



Chronicles

I wish to thank everyone who donated to the department last year. On page 2, Prof. Carson discusses how our students benefitted from your generosity.

Queen's is a nation-wide leader in its support for students of modest financial means. Over the past decade we have placed in the top 2 or 3 in the nation in spending on student assistance. Our university-wide bursary and scholarship programs help to attract the best and the brightest undergraduates in the country. I profiled some of these students in last year's Newsletter, which you may find here:

<http://www.queensu.ca/history/index/Newsletter2011Fall.pdf>

Ontario universities are under constant pressure to admit more students. This department teaches twice as many students today as it did in 1990, but with roughly the same number of professors. As a historian of recent public policy, I believe that some Ontario universities, including Queen's, continue to offer world-class undergraduate education. Your continued support is crucial; every seminar we save makes a big difference. The professional schools benefit from 'deregulated tuition' which allows them larger revenue streams but they also have an excellent record in fundraising. We've only just begun to take this path and regrettably it involves a certain amount of pestering. But we hope that you'll agree that our department has done some good in the past. Last year four of my colleagues were nominated for university-wide teaching awards. We strive to be good teachers, mentors and scholars. We are lucky to teach some of the most hard-working and fascinating students in the country. For more departmental news, please see:

<http://www.queensu.ca/history/index.html>

On behalf of the History Department, once again, I offer thanks for your support.

Prof. Tim Smith, Newsletter Editor

From the Chair..

The pleasures of working at a university rarely get their due. It is seasonal work framed by the falling and the springing of the trees' leaves. Students are keen to learn and eager to work. And you get to read and to write when a spare minute falls into your lap.

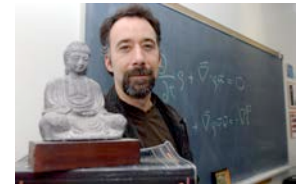
You also get to talk and to listen to more interesting people than you could ever hope to meet on your own; people who often leave you with lasting impressions, challenging you and reminding you that in an ideal world the process of growing and of learning never stops.

A few months ago I, along with maybe forty other members of our departmental community, got to listen to a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian tell us a story about a self-pitying Loyalist who thought his main chance had come with the opening of the War of 1812. Only instead of reaping commissions, salaries, and contracts, he came to see that neither his neighbours nor his superiors had much time for his martinet behaviour and the endless streams of petitions and complaints he forwarded to just about every royal officer who served in the St. Lawrence River valley.

Many of you may have read or are at least familiar with the work of Alan Taylor. If you haven't, that's ok too because what he said at the end of his talk requires no foreknowledge. A student simply asked him about writing and telling stories and wondered how Taylor thought he fit within the context of a profession that often looks down upon the word narrative.

Taylor remarked that people inhabit worlds of stories, and that the stories we each tell shape our sense of who we are, even if our stories might wind up being irreconcilable to an outsider's logic but perfectly ordered within our own fractured souls. It is worth thinking about the power of stories, because, at heart that is what the practice of history is all about. And just a few weeks ago the department

was privileged to be able to listen to Dr. Adam Frank, an astrophysicist from the University of Rochester, tell a story about the beginning of the universe and how our stories about its origins reflect how we understand our world.



Dr. Adam Frank delivered the 2012 John Sherwood Memorial Lecture

In each stage of human history, he explained, we have understood the universe to be analogous to the technological times in which we live, from God supervising the sowing and the reaping of wheat to the clock-work universe of the industrial revolution to the big-bang of the atomic age. And today, when digital devices take up so much of our time and lives, we are, he predicted, at a moment in time where a new understanding of the universe as an information processing system with multiple centres—multiverses—threatens to supplant the big-bang as the basic story of where we come from.

From history to astronomy to philosophy to physics, stories remain the unshakeable foundation of human knowledge and exploration. And so our mission remains to inculcate in students the kinds of critical thinking, reading and writing skills that foster learned, judicious, and constructive expression so that they can tell their own stories as they go out in the world after their time here is done.



Prof. James Carson, Chair

Chair's Report

by James Carson, with T. Smith

Dr. Jacalyn Duffin has been named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, one of the highest honours for Canadian academics.



Dr. Duffin holds the Hannah Chair for the History of Medicine in the School of Medicine but has also been an important instructor in our department for years. She is one of the first scholars to fully-integrate history into medical curricula. For her book *Medical Miracles*, Dr. Duffin went through the Vatican archives to study more than 1,400 miracles from 1588 to 1999.

"This recognition of my work is humbling and I am ever so grateful for the support of colleagues who believe in the value of humanities research in medical education and practice," Dr. Duffin says.

New Oliver Postdoctoral Fellow

The department was sad to bid farewell to Rebecca Slitt who held the Marjorie McLean Oliver Post-Doctoral Fellowship for the past two years. Dr. Slitt moved on to a job at Fordham University in New York.

The department is delighted, however, to welcome the new Oliver Fellow, Dr. **Laura Carlson**. She has worked most recently as the Past and Present Research Fellow at the University of London's Institute of Historical Research. Dr. Carlson received her bachelors from the University of San Diego, attended the University of Toronto where she obtained a master's degree in

medieval studies, and received her doctorate from the University of Oxford. Her doctoral thesis examined the practice of writing in the Carolingian world, particularly letters written by the courtly elite and, as a postdoctoral fellow, she will expand her study into the literate world of the medieval Mediterranean. Given the work of such faculty members as Richard Greenfield, Adnan Husain, and Ariel Salzman, we look forward to the Mediterranean world becoming a strong area of expertise for the department. And we welcome Dr. Carlson.



The Oliver postdoctoral fellowship is supported by a generous bequest from the estate of Marjorie McLean Oliver. The bequest also funds a Graduate Scholarship and both the scholarship and the postdoctoral fellowship are, under the terms of the bequest, to be given to women who work in the fields of Medieval European History or Classical Greek or Roman History. Postdoctoral fellows use their time in the department to research and write and to develop their teaching portfolio.

Professor Emeritus James Leith receives Diamond Jubilee Medal

At the annual conference of Humanities and Social Sciences, hosted at the University of Waterloo in 2012, Dr. Lyle Dick, President of the Canadian Historical Association, presented Dr. Leith with the Diamond Jubilee Medal for lifetime achievements. Dr. Leith was President of the Canadian Historical Association in 1994-95.

Your Donations at Work

Donor responses to last year's Newsletter was incredible and much appreciated. We raised more in that year than we ever have--\$16,000—and your contributions have made important impacts on both the department's operations and on our ability to support students' activities.

Among undergraduate student groups, the department supported the Model United Nations Conference, the Model United Nations Team, the Queen's Debating Union, Holocaust Education Week, Model Court, and Model NATO.

In terms of university-wide events, we made contributions to the Studies in National and International Development seminar; an upcoming graduate student interdisciplinary conference entitled "(Dé)placements: le corps et l'espace," the annual meeting of the North American Conference on British Studies held at McGill in October; and, in an attempt to provide important community outreach, we helped to sponsor a symposium entitled "Gathering Knowledge" which will bring together members of Ardoch Algonquin First Nation and other scholars and writers to discuss the creation and sharing of knowledge about first peoples' pasts and presents.

When people donate to the department, their support goes toward enabling the department to support both graduate and undergraduate student activities and initiatives. Since your generous contributions almost doubled our departmental trust fund, the department was able to expand its support to students and to enrich our own departmental culture.

To support the Department of History's Trust Fund please visit:

<http://www.queensu.ca/history/news/supportdepartment.html>

SSHRC recipient

Prof. Ana Siljak received a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Insight Development grant for her new book project: "The Art of Life: The Aesthetics of the Russian Silver Age, 1890-1917."

This project looks at the constellation of philosophical, theological, and artistic movements that blossomed in late-nineteenth century Russia -- movements collectively known as Russia's "Silver Age." Few historians have attempted to write on the Silver Age as a whole, and Siljak plans to do so by looking at the common vision of the meaning and importance of "beauty" in Silver Age poetry, visual art, religion, and philosophy. The Silver Age theory of "beauty" not only revolutionized Russian approaches to religion and culture, but also influenced Western cultural endeavours through international exhibitions and



performances (such as Sergei Diaghilev's "Ballets Russes") and through the exile of Silver Age poets and philosophers after 1917. The SSHRC Insight Development Grant is a new grant that funds projects that depart from a researcher's previous realm of expertise.

Visiting Lecture

On March 22, 2012, the Department's Nugent Fund lecture series featured **Dr Tai-chun Kuo** of Stanford University's Hoover Institution. Dr Kuo's lecture "From a Planned to a Market Economy:

Taiwan's Economic Reforms, 1949-1960" was enlivened by anecdotes from her interviews with the officials who steered Taiwan's economy as rapid transformation began.



Generous support from a co-sponsor helped make the event possible: the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Toronto hosted and funded a reception following Dr Kuo's lecture.

Annual Faculty Lecture

The 2011 lecture was delivered by **Prof. James Carson** on Dec. 1 and was entitled "Tell about the South: An Autobiography of Antiquity." Prof. Carson discussed the relationship between modern life and North America's antiquity, particularly in reference to the prevalence of corn in our diets, to the disaster of Hurricane Katrina, and to the presidency of Barack Obama.

Teaching Awards

The History Department is a key 'service' department, opening its courses to students across the university. Our teachers are often recognized for their dedication to their craft. Our lectures are in high demand.

Last year, three colleagues were nominated for the university-wide Frank Knox teaching award (**Richard Bailey, Rosanne Currarino, and Steven Maynard**). **James Carson** was nominated for the Alumni Teaching Award.

The annual History Department Teaching Awards are meant to recognize outstanding Faculty, Teaching Fellows, and Teaching Assistants who both inform and inspire their students. There were three recipients for 2010-2011.

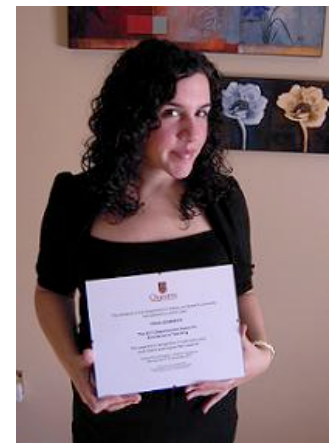
Steven Maynard received an award for HIST 312: Canadian Social History and HIST 210: History of Sexuality in Canada.



Tim Smith received an award for HIST 253: History of Public Policy.



Trina Zeimbekis received an award for HIST 467: First Nations of North America.



Comings and Goings

New Chairs of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies

The Department thanks Professors Jeff McNairn and Rebecca Manley for their hard work as Graduate and Undergraduate Chairs. We welcome our new colleague-administrators, Jeff Collins and Tony D'Elia.

Student News (in brief)

James Allum, PhD 1995, was elected MLA to the Manitoba Legislative Assembly in the October 2011 election. He spent many years as the City of Winnipeg archivist.

Alexandra Petre, BAH 2012, interned at the Canadian Embassy in Washington last summer. She is now on a scholarship at Oxford.

Brooke Anderson just completed an M.A. with Prof. Jeff Brison. She is taking up an internship at the Canadian Embassy in Washington this year.

Michel Beaulieu, PhD 2007, is now chair of the history department at Lakehead University.

Howard Coombs, PhD 2010, is an Assistant Professor, Dept. of History, Royal Military College of Canada

Michael Boudreau, PhD 1991, is now Dean of Humanities at St. Thomas University.

Jie Deng, the recipient of a four-year Chinese Government Scholarship for doctoral studies under Dr. Emily Hill's supervision, successfully defended his PhD thesis in June 2012. On July 1, he was appointed to a full-time faculty position at Fudan University in Shanghai. His dissertation title was "Insiders' Entitlements: The Founding of the Household Registration (hujia/hukou) System in Shanghai, People's Republic of China (1949-1959)."

Richard Goette has been appointed associate editor-in-chief of *Airforce*, the Air Force Association of Canada's flagship publication.

Vic Huard, PhD 1996, is Vice President Corporate Affairs at Federated Co-operatives Limited, Saskatchewan.

Chris Kilford, PhD 2009, is a Colonel in the Canadian Forces and Canada's Defence Attaché to Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan

Alan MacEachern at the University of Western Ontario is the Director of NICHE (Network in Canadian History & Environment), a SSHRC Strategic Knowledge Cluster.

During the [2010 Royal Tour of Canada](#) **Chris McCreery**, PhD 2003, was appointed a Member of the [Royal Victorian Order](#) (MVO) by Queen Elizabeth II in Halifax. He is the private secretary to the lieutenant governor of Nova Scotia.

Travis Tomchuk, PhD 2010, worked with Dr. Ian McKay and now works at the Museum of Human Rights in Winnipeg.

Matthew Trudgen, PhD 2011, just completed a R.B. Byers Post-Doctoral Fellowship at the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary. He is now doing a Post-Doctoral Fellowship in US Foreign Policy and International Security at the Dickey Centre for International Understanding Dartmouth College, NH, USA.

Richard Mayne, PhD 2008, is employed by the Department of National Defence as the Director of Canadian Air Force History and Heritage

Ian Hope, PhD 2011, is a Colonel in the Canadian Forces, Commander Consolidated Fielding Centre in

Kabul, Afghanistan overseeing NATO training of Afghan forces.

Rob Engen, MA 2008, PhD in progress, is currently holding a three-year SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Scholarship. He received a Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences Aid to Scholarly Publications Program Grant to publish his book based on his MA thesis (*Canadians Under Fire: Infantry Effectiveness in the Second World War*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill Queen's Univ. Press, 2009)

Other Student News

Congratulations to our doctoral student, **Casey Hurrell** who won the 2011 Hertog Prize. The Hertog Global Strategy Initiative is a research program that employs historical analysis to confront present and future problems in world politics. Casey not only received the prize but she also received a scholarship to attend the summer program at Columbia University, New York. She is interviewed in the next section.

Doctoral student **Dinah Jansen** won the Charles Timberlake Prize for best paper submitted by a graduate student at the 'Central Slavic Conference: 50 Years (and Beyond)' in St. Louis, Missouri, which took place 1-4 November. The paper, drawn from Dinah's first thesis chapter, was titled "Defending a Crumbling Empire: Territory and Russian Political Exiles at the Paris Peace Conference, 1919." Congratulations Dinah!

For additional news please see:

<http://www.queensu.ca/history/news.html>

Interviews *with Prof. Tim Smith*

Are you receiving this Newsletter for the first time? You may also be interested in the 25 interviews found in the 2011 edition of "Chronicles." Students considering studying in the History Department will find several career profiles of recent graduates. Please see:

<http://www.queensu.ca/history/index/Newsletter2011Fall.pdf>

I reached **James Vanstone** by phone at his office at the picturesque campus of John Abbott College in Ste. Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec. Situated near the western tip of the island of Montreal, Abbott is a CEGEP established in 1971. It is one of Quebec's leading 2-year colleges. It serves as a bridge between high school (which ends at Grade 11 in Quebec) and university and it doubles as a vocational school offering training for future nurses, police officers, dental hygienists, pre-hospital emergency care and bio-pharmaceutical technology. Abbott is home to 6,300 full-time students and 2,000 Continuing Education students.

Born and raised in Windsor, Jim graduated from the University of Windsor with the University Gold Medal. He graduated from Queen's in 1974 with a PhD on the Cape of Good Hope Colony. He studied with the eminent historian of South Africa, Arthur Keppel-Jones, whom Jim remembers as a conscientious and demanding (in a good way) supervisor. Jim's research took him to Africa for a year and to Oxford as well. While Jim was completing his thesis he took a job at John Abbott in 1972.

In his 41st year of teaching, Jim is as enthusiastic and vital as ever, and, at the age of 70, cannot imagine retiring. A teacher with a wide range, Jim now offers courses in Western Civilization and in the History of the Third World. When your interviewer studied with him in 1986, it was in a course in Russian and Soviet history that introduced the rigors of a university-level course to 17 and 18 year-olds.

Jim has been the Chair of the Department of History, Classics, Political Science and Economics for the past seventeen years. He was elected a member of the Academic

Council of the college in 1974 and elected Chairperson in 1975.

Faculty, administration, students, professionals and support staff have thanked him every year down to the present time by re-electing him! Each year, since 1975, the faculty has also elected Jim Chairperson of the Faculty Professional Development Committee. It has a mandate and a budget to assist professors become better teachers. From 1979-1985 Jim was elected to serve on the college's Board of Governors and for four of those years was a member of the Executive of the Board.



James Vanstone, PhD 1974, is often Master of Ceremonies at John Abbott College convocations.

Outside of the college, Jim served as a teacher and, for seven years, Superintendent of Ste. Genevieve United Church Sunday School. He is an Elder of his church and served for five years as Chairperson of the Official Board. At the present time, he is a lay representative to Montreal Presbytery of the United Church and had the distinct honour to be elected Chairperson of Montreal Presbytery from 2000 to 2002 responsible for the oversight of sixty pastoral charges. From 2007-2008 he was President of the Montreal and Ottawa

Conference of the United Church (it's like an archdiocese in other denominations). Jim is a member of the Board of Governors of the United Theological College. And the list goes on: Jim is a member of the Masonic Order and was Master of Meridian Royal Alexandra Lodge #125 in 2001-2002. He is a Shriner and a member of the Greeters Unit picking up children from the airport and transporting them to the Shrine Hospital in Montreal. He is the current Deputy Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Quebec. Jim is currently the Vice-Chair of the Montreal School of Theology at McGill University. In 2014 he becomes Chair.

Jim is happily married to Beverley, the very proud father of two children, one son and one daughter, both trained as nurses, and now both employed as high-level health care administrators in Montreal and in Dallas. Jim is also an actively involved grandfather of three.

Q. Robert Putnam* teaches us that civic engagement increases social capital and personal happiness too. I know you're a happy man, Jim, but my first question is: when do you find time to sleep?

JV. When you are as old as I am five hours is sufficient!

Q. I see.... How have you adapted your teaching to the new world of high tech?

JV. I find it is crucial to use technology to retain my students' attention. I switch gears all the time. Films, videos, internet...you name it, I have woven it into my teaching.

* The author of *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (2001).

The basic content hasn't changed, but the method of delivery has. I used to consider myself the fount of knowledge but now all the world's information can be gleaned by a click of a button on your smart phone. My whole job has changed. Now my responsibility is to teach the students critical thinking and assist them to discern truth from fiction as they wade through the literally "google" of "facts" out there.

Q. But are you still able to teach at the high level you operated on back in the 80s? You assigned a university-level text in your Russian history course back in 86. You had us reading Marx, snippets of Herzen, Nechaev, even Stalin's constitution of 1936. You showed us Eisenstein's "Battleship Potemkin" and several other films.

JV. Yes, I still teach to the highest level. Things haven't changed that much. Students are just as bright, but their expectations have changed. You can't just lecture at them for an hour.

Q. At a time when the newspapers are filled with stories of corruption in the public sector, Jim Vanstone serves as a reminder that the spirit of public service is alive and kicking. Jim's tireless devotion to the administration of his college is on top of his teaching and is entirely unpaid. For over four decades, he has inspired thousands of students. When I studied with Jim I had no idea of the various demands on his time and yet his office door was always open, he was always pleased to speak with students, and he went to great lengths to help us to improve our research and writing. I still have my notes from his class; I have referred to them for my own teaching purposes and to part with them would be some form of disrespect, I fear! It is quite an accomplishment to make students fresh out of grade 11 become interested in Nechaev and Chernyshevsky but somehow Jim did that. The best teachers command our interest in the particular but they also instill a general love of learning. Jim Vanstone is one such teacher.

Casey Hurrell is a PhD student working on a thesis on the World Health Organization and medical humanitarianism in the post World War II era. She is the recipient of a Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Doctoral Scholarship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, given to the top graduate students in the country. Dr. Jacalyn Duffin, Canada's preeminent medical historian (see page 2) is one of her supervisors.



Q. Why did you come to Queen's?

CH. I thought that the faculty had diverse strengths, and I knew from meeting with the Grad Chair during the recruitment fair that there would be flexibility. When I visited Queen's, I got the feeling that it was a close-knit program with a strong sense of camaraderie among the grad students--and now that I'm here I know this is more than a feeling. It's reality. My peers are a very social bunch. I've taken courses on Britain and Empire, the Canadian Left (which helped me to better understand the origins of health care provision), Modern Europe, 20th Century USA, and two directed readings courses close to my field of interest--these were one-on-one meetings with my professors. I feel prepared to dive into my research and to teach one day.

Q. Tell us a bit about your research. How did you arrive at your research topic?

CH. I did a lot of diplomatic history as an undergrad at Carleton including a 40 page 4th year seminar paper for a course in British International history. I wrote about

the diplomatic implications of the fears over 'national efficiency'--the concern for the physical health of the population, the fear of a falling birth rate, that sort of thing, in the period between the Boer War and the First World War. That paper showed me that there is an interaction between concerns over health and welfare and foreign policy. Also, I have always been interested in the history of humanitarianism. The humanitarian impulse emerged in a coordinated fashion during the nineteenth century, with the rise of a stronger global consciousness, which was made possible, in part, by the rise of the telegraph and the national daily newspaper. The suffering caused by warfare was, at the time, one of the forces driving humanitarianism.

Today, it's more likely that coordinated humanitarian efforts will be directed at the aftermath of natural disasters like earthquakes and tsunamis, but will similarly capture public interest. Anyway, I wanted to know how the contemporary interest in interventionism evolved over time, and how it became wrapped up in power-political relations, in geopolitics. In a sense, my current project is the culmination of everything I have been working on since my days at Carleton.

I am working on what I consider the institutionalization of medical humanitarianism after the Second World War. My M.A. research looked at institutional continuity and turnover between wartime relief agencies and the new World Health Organization. I knew that for my PhD research I wanted to keep that as the underlying narrative but I also wanted to look more at the ideals that drove the people involved in the planning of the WHO. There is definitely a relative dead zone in the historiography covering the period 1945 to 1955. There is some stuff written by political scientists but no historian had tackled this period. To me, this is when the original sins of the WHO were committed.

There are two ideas about international health warring with each other, within the WHO. There is a fundamental tension between social medicine and technical medicine. For example, using DDT across Eastern Europe and Italy to

get rid of malaria and typhus is one (technical) way of going about disease management; the other way would have been to deal with poverty, with basic things like land management, like draining stagnant water pools, improving basic infrastructure. There are people advocating for the social approach to medicine; there are others who are swept up in the postwar optimism about the omnipotence and desirability of scientific solutions—because we can spray with insecticide, we should.

There are these two very different ideas about how healthcare should be carried out in this period, but also about how international health interventions should take place. Within this organization, there are many extremely capable and intelligent people with contradictory ideas. What were the consequences of choosing the ‘technical medicine’ route? How and why did this path win the day?

I am also exploring the Cold War’s influence; how did the East-West schism affect the WHO? Should you help people on the other side of The Wall? Do you help a communist region just as readily as a non-communist one? How are ‘enemy’ civilians to be treated?

Q What sorts of sources are you using for your thesis?

CH. I am looking at archival and published records from the WHO, the UN, UNRRA, private organizations like the Rockefeller Foundation, the Millbank Memorial Fund, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Canadian Methodists, and the American, Canadian and British Medical Associations.

I had lunch with **Iain Reid** in downtown Kingston. Iain graduated from Queen’s in 2004 with a BAH (History major, English minor). Iain’s first book, *One Bird’s Choice* was published to widespread acclaim in 2010. The book has been translated into German, Cantonese and several other languages. It earned Iain the CBC Bookie Award for Non Fiction. The book was reviewed across North

America and led to a video interview with *National Geographic*, which can be found online. The *Globe and Mail* named Iain as one of CanLit’s “hottest 5 up and comers.” Iain’s second book, *The Truth About Luck* will be published in March 2013. Iain has lived in Kingston for almost four years and is a regular fixture at lunch-time basketball games on campus. Iain played varsity basketball during the early 2000s.

Upon graduation, Iain worked in Toronto in journalism. When that well ran dry, Iain took a temporary job at CBC radio in Ottawa, where he discussed books on a popular radio show, did freelance work, and some editing. His stay in Ottawa was supposed to “last the summer” so, he figured, why not live on the family farm with his parents and rekindle his relationship with them?

A couple of months turned into a year. After a few weeks a friend called to arrange a visit. “I’ll have to check with my parents first,” came his reply. “It was at that point that I realized how absurd my situation was. I started to put paper to pen.”

Underemployed, Iain found time on his hands. “Now is the time, I said. If you cannot become a writer now, you’ll never do it.” He produced a short story about life on the farm. A friend gave him the names of a few literary agents. And the rest is history.

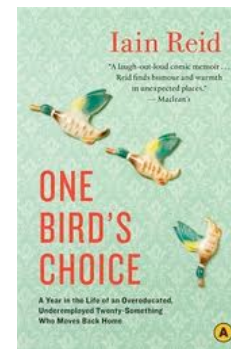
One Bird’s Choice is a reflection of life on the farm outside Ottawa, a chronicle of twentysomething soul searching, and a poignant tribute to Iain’s parents. “My parents have a rare, very happy relationship. Growing up, you don’t really see it. Not as an 18 year-old, at least. But coming home as a 28 year-old you gain an entirely different perspective. What does it mean to live with someone for decades?



How does it change the individual? I began to see just how much parents

give to their children. I wanted that to come across in the book.”

Q. But you do that with a light touch. You let that come through in the stories you tell, many of which, I might note, are hilarious.



IR. Thanks. That was my hope. I have been pleased with the reception of the book. Completing it was bittersweet, like leaving an apartment for the last time. The book dominated my life for two years. And then it’s gone, out the door. So you get started on the next one!

Q. Does this mean you will now devote yourself full-time to being a writer?

IR. The jury’s still out, but I’m going to give it a shot. I still do some editing and freelance journalism but if my second book succeeds I’ll probably try to write full time.

Q. What is a typical day in the life of a writer like yourself?

IR. I begin the day with freelance writing and editing. After a few hours of that it’s off to the gym. I try to feed my brain with fiction old and new in the afternoon. The writing is always with you. It’s hard to turn the ideas off. I escape with exercise and cooking. I do some more writing in the evening. I volunteer at the Screening Room (a local cinema).

Q. Why settle in Kingston?

IR. A struggling writer can eke out a living here. Plus it’s a beautiful town. There are over

100 registered book clubs at the library. Local writers like Wayne Grady, Marilyn Simmonds and Steven Heighton have welcomed me into the community and have been a great source of support. Some of my old friends from Queen's are working here. Growing up on a farm, traffic is not for me.

Q. Tell us about your time at Queen's, please.

IR. That's easy. I loved it. The highlight of my education was the seminar system. It was so much more rewarding than anything else. *Talking* about something with people is the best way to learn. I grew up hearing about the value of a good liberal arts education--my dad stressed that. So I never came to Queen's thinking I'll do *this* for *that* career purpose. I remember how fun it was to drop by my professors' offices and simply talk for an hour.

Q. In Iain's second book, *The Truth about Luck*, he recalls a week-long visit with his 92 year-old grandmother. The two recall memories of Iain's childhood and get to know one another as adults. His grandmother slowly reveals the layers of her life's story.

At the age of 24, **Simon Li** found himself debating Prime Minister Paul Martin on the radio regarding a proposal to issue a formal apology for the head tax on Chinese labourers.



"I achieved success in radio by using my knowledge of history, and I got that training in the Queen's History department," he notes. Today, Simon is married and a 31 year-old father of a boy born in early 2012. He is also the Head of the Global Media and

Communication faculty at Yew Chung Community College, Hong Kong, where he has taught since 2008. His area of expertise is International Communication and Broadcasting.

Simon grew up in Hong Kong and went to junior high school in Canada. He studied Politics and History as an undergraduate at Queen's and then received an M.A. in 2008. His thesis, written under Prof. Emily Hill's supervision, examined the origins and outcome of the Trudeau government's decision to officially recognize China in 1970.

Upon graduation, Simon became a radio broadcaster in Toronto and hosted a talk show called *Power Politics*, with 200,000 daily listeners, on AM 1540 Toronto First Radio. He was later promoted as the station's Chief Current Affairs Editor. Between 2005 and 2008 Simon was a regular guest host of Anna Maria Tremonti's flagship show *The Current* on CBC Radio One. He was also a regular guest commentator for CBC Radio Toronto's *Metro Morning* and *Here and Now*. While teaching in Hong Kong, he still comments on local Asian affairs for CBC Radio Vancouver's *The Early Edition*. Simon is a frequent commentator in the local Chinese-language media. He has been profiled in the *Globe and Mail*, the *Toronto Star*, CBC News Network and CTV.

During the summer of 2012, when tens of thousands of people marched through the streets of Hong Kong to protest Chinese rule on the 15th anniversary of the city's return to Beijing's control, Simon was interviewed by CBC Radio's "The Early Edition". The interview can be found by selecting the July 2 episode (and by scrolling to 0:30:00): <http://www.cbc.ca/earlyedition/pastepisodes/>

"As it happens, prior to agreeing to do this interview with you, I had just mentioned my memorable learning experience at Queen's History Department in an audio segment which was aired [last July] on CBC Radio Toronto's "Metro Morning." It was about both the Hong Kong handover anniversary and Canada Day. I was interviewed with questions such as:

how I celebrated Canada Day in HK and how I explored the Chinese aspect of my identity through learning history. I highlighted Emily Hill's HIST 284 "Chinese Outside China" course as it has indeed got me think deeply about my own Chinese roots. Without that course, and without her mentorship, I doubt I would have ended up where I am today."



"History remains my passion. I took part in a history documentary called "Redress Remix" on Canada's historic Chinese head tax and Exclusion Act which was shown on CityTV and OMNI TV. In it, I talked about my involvement in the head tax redress movement. You can find the documentary on Youtube."

Simon attributes his career path to a single moment at Queen's when "I realized that I would pursue journalism and take a more historical approach than normal. It was as simple as that, yet it seemed to fulfill a real need in the profession."

Simon wishes to thank Emily Hill and, in Politics, Kim Nossal and Margaret Little. "The ability to have a mentorship relationship with *several* professors is something for which I am grateful. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to study at Queen's. As a third-year student I was a research assistant; as a fourth-year student I had the opportunity to co-write an article with Prof. Hill. Prof. Nossal supervised my B.A. thesis on public housing in Hong Kong. Prof. Little's course on the Canadian welfare state changed the way I view politics. Perhaps back then I didn't realize how lucky I was but I certainly do now. My Queen's education helped me in a general way to become a better citizen but the rigors of my History training helps me today as I digest press transcripts in a short timeframe and then comment about news events on the radio. I first learned how to analyze material like that as a Queen's undergrad."

Gerald Tulchinsky retired from the History Department in 1999 but he continued with his active research agenda and remains a leading economic historian of Canada as well as the leading historian of the Jewish people of Canada. Jerry is the author of three books devoted to the history of the Jews in Canada, pictured on the next page. He is also the author of the classic in Canadian economic history, *The River Barons*, a study of Montreal's business elite during the mid-nineteenth century.

Jerry was born in Brantford, Ontario in 1933. His interest in history was sparked by visits to the Brant County Historical Museum as a child. He took a special interest in exhibits regarding the Six Nations. But it was a letter that arrived in the mailbox one day in 1946 that stands out the most. Written by one of his father's brothers, this "historical document of sorts" set Jerry upon his life's work. Jerry's uncle had lived in Bucharest during the war. With a group of friends, he went to the port of Constanta and bought a small boat with cash. They took off into the Black Sea en route to Palestine. Off the coast of Turkey, they could see with their binoculars that a Turkish army gun crew was preparing to fire on them. With no white flag at hand, Jerry's uncle held up his small daughter with the intention of signaling civilian status. The Turks let the boat through the Dardanelles. Next the Italian army took them into custody and a doctor gave them medicine, food and milk for the children. The voyage resumed. The British Navy picked them up. The party was interned for six months then allowed to proceed to Palestine.

"At the age of thirteen," I found myself asking 'what does it mean to be a Jew?' With hindsight, I think this was the moment when I knew that I would ultimately become a historian and study my roots. This family story was crucial to me as I searched for an identity as a young man. That letter informed the development of my personal historical consciousness." At

the age of 19, in 1952, Jerry spent a year in Israel.

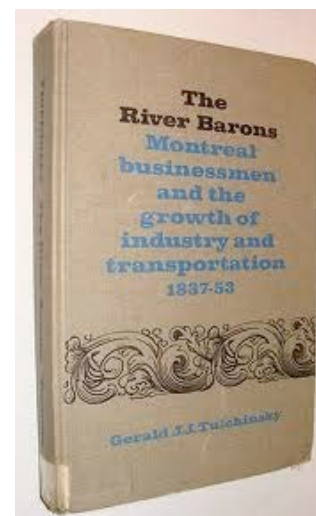


It was a life-changing experience." He worked and lived on two kibbutzim for six months. "I was 19 and I was naïve. How was this new Jewish state going to work? I wanted to see the society first-hand. I had a couple of adventures that woke me up to the reality of the Middle East. There was a sense of fear and menace on both sides—anywhere you went, you felt it. There were guns everywhere, on both sides. But that's not the whole story. We visited a Bedouin camp and were welcomed with open arms. We were hiking once in the Galilee and came across a farm. Our guide spoke perfect Arabic and communicated with the farmer. This kind man had set out a feast for us upon our return from a hike. And yet, I can't help to forget the all-consuming tension going into Nazareth—never without an armed friend or guard.

Jerry returned to Canada and studied Economics and Political Science at the University of Toronto, graduating in 1957. The next year he began his graduate work in history at McGill, receiving his M.A. in 1960. He met Ruth, a nurse, and was married in 1961. He taught at Loyola College (Jesuit-run) for two years. It was a wonderful experience, although he was "two classes ahead of my students!" On he went to the University of Toronto to pursue

doctoral studies under the supervision of Prof. Maurice Careless, who was "nice and friendly but tough as nails" [*we'll come back to that theme!—Ed.*].

With his course work completed, Jerry took a job at the University of Saskatchewan and then came to Queen's in 1966 while still working on his doctorate. "Queen's was not a diverse place at that time," recalls Jerry. "But I never had a problem. My Jewishness was never an issue." Arthur Keppel-Jones, Don Swainson and Fred Gibson were among the many others who welcomed Jerry and Ruth and became good friends. Dick Pierce and Jim and Carol Leith helped Jerry acclimatize to Kingston. Jerry's third child was born shortly after he arrived at Queen's: "I was scrambling to keep up with work." He worked on his teaching and his first book, a study of Montreal's business elite. "I was fascinated by Montreal's dynamism. There was a certain magic to the place, then and now. I picked the mid-nineteenth century period when the city emerged as a metropolis. It was *the* city: I wanted to piece some of its history together." The result was the seminal *River Barons*, published in 1977.



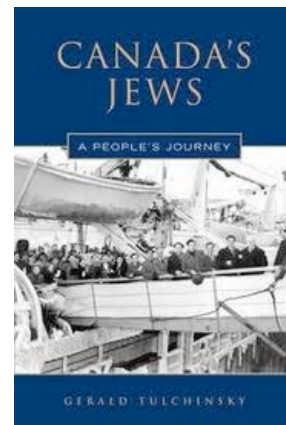
Clothing was the biggest industry in late nineteenth-century Montreal. By 1900, "it was dominated by a Jewish

owner and worker class.” This was the book that led to a three-volume history of the Jewish people in Canada as well as to Jerry’s crucial contributions to the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. He has just completed a biography of Joe Salsberg, the Ontario MPP and leading Communist labor union organizer. The University of Toronto will publish the book in the early summer of 2013.

Jerry taught Canadian Economic History, Urban History, the Jewish Experience in North America, and the Holocaust. The latter subject, “I felt, must be taught ice cold and completely dispassionately. At least that’s how I felt I had to teach it. It is highly loaded stuff. I tried to be sensitive to the feelings of students. There were nearly 300 students in the class—until they saw the reading list and the final enrollment settled at around 230! I brought in leading scholars like Michael Marrus to give guest lectures.” Jerry was awarded the Frank Knox Teaching Award in 1999. He retired that year but ran the Jewish Studies program from 1999 to 2002 and continued to walk his 4 km route to the office on a regular basis, into his seventies.

Jerry looks back fondly on “seminars of 6 to 12 students when I began my career. There’s no substitute for face-to-face learning, no substitute for the spontaneity of a seminar.” Jerry “loved being able to go across the hall and talk with Roger Graham and Fred Gibson. People were around, doors were open. It was a collegial environment.” But, he admits, “I was strict. By way of a belated apology to former students, I now realize that my reading lists were a bit long. I pushed myself hard as a teacher early in my career. I expected a lot from myself and from my students. I once re-scheduled a seminar that I had canceled due to illness for a Sunday afternoon. All the students came!”

Jerry would be delighted to hear from former students. He can be reached at tulchins@queensu.ca



Faculty Profile

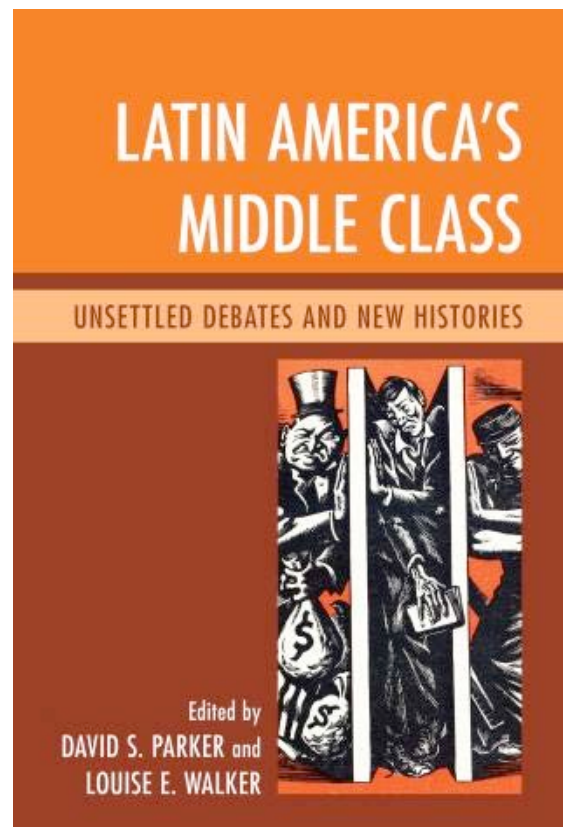
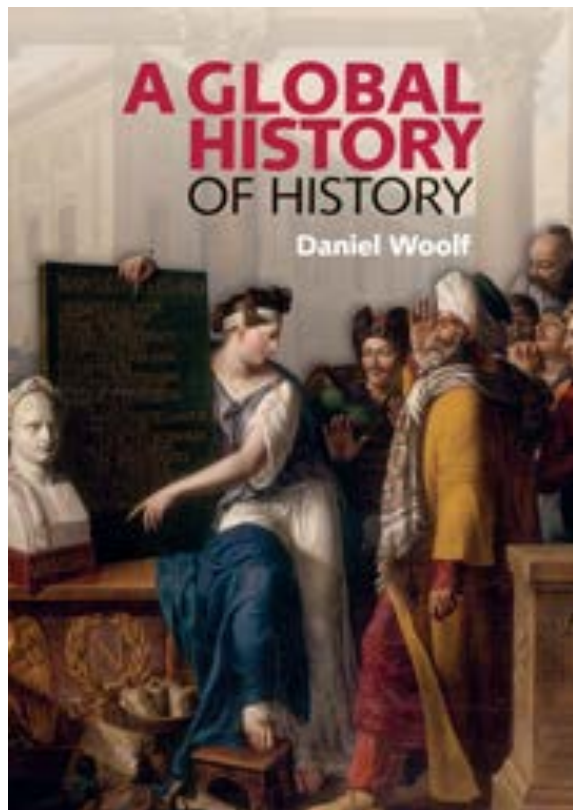
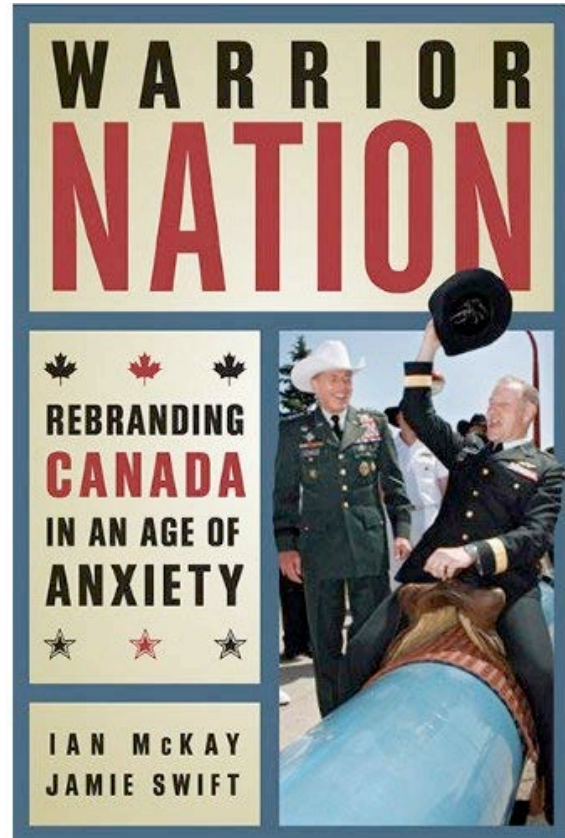
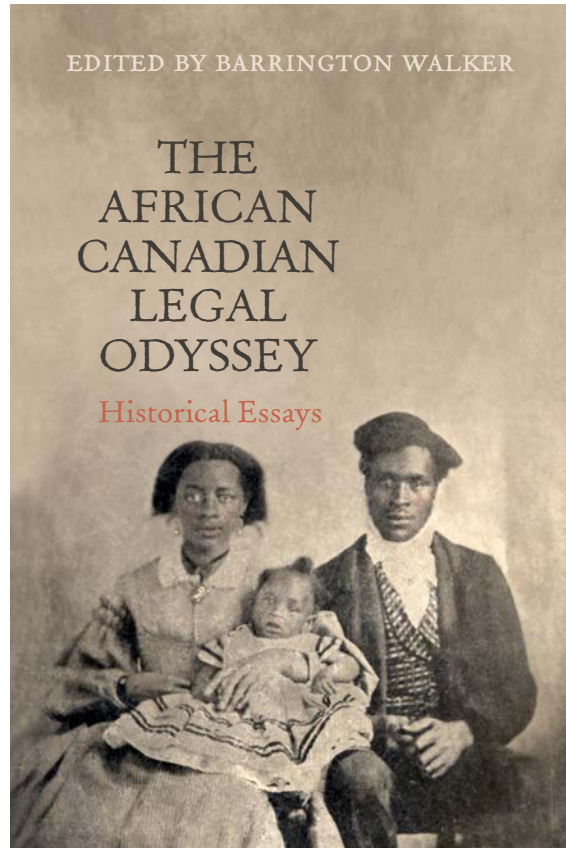
Prof. Amitava Chowdhury is the department’s most recent tenure-track hire. He is an historian of colonial plantations and labour systems in the 19th and early 20th century. Since 2001, he has worked on various aspects of colonial plantation labour beginning with his now famous archaeological excavations in Mauritius, Indian Ocean. Between 2001 and 2004, Amitava explored ninety-nine archaeological sites related to the history of fugitive slaves in Mauritius, and excavated six of them. One of his sites, Le Morne Brabant, is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. During his stay in Mauritius, Amitava also excavated Apravasi Ghat, which was also inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Since 2004, Amitava has mainly pursued research questions in the archives. His forthcoming book, Horizons of Memory, for example, looks at identity and subject formation of the Indian indentured labourers in post-emancipation Caribbean and the Indian Ocean. More recently, he has initiated two long-term projects. The first, tentatively entitled, Liminal Horizons, is an exploration of experience and practices in colonial backwaters. He asks, “what can we learn about colonial history by looking at those processes and geographical areas that have traditionally been considered insignificant?” This past summer, while pursuing this question at the National Archives, Kew, UK, Amitava was thrilled to discover previously unreported archival documents on unknown slave revolts, contraband trade, and labour settlements. The second project examines the connection of disaster relief and the emergence of the welfare system in the British Caribbean.

Amitava is the Managing Editor of the Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies. He has worked as a professional photographer but now pursues that hobby in his spare time. In November 2012, Amitava won the History Department’s Teaching Excellence Award.

New Books



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