What is it going to be?

**Znamenski:** I want to share with you how, last summer, I happened to stumble upon various brands of nationalism – big and small – in Eurasia. Formally, I went there to conduct talks at two academic conferences: one in Estonia and another in Siberia (Russia). In between, I was doing some archival research at St. Petersburg, Russia.

**Duenas-Vargas:** Tell us about the first conference.

**Znamenski:** The first one was put together by the Nordic Geographers Association and Tallinn University, Estonia. The panel on which I participated dealt with historical geography. My own paper, “Patriot Games,” explored how current Russian nationalism treats Alaskan history. As you know, Alaska was the object of my earlier research in the 1990s. Russian nationalism is still infested with a large dose of imperialism and laments the loss of the empire. For this reason, it frequently acts as an amputee who cannot get used to a missing limb in his sleeve. This imperial imagination seeks to appropriate the areas that used to be parts of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, which is repeatedly accompanied by heated patriotic rhetoric on TV, in print and web media, and in-group conversations.

**Duenas-Vargas:** Can you give us an example of this patriotic rhetoric?

**Znamenski:** One episode somehow got stuck in my mind. When I left Estonia and arrived in St. Petersburg, which is in northern Russia, the first thing I saw, when coming out of the airport, was a large posh car that was passing me. Its windshield was decorated with an orange and black “St. George ribbon”; this ribbon (a symbol of the patron saint of the Russian military) is currently a badge of patriotism for millions of my former compatriots. The back of the car sported big letters in blue: “Onward to Berlin! I honor WWII vets.” The irony of the situation was that the car driven by that well-to-do patriot was a German Mercedes! By the way, the topic of World War II is a “sacred cow” in Russia. From the Soviet times to the present, the government and conservative elements have been constantly bombarding people with two pieces of propaganda. First, they have been arguing that the Soviet Union/Russia had singlehandedly saved the world from fascism. For this reason, the whole world owes them everything. Second, since the country lost in that war more people than any other country, Russians suffered more than anybody else and, again, for this reason, the world owes them. Many people internalized this mythology. The government is now milking the heroism and suffering sentiments in order to boost patriotism and distract people’s attention from the deteriorating economic situation. Moreover, two years ago, the Russian parliament adopted a special law that criminalized so-called falsifications of

**(Znamenski, con't):** World War II history. Now writers and scholars who say “wrong things” about that history and “smear” the heroic deeds can be formally penalized and would have to pay a fine. I wonder who is going to be the ultimate judge in this matter.

**Duenas-Vargas:** You sidetracked a bit. How is it related to your Estonian paper?

**Znamenski:** Well, what essentially I did in my paper was debunking the nationalist mythology as applied to Alaskan history, which patriotic writers envision as more “Russian” than it had been in reality. I showed that this particular area, which had been a colony of the Russian Empire until 1867, never had more than 500 Russian settlers and that the greater part of the indigenous population was not even aware of being a part of the czar’s domain.

**Duenas-Vargas:** So it is a marginal history topic with wider implications.

**Znamenski:** Precisely. I would only add that for current patriotic writers in Russia, this nationalist rereading of Alaska’s history neatly fits anti-Americanism – the dominant geopolitical narrative in current Russia. Those writers suggest that the US government and corrupt elements in the czar’s court somehow conspired to steal that precious piece of land from the empire. In reality, the czar’s envoy literally begged the US Congress to buy what, at that time, was dismissed by everybody as an “ice box.” He even had to bribe several congressional people to speed up the whole process.



**Duenas-Vargas:** How did this earlier research inform your present research and your methodology in general?

**Znamenski:** It sharpened my skepticism of various attempts to write history from a viewpoint of a particular (socio-economic, national, religious, ideological, cultural, ethnic, or racial) group. Do not get me wrong: it is absolutely essential to be aware of the existence of those viewpoints. In fact, we need to bring to light as many perspectives as possible to make the “historical canvas” more “complete.” But it is very problematic when a scholar sides with a particular group or a nation and begins to massage its ego.

**Duenas-Vargas:** But you cannot be absolutely unbiased in your research?

**Znamenski:** I absolutely agree with you. Social scholarship was, is, and will always be politicized to some extent. It is a natural thing. The point is how to minimize our biases.

**Duenas-Vargas:** What is your methodological bias, by the way?

**Znamenski:** I side with those scholars who are more focused on the individual. In my view, we are first of all individuals with our own agency. We as individuals can act rationally or irrationally and nobody can predict what we are going to do. On the one hand, in various degrees, we are “conditioned” by economic, national, gender, ethnic, racial, religious, ideological and cultural forces. On the other hand, we can shape and transgress those forces. I have always been interested in how particular historical characters shaped their identities, while encountering all those forces I mentioned above. So I guess I can describe my approach as “methodological anarchism.” It is not my definition. Philosopher Paul Feyerabend coined this expression somewhere in the 1970s.

**Duenas-Vargas:** Tell us about your second conference trip.

**Znamenski:** From Estonia, I flew thousands of miles eastward to the Altai (it is in southern Siberia), where I did another conference talk. I was talking about the influence of Mongolian Buddhism on the ethnoreligious movement in the Altai area in the early 20th century. By the way, this topic



**(Znamenski, con't):** has been covered in detail in the updated edition of my book *Red Shambhala*, which was published last November in France as *Shambhala, le royaume rouge Magie et géopolitique au coeur de l'Asie*.

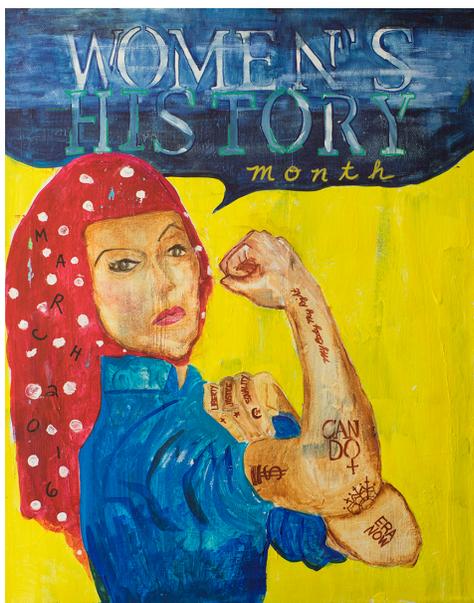
**Duenas-Vargas:** How is this second talk related to the theme of our interview?

**Znamenski:** There is a direct link here. To my surprise, doing a paper on such a seemingly obscure topic, I ran

into trouble with local Altaian “patriots” who, I guess, wanted to feel indigenous through and through. The very mentioning of outside influences on their “pure” history and culture produced an outburst of an ethnic “temper tantrum” on their part. It was a great learning experience for me! A Russian academic, who is deeply entangled with their sentiments, mentored me in the following manner: “For you this [the influence of Buddhism on Altai] is an academic topic, but for us here it is not!” The further exchange of replicas was even more

(Znamenski, con’t): interesting. When I asked her “So now one cannot compare Mongolia and Altai?” she answered, “You can compare, but you should not draw direct genetic links.” How do you like this? I am not a naïve person, and, of course, I am fully aware that every part of our world has its own “Altai” with its own can of ideological worms and taboos.

**Duenas-Vargas:** Yes, indeed. Thank you for sharing your experiences.



## Women's History Month: Celebrate a woman in your life!

Inspired by women of action both in the past and today, the 2016 theme for Women’s History Month is “We Can Do It!” In line with the U of M’s new motto, “Driven by Doing,” and symbolized by modern and diverse “Rosie the Riveters,” we ask you to join us in the celebration of women who drive positive change.

We invite you to honor women in your life who have made a positive impact and exemplified the “We Can Do It!” spirit. Visit the Women's History Month home page at <http://www.memphis.edu/whm/> and use the link provided to write a paragraph about a woman who has done something to benefit you, our campus, and/or her community, and show her that her efforts are appreciated! Submissions accepted from 29 Feb through 25 March.

# Learning and Enjoying at the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak Temple, Luxor

*By Erika Feleg and Andrew Shilling, Ph. D. Students*

Visiting Egypt is the ultimate dream of every Egyptology student. No book, museum or documentary film could ever replace the experience of seeing history up close and personal. Yet to date there are only a handful of Egyptology programs in the U.S. that would involve students in fieldwork. Luckily, the Egyptology program in the History Department at the University of Memphis can boast with two ongoing field projects in Egypt in which both M.A. and Ph.D. Egyptology students can participate.

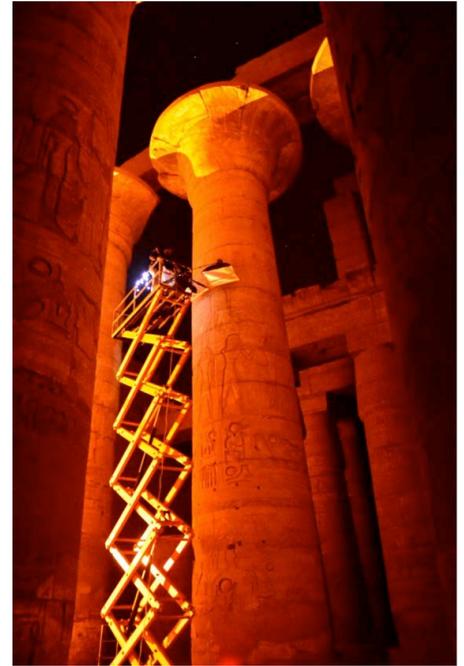
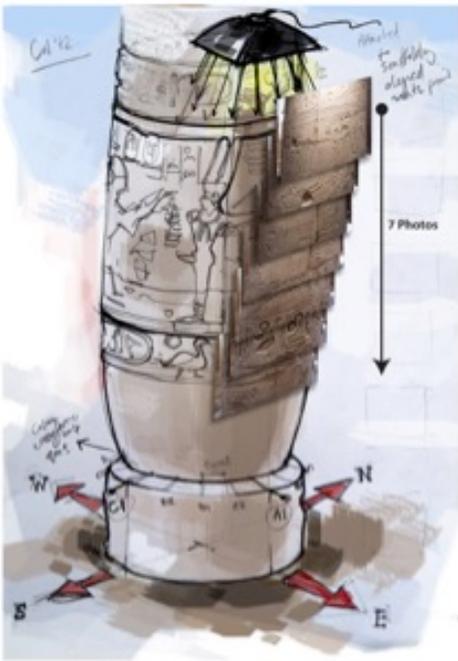
In the autumn and winter of 2014-2015, Dr. Peter Brand and seven Egyptology graduate students from the University of Memphis traveled to Egypt to continue documenting and recording the relief scenes in the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak Temple in Luxor. Building on the progress that we had made during recording inscriptions in previous field trip, we left Memphis for Cairo on 26

October, with the goal of documenting the reliefs and inscriptions decorating the 134 massive columns of the Hypostyle Hall. Established in 1990 at the University of Memphis, this project is one of a small number of renowned ongoing epigraphic missions in Egypt.

After a brief excursion in Cairo we traveled to Luxor and began our work recording and documenting the monumental inscriptions located on the Hypostyle Hall's forest of columns. On a typical day during our six-day workweek, the team would leave our flats at 5:30 a.m. and travel to Karnak to begin our work at 6:00 a.m. It is imperative for an epigraphic mission, such as the Hypostyle Hall Project, to meticulously copy, check, and collate the inscriptions to make sure the information that we record coincides exactly with the inscriptional material on the columns.



*At the entrance to the Hypostyle Hall, Dr. Peter Brand, professor of Egyptology at the University of Memphis, his students from Memphis, and some of our Egyptian workers. Pictured from left to right top: Arielle Reed, Cristina Rose, Dr. Peter Brand, Hadjaj, Erika Feleg; bottom: Mahmud, Kris Holmes, Hazem Shareed, Andrew Shilling, Hassan, Amr Shahat (not pictured).*



*Pictures from left to right: a diagram showing Owen Murray's method, a picture of his scaffolding shadow box, and a large column of the Hypostyle Hall at night.*

In teams of two or three, students would transcribe the inscriptions from a number of horizontal registers or bandeaux, with specific focus on unique characteristics and positions of the signs, their paleography and orthography, while also noting peculiarities of grammar, paint color and even different “artistic licenses” taken in the writing of particular hieroglyphic signs. The workday would typically last until about 1:00 p.m., when the heat would begin to rise (even in winter) and the hordes of tourists would make it nigh impossible to accomplish our task. After a team lunch (and sometimes a post-work power nap), we would then digitize the information that we recorded that day and plan our method of attack for the next day.

Traveling to Egypt during the fall and winter months allowed for the team to meet numerous prominent Egyptologists and visit active and closed archaeological sites throughout Egypt. These included the magnificent tomb of Montuemhat, Theban Tomb (TT) 34; the Johns Hopkins University expedition at the Temple of Mut at Karnak; the ARCE conservation project and field school at the tomb of Djehuty (TT110) as well as the tomb of Panehsy (TT 16), the excavation of which is under the supervision of Dr. Suzanne Onstine of the History Department. We were also very fortunate to have the opportunity to study at the library of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, whose Egyptology collections are among the most expansive not

only in Egypt, but the world. Our colleagues from the University of Chicago were also kind enough to invite us to Epigraphic Survey's headquarters in Luxor, known as Chicago House, to celebrate both the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

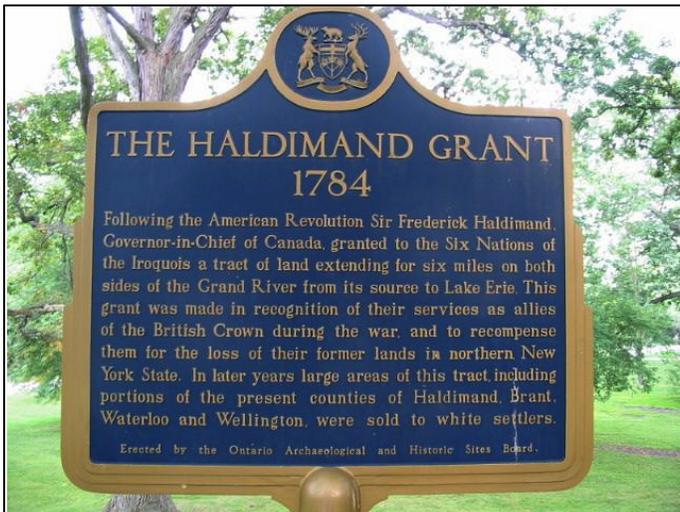
We also had the chance to do some nighttime photography inside the Hypostyle Hall. The 12 large columns of the Hall are significantly taller than their smaller companions, which made it difficult to use the soft-box technique Owen Murray (a professional archaeological photographer) developed for use in the rest of the Hall. In order to get the best results, we needed to block out the sun and use an artificial light source. So, the authorities allowed us on entire night (from 11:00 p.m. until 6:00 a. m.) to experiment. There is nothing more eerie than the Hypostyle Hall in utter darkness and silence, with only fluttering bats there to remind you time has not come to a complete halt.

A lot has been accomplished during this field season of the Hypostyle Hall Project. As students we had part of an invaluable experience that cannot be equaled. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the entire History Department of the University of Memphis for allowing us to take time during a busy fall semester to participate in fieldwork, and to Dr. Peter Brand for his mentorship and trust that as students we can make a valuable contribution.

# Tales from the Tundra

by William J. Campbell

Not that long ago, but long enough to remember Ronald Reagan and Saturday morning cartoons on TV, I came across a public history placard on my way to a campground on the northern shore of Lake Erie. I was on vacation with my family. We were headed to Turkey Point Provincial Park with the beat-up family trailer in-tow. Having grown-up in a predominantly German community of less than two thousand people located one-hour north of our destination, I knew very little about the areas local history let alone what could be found just over the horizons of the breathtaking Great Lakes. I knew even less about North America's First Nations. In fact, on that crummy cold day in April 1980-something, I read about how Mohawk Chief Joseph Brant secured from the British Crown a large tract of land in southern Ontario following the American Revolution. By the late 1780s, that land became home to hundreds of displaced Iroquois that fought with loyalists during the revolution. My mind bent as I pulled my toque over my ears and ate my beaver tail. It bent not because I understood the complexities of eighteenth-century treaty negotiations (as if I ever will), but because that placard confirmed that Indians must have once roamed through the forest behind my house.



Well, notwithstanding the years of fuel that placard produced for my otherwise stalling imagination, I was wrong about the Indians in the bushes behind my house. In fact, the “primordial forest” behind my family’s bungalow was just a little bit older than Reagan – and the most interesting artifact I ever found while inspecting the terrain was a discarded toilet seat. Time passed. CBC’s Hockey Night in Canada eventually commandeered my loyalty instead of Saturday morning cartoons; my interest in school faded. But I never forgot about that placard.

Years later while struggling to stay awake in my Grade 9 high-school history class, my teacher informed the students that Brantford, Ontario (the hometown of none other than Wayne Gretzky, the best hockey player ever to skate the frozen tundra) was named after Joseph Brant. In fact, like Brantford, the location of my own hometown was part of a land cession that stretched back two hundred years to the negotiations between Brant and Frederick Haldimand, Governor-in-Chief of British Canada. Located within the Grand River watershed, the soil my depressed little town would eventually be built upon was sold by its indigenous owners to pacifist immigrants from Pennsylvania known as Mennonites; oh, and the town fifteen minutes north (Fergus, Ontario) that always inexplicably held annual Highland games was sold to Scottish immigrants. Go figure. All of a sudden, like actually finding an arrowhead in my backyard instead of a discarded toilet seat, the geopolitical history of my known world fell into place.



And so, a few years later as I weighed my options (go to university or purchase a used Trans-Am), I sent in a mediocre application to university to become a history major. From there, after a few sidetracks in Asia and South and Central America, I went on to grad school. With the guidance of a wonderful mentor at McMaster University, the more time I spent reading and writing the more I learned that history was, in fact, not all about Nazi Germany and America’s 20th Century. The more I read about North America, the more I understood how my story was in ways connected to peoples and spaces whose histories were both fascinating and still very much alive. More specifically, my studies narrowed to focus on how First Nations and colonizers interacted, co-existed, and negotiated, often over land; centuries-old exchanges that continue to have direct relevance to very contentious issues today. And these, the ties that bound the intimacy of “my” local history to a much larger, and oftentimes unsettling narrative, is why I continued to pursue history.

After spending a year in Montréal learning how to teach while pretending to revise my dissertation, I was fortunate to be offered a few permanent employment opportunities in academia. Like any other serious scholar focused on the history northeastern North America and worried about being close to their sources, I opted to take the job in California. While spending the next six years primarily teaching, I did manage to publish that pesky dissertation. Then, in 2014, when I was presented with an opportunity to take a position at a university that would allow for more time to research and write, I jumped on it. And so, together with the help of that public history placard and the depreciated market for used Trans-As, that is how I ended up as the Native American and Early North American specialist here at the University of Memphis.



*William J. Campbell, assistant professor of early American and Native American history at the University of Memphis.*

# Introducing Dr. Benjamin Graham

Writing one's own biography (an autobiography, as they say) is an exercise in bad history. The source is deeply biased and should not be trusted. Alas, sometimes historians must work with faulty evidence.

I was born and raised on the high plains of Middle America, the heart of fly-over country. Though underpopulated, the landscape is highly managed by human beings. Perfectly orthographic roads delineate rectangular fields of corn and soybeans, usually inscribed by perfect green circles that betray the effects of rotary sprinkler irrigation. The stunning pervasiveness and artificiality of those shapes provoked questions about nature and the ways humans change their surroundings over the long arc of time. Middle America also exposed me to particular expressions of labor, poverty, and profound boredom, all elements that would influence my meandering path to the discipline of history.

During an undergraduate course on ancient Rome and the empire's efforts to manipulate nature (think aqueducts, for instance), I saw striking parallels between the classical Mediterranean and the twentieth-century American breadbasket—measurements of the land, lines, legibility, arrogance, etc. It was the first time I sensed that the past could help me to understand the present, because of (not despite) a vast expanse of time and cultural differences; the exotic features of Roman antiquity, moreover, facilitated an intellectual pilgrimage that transported me somewhere else, which I appreciated.

After college I took a Masters degree at the state school and taught Latin to high school students for a few years. From there I accepted a slot in the PhD program at the



*Benjamin Graham, assistant professor of medieval and environmental history at the University of Memphis.*

University of Michigan, where I studied the transition from the classical world to the Middle Ages in Europe and the Mediterranean. After winning a Fulbright and a Mellon Writing Fellowship, I spent a great deal of time in Italy (mostly Rome), which took me to the subject of olive trees, the subject featured in my dissertation. My study on Dark Age olives has sparked historical interests across time and space, including the study of food, plant and animal domestication, the Columbian Exchange, and Mediterranean ecologies—I hope to teach courses on all of these subjects while at the University of Memphis. I am presently engaged with a number of projects, including a study of early medieval European trees, a cultural history of European nature in the Dark Ages, a paper that details the religious and ecological significance of early medieval roof beams, and a book about olive trees.

## Clio's Closet

*by Amanda Lee Savage*

Last spring semester, the Department of History's student resource center (the HERC) opened a new annex called Clio's Closet, a food and clothing pantry aimed at assisting our growing population of students experiencing a variety of financial insecurities. Over the last year my work with Clio's Closet changed the way I think about our students, our faculty, and our university. I'm continually astonished by the generosity of this community, and its commitment

to helping students succeed. The Faculty Senate donated professional clothing for men and women. Both Armark and Student Affairs held food drives during the holidays to restock our shelves. Residence Life donated (and continues to donate) boxes of cleaning supplies and toiletries. We received a substantial donation from Dr. Loretta Rudd, wife of our university president Dr. David Rudd. But this doesn't even begin to cover the individual generousities of our

own History Department faculty and students, who contribute to Clio's on a regular basis to make sure we do not run out of provisions.

And run out of provisions we do! On the one hand, it can be tremendously discouraging to walk into Clio's and see the empty shelves because it indicates how great the need is among our students. On the other, those same empty shelves tell us that Clio's is succeeding in its mission. Though Clio's Closet is open during the same hours as our student center, we keep Clio's Closet unstaffed to afford students a measure of privacy. As a result, these empty shelves, or empty clothing racks, are our only way to measure our program's efficacy.

This year we hope to see increased institutional support for Clio's Closet, and are looking into participating more closely with our community partners. Our Student History Society and Phi Alpha Theta chapters will be holding food and clothing drives for Clio's closet this term. If you are interested in helping, donations can be brought to the HERC, Mitchell 147, from 9am-2pm Monday-Friday. If you don't have anything you'd like to donate, but still want to contribute, consider our Amazon wishlist. You can have something sent right to Clio's Closet.



You can find Clio's Closet's Amazon Wish list at <http://amzn.com/w/2HCFYB91FKY7S>

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## Upcoming Events of Interest

Thursday, February 25, 6:00 pm: "Look, What a Wonder" (gospel opera about Denmark Vesey slave uprising), Rose Theater

Saturday, February 27: West Tennessee History Day

Monday, February 29, 11:00 am-1:00 pm: Women's History Month Opening, UC Atrium

Thursday, March 3, 6:00 pm: Simco Lecture by Sally Haslanger, "Beyond Belief: Racism and Social Critique, UC Theatre

Friday, March 18, 1:00 pm: Coffee, Cookies, and Conversation with Catherine Phipps, HERC

Friday, March 25, 12:45 pm: Pizza talk by Beverly Bond, "Women and Post-Civil War Racial Violence – The 1866 Memphis Massacre," MI 200

Thursday, March 31, 6:00 pm: Belle McWilliams Lecture by Alan Taylor, "The Economy of Violence: The American Revolution in the South," UC Theatre

Friday, April 1, 1:00 pm: Women's History Month Closing Event

Thursday, April 14, 12:30 pm: MOCH Brown Bag talk by Ben Graham, "Mediterranean Postmortem: Ecological Strategy and the Collapse of the Roman Empire," UC 342

Friday, April 15, 1:00 pm: Annual awards banquet and PAT initiation

Friday, April 22, 1:00 pm: Coffee, Cookies, and Conversation with Suzanne Onstine, HERC

Friday, May 20, and Saturday, May 21: Academic symposium, "Memories of a Massacre," UC Theater

Friday, May 20, 6:00 pm: Keynote address by Robert Sutton, "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly in American History: Remembering Reconstruction," UC Theater

**Be sure to check the Department of History's website and Facebook page for more details!**