



**DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY**

**FACULTY OF ARTS AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES**

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STAY CONNECTED

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY



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For information on events within the Faculty or to plan a reunion, visit dal.ca/fass or email fassalum@dal.ca

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

GREETINGS TO ALL STUDENTS, alumni, staff, faculty, and friends of Dal History. I'm pleased to share with you this year's newsletter, with updates on our activities over the 2023/24 academic year.

As you'll see, we have much to celebrate, with many student achievements in and out of the classroom. We had a particularly lively undergraduate student society this year – please do check out their update in the pages that follow. We're especially delighted to be able to celebrate with our students at this year's convocations, at both Dal and King's: for many of this year's graduates, this is their first such ceremony, as they finished their high school years in that ill fated spring of 2020. Congratulations to Emily Frank, winner of the University Medal in History, and to all our grads, both undergraduate and graduate – you've come through an extraordinary few years and should feel real pride in your persistence and your successes. We look forward to seeing what you do next and urge you to keep in touch.

We celebrate, too, achievements by staff and faculty. Michele Edgerton, the office administrator, and Colin Mitchell, our outgoing graduate coordinator, won the staff and faculty awards for excellence in service, respectively. We congratulate as well Drs. Jolanta Pekacz and Afua Cooper on their retirements and wish them all the very best for what's to come. And we're

very pleased to mark the hundred-year anniversary of the Dal/King's relationship with the appointment on 1 July of Dr. Harvey Amani Whitfield as the inaugural Centennial Carnegie Professor in the History of Slavery in Canada, a position to be shared between both institutions.

We have had some hard losses this year, though, including the deaths of Chris Bell, an award-winning scholar and teacher who has worked with us since 2003, and Tina Jones, our long-time and only recently retired office administrator. We lost both too suddenly and too soon: both are and will be deeply missed. We extend our deepest condolences to their families and friends and note our thanks for their many contributions to our collective life as a department over many long years.

As this is my last newsletter as chair, I want to extend a brief but heartfelt note of my own gratitude for all the gifts of time, energy, and thoughtfulness that people have made to our collective efforts over the last five years. It's certainly been a more eventful term than I'd anticipated back in 2019, but I'm honoured to have had the chance to work with so many of you. Thanks to all, and as ever, do get in touch with any news you might like to share. In the meantime, very best wishes from all your friends in History.

Krista Kesselring



Convocation, May 2024

UNDERGRADUATE HISTORY STUDENTS SOCIETY UPDATE

THE UNDERGRADUATE HISTORY SOCIETY made waves throughout the 2023-24 academic year, offering a series of engaging, interactive, and competitive activities. The society aimed to offer events programming and peer support to foster a sense of community and friendship amidst like-minded students, welcoming all levels of history-buffs.

The kickoff to the year was marked by the well-attended and highly energized Fall 2023 AGM, which brought together the most enthusiastic executive team to set the tone for the rest of the year. Over the fall semester, the society's calendar was packed with events ranging from a bake sale, movie night, trivia game night, and study sessions to keep our members entertained and educated.

The Winter Social took place in January to offer a warm welcome back to students amidst a rather chilly winter semester. It was a joyful night with delicious butternut squash soup, hot chocolate, and cinnamon rolls! Everyone brought their competitive spirits and laughter to the many rounds of Pictionary that were played. In March, the society presented its winter Bake Sale offering everything from cookies to croissants and hosted its second movie night of the year, featuring Disney's Hercules. Our most popular and anticipated event, Jeopardy! made a bigger and better comeback in the winter term. Held at the Grawood, and widely attended and loved by all. In addition, the UGHS in coordination with the history honours seminar cohort, also put forward the 2023-24 edition of the undergraduate journal, Pangaea. This stellar edition features twelve exemplary essays written by undergraduate students from universities across Canada.

The Winter AGM was held on March 20, where the incoming society executive team for the 2024-25 year was formally voted in. We welcome Eleanor and Teymour to our team! The society will also be electing more representative in Fall 2024, to give incoming students a chance to participate in the society. To celebrate the end of the academic year, the UGHS put on a gala at The Daily Grind, a cozy restaurant located at the



Halifax waterfront. It was a black-and-white themed night consisting of good food, music, and company. With over fifty students and staff in attendance, it was the perfect highlight to bring the year to a close.

Thank you to everyone who spent their time with the UGHS this year, and we hope that you take away memories of friendships and good times. We would also like to express our gratitude to Michele, Jill, Dr. Kesselring, and Dr. Kozlov for their unwavering and kind support always. And lastly, to the entire UGHS executive, for their tireless and continued efforts throughout to keep the society thriving. We are immensely awaiting the arrival of the next year!

Kriti Maini



PANGAEA: THE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH JOURNAL

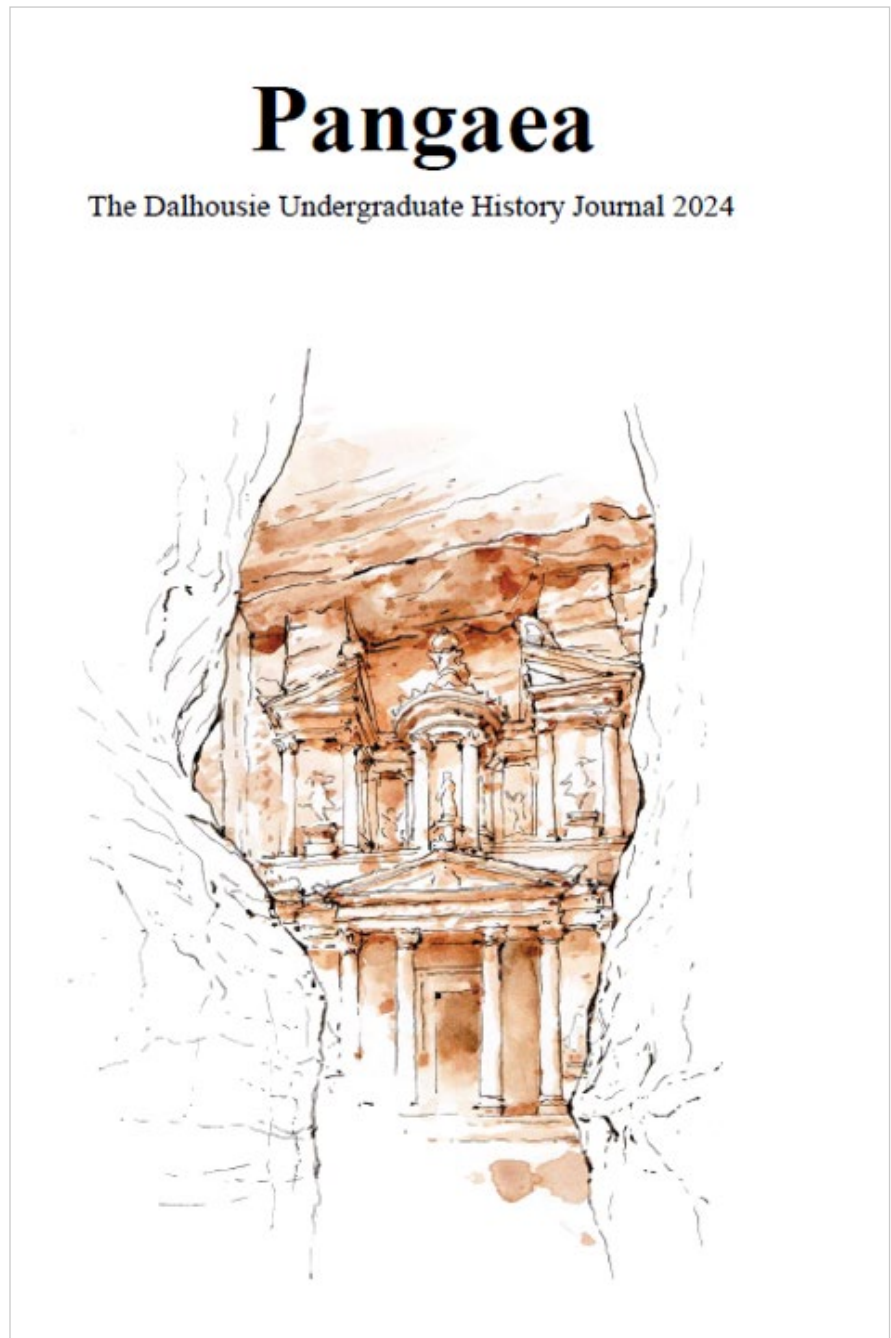
THE PRODUCTION OF THIS YEAR'S

edition of *Pangaea*, the Dalhousie Undergraduate History Journal, has been a unique and rewarding challenge.

After a year hiatus, I once joked that *Pangaea*'s revival would be like putting the shock pads to the heart of Frankenstein; thanks to the brilliance of our final twelve chosen contributing writers, *Pangaea*'s Frankenstein has come to bear a much closer resemblance to the profound, eloquent creature of Mary Shelly's original work than to his grunting green Hollywood counterpart. Overseen jointly by the department's Honours class and the UGHS, and jumpstarted by a national call for papers, putting *Pangaea* together has been an unexpected joy. Flooded with submissions from the very outset, I've been blessed as editor with the opportunity to glimpse so many diverse genres and conceptions of history from over fifty of Canada's top undergraduate history students. I can't help but echo the sentiments expressed by Liam Alabiso-Cahill, one of our editing team, in his op-ed on behalf on the honours class, with which the journal opens; it has truly been an honour. From Kriti Maini, our UGHS president who stepped up to join the editorial core, to Emily Frank and Sophie Milner, whose tireless editing glossed over every rough patch, to Riley Paris who oversaw our call for papers, and finally Elizabeth Heaton, my partner in crime running the show from day one, this entire team deserves a massive round of applause. Like the depiction of Petra on its cover, *Pangaea* has emerged out of the shadows and stands tall, a monument to the strength of history at its best.

Rafe Taylor, on behalf of the Pangaea editorial board, 2023-24

This year's issue can be viewed [online](#).



UNDERGRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

KRITI MAINI

Kriti Maini is in her fourth year, double majoring in Political Science and History. She was the president of the UGHS society last year and will continue her presidency in the upcoming year.

Q: How did you come to decide to study at Dalhousie?

A: I moved to Halifax from New Delhi in 2017 as a grade 10 student when I was enrolled at Halifax West High School. When looking at universities in my final year of high school, I applied to schools in multiple provinces, but COVID-19 appeared, and I wanted to stay close to home since my first year was going to be online. I initially applied to King's, drawn to the Foundation Year Program. Over my decision cycle and when I was considering my options, FYP gradually became obvious to be the best option for me. After completing the program in second year, I transferred to be a Dalhousie student.

Q: Did you initially begin your studies in History or Political Science?

A: I initially started in History; it was the first major I declared. I always knew that I wanted to study the Humanities and was always drawn to History, so it was a long time coming. In my second and third year at university, I began to experiment with other departments within the faculty and took some Political Science classes, which I really came to enjoy as well. In History courses, my focus typically has been to study political issues and foreign policy, so I found that studying both subjects together really complemented each other and my overall learning.

Q: What made you decide to Double Major?

A: I found that the two subjects really complimented each other, and I intend to write an interdisciplinary thesis topic for my Honours next year. I am planning to study political memory and how politics affects societies over time, which I think will allow me to bring my learning from both disciplines together. I feel that History allows me to understand societies more, while Political Science allows me to understand governance. The differences in learning techniques and methodology between the two subjects can also provide two ways to address similar kinds of questions, which I am hoping to explore.

Q: You were the UGHS President this year. Do you have any favourite memories from that?

A: There are so many that I can't pick just one. I would say that the entire society was my favourite memory from my fourth year! There was no part of the process that I didn't enjoy. The executive team was lovely! I think the Trivia and Jeopardy nights were my favourite as they were the most well attended events programming, we offered. The society drive and excitement is higher when more people show up. The gala was also a great memory! There was lots of planning involved and I feel that students can really have their visions come to life through the society, based on what they want to see from it. Much of the executive continues to be involved, but we also have some new members which will bring some fresh perspectives too, so we are all eagerly awaiting to see what the UGHS will be next year.



Q: What comes next after you graduate next spring?

A: Next year will be my final year, and I am sure I will focus most of it on writing my Honours thesis. While I want to continue my learning journey, I feel like I need to switch things up from the classroom environment. So, I don't plan to go to graduate school right after my undergrad, even though it is definitely still in my future. For now, I plan to take shots in different directions, and apply to work in my chosen field and see what sticks! I want to work in public policy or public administration so I hope to find an experience which will bring me closer to that. I have been a summer student with the provincial government for three summers, so maybe that experience will materialize into something more permanent. Maybe you could ask me again this time next year? :)

UNDERGRADUATE HONOURS THESES, 2023/24

LIAM ALABISO-CAHILL, "DISASTER DIPLOMACY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE UNITED STATES' RESPONSE TO A COLLECTION OF HURRICANES THAT IMPACTED CUBA AND PUERTO RICO, 1952-2022."

My research focused on a series of hurricanes that hit Puerto Rico and Cuba during the 20th and 21st centuries – particularly the responses (often lack thereof) from the United States. The research on this topic and my connection to hurricanes (in Puerto Rico and here in Halifax) taught me a lot about hurricane preparation and a comprehensive understanding of governmental relief networks. The biggest takeaway from my research is that historical events (particularly natural disasters) must be examined from multiple perspectives and are never as clear-cut as meets the eye.

EMILY FRANK, "SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH LAW": THE DALHOUSIE LEGAL AID SERVICE, 1970-1990."

My thesis explores the history of the legal aid clinic at the Dalhousie Law School. The Dalhousie Legal Aid Service (DLAS). DLAS was established in the summer of 1970 by first-year Dalhousie Law students. My thesis discusses the history of DLAS from its initial development in 1970 to the early 1990s. Throughout my thesis, I describe the efforts of Dalhousie students and staff to develop and operate DLAS and examine the political and social context of legal aid delivery.

ELIZABETH HEATON, "THE ELIZABETHAN RESPONSE TO MAGICAL PLOTS."

My thesis examined the major magical plots and the different measures that went into stabilizing the position of Elizabeth I. Through government statutes, treatises by supporters, and actual examples of magical texts I determined that the magical aspects of the plots decreased by the end of Elizabeth's reign, but the plotting never ended. The use of torture, spies, propaganda, executions, statutes, and imprisonment could not stop those who were determined to put their favourite on the throne.

VICTOR GRANDY, "ANALYSIS OF CROMWELL'S MAJOR-GENERALS' GOVERNANCE IN ENGLAND AND WALES."

SOPHIE MILINER, "INTERPRETING HADRIAN'S WALL: ANTIQUARIAN ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ROMAN WALL, 1848-1892."

My thesis examined antiquarian and archaeological interest in Hadrian's Wall during the second half of the 19th century with a focus on the ways that this interest brought the Wall to the attention of a public audience. I found that the period from 1848 to 1892 saw the beginning of large-scale excavation at sites along the Wall as well as the first organized tourism of the Wall as a heritage site. As a result, I argued that the Victorian antiquarians contributed new layers of meaning to the monument by enabling later professional archaeological investigation and popularizing the Wall within the context of discussions that connected it symbolically to British imperial expansion.

RIN SINCLAIR, "MEHMED V WANTS YOU: OTTOMAN AND GERMAN PROPAGANDA IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR"

In my thesis I explore Ottoman and German propaganda during the First World War (1914-1918). I placed a particular emphasis on the use of Islam and the language of jihad as a tool of propaganda, and on the ways in which the propaganda was impacted by the two polities seeing one another as a means to an end.

RAFE TAYLOR, "BLACK AS HELL, STRONG AS DEATH, SWEET AS LOVE: SOCIAL DEVIANCE AND POLITICAL SEDITION IN ISTANBUL COFFEEHOUSES, 16TH-18TH C."

"Black as Hell, Strong as Death, Sweet as Love" traces the evolution of the coffeehouse in Istanbul, at once a massive social phenomenon and a forum for crime and controversy across the early modern period. Through Sufi networks and imperial conquest, coffee made its way to the Ottoman capital and immediately exploded in popularity, filling the niche of taverns banned under Islamic law and providing the empire's first truly secular public sphere. A nexus of intellectualism, neighbourhood gossip and underworld activity, the coffeehouse facilitated political sedition and social deviance of all kinds, from sexual promiscuity to the germination of revolutions that rocked the very foundations of the state.

GRADUATE HISTORY STUDENTS SOCIETY UPDATE



I AM DELIGHTED TO PRESENT an update on behalf of the Graduate History Society. The Society had a successful year! We formed bonds within our cohort as we settled into our new lives as graduate students, and some of us adjusted to Maritime life (and weather). We worked together to overcome the challenges of graduate school and share in our many achievements. We successfully hosted the 25th annual History Across the Disciplines Conference, honed our curling skills in the Best Curlers in History bonspiel, and engaged in scholarly conversation at the weekly Stokes Seminar. We spent countless hours preparing and defending our thesis proposals, even more hours in the library, and an undisclosed number of hours at the bar decompressing and partaking in camaraderie.

In the graduate history seminar every week, we discussed different fields and perspectives on history, ranging from debates on Presentism to Marxism to the History of Emotions. Each of us presented an additional historical framework we engaged in our work. These ranged from Material Culture to Sports History to Queer History. Exploring these diverse and exciting fields of history inspired the theme of the annual Graduate History Conference: Consilience. Consilience

means linking theories from various disciplines to form a comprehensive analysis, which we thought captured the spirit of the conference. As the first in-person Graduate History Conference since the pandemic, we focused on making the experience as enjoyable as possible for both presenters and attendees. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Karly Kehoe from SMU discussed the limits of siloed research and the ways in which expanding partnerships across disciplines benefits not only research and researchers, but also the general public. Following Dr. Kehoe we had four excellent panels: Landscapes of History, History of the Maritimes, Topics in Colonialism, and Reflections Across History. Presenters shared their work on a wide range of topics, ranging from the history of the geological survey of New Brunswick to colonial rule in Igboland (Nigeria) to the connection between anaesthesia and childbirth in Britain. The presenters embodied the spirit of consilience, connecting and engaging various disciplines that otherwise may not have been included in the conversation.

Beyond the conference, the GHS cultivated a vibrant social and intellectual community. In the fall, we organized a History Department clothing order that received over 50 orders! We also did

some small social events like a night at Propeller Arcade and several study sessions. At the department holiday potluck we hosted some holiday-themed trivia. In celebration of our successful proposal defences, we gathered at the Boardroom Café for a night of Settlers of Catan and milkshakes. In closing, the GHS would like to thank Colin for excellent seminars and to express a very special thank you to Jill and Michele.

Ronny Blanchard

GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

ALEX ROBBEN

Alex is a graduate student at Dalhousie studying Nova Scotian labour history, specifically the Nova Scotian Teachers' Union, and is the winner of this year's Bowes Award.

Q: Thanks for much for agreeing to be interviewed! Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and where you grew up?

A: I started at Dalhousie in the Fall of 2023. I grew up in this real far-off, tropical spot called Truro, about an hour outside the city. Even though I lived nearby, I still managed to get lost a lot this past year. Should I have expected that, moving from a town with a cornfield across from its high school? Maybe. I love my hometown, though; Truro is the kind of place that all Maritimers know and have a (negative) opinion of, but I don't think it's ever been given its due. I go back often to see my loved ones and to check on the Dooly's.

Q: What was your journey to end up in a graduate degree at Dalhousie?

A: History is a subject I've loved since reading about the Titanic as a little kid, so I didn't take much time deciding what I'd do in undergrad. I studied at Mount Allison, got beat up by the Pandemic, took a year to work, and decided Halifax would be a nice change of pace. I've never had a clue what I want to do with myself, but after spending some time away from it, I figured I wanted to do some history again. Now to decide what's next!

Q: Can you tell me about your MA research?

A: I'm studying Nova Scotian labour history, in particular the struggles of the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union. The body of work on Canadian teachers' unions is sparse at very best, and NS is entirely missing in most of the literature. This isn't the fault of other researchers; I can count on one hand how many sources have been written on this topic! That said, teachers' unions and labour relations are always relevant, especially because their collective bargaining rights are continually breached. With this work, I hope to demonstrate how different levels of government have systematically disenfranchised some of our most important workers.

Q: Congrats on winning the Bowes award! Can you tell us about the award and how you came to win it?

A: Thank you so much! It's my understanding that the scholarship is granted based on coursework and the thesis proposal, and given to a student studying Halifax, Nova Scotia, or the Atlantic provinces. I'm so very grateful to Ms. Janeen E. Bowes for endowing the scholarship, not only because it's been an immense help, but because I think we ought to incentivize more local history! Nova Scotia is a sweet place, but we know so little about it.



Q: Do you have any advice for students pursuing a Masters?

A: Do Nova Scotian history! That's a joke – if you're not interested in your topic, it'll be hard to stay engaged. I think developing a schedule and a routine early on are really important. Making the archives and reading a consistent part of my weekday has been key. More importantly, if you want to get something done in a certain timeframe, don't be hard on yourself if it doesn't work out; school doesn't happen separately from the rest of your life and sometimes your friends want to go dancing. You'll be okay.

JUDITH MEYRICK

JUDITH IS A GRADUATE STUDENT at Dalhousie studying an amendment made to section 49 of the Indian Act. Section 49a was created for the government to force reserves to surrender land if they had a population size over 8000. She is focusing on the events that led up to the amendment of this bill, specifically on the Kings Road Reserve in Sydney, Nova Scotia.

While researching and studying, Judith submitted her story, "A Dubious Honour," to the SSHRC Storyteller's Competition. This true story is about the Kings Road Reserve as the first reserve to have this amendment forced upon them. To apply to the Storyteller's Competition, applicants create a three-minute-long video or submit a three-hundred-word essay about their area of research. Judith was named one of the finalists and had the honour of presenting her topic in Saskatoon at the Science Writers and Communicators of Canada Conference! Dalhousie flew her to this conference, so she was able to attend in person. She had an incredible experience meeting the other finalists from all over Canada and had a wide range of topics.

In her 30s Judith went to SMU and began studying to receive an accounting degree while also working full-time and

raising her daughter. In her second year doing this degree she decided that it was not for her and no longer wanted to continue. But after seeing her daughter graduate in Ottawa after obtaining her undergrad when she went back to school at 35, Judith decided that she wanted to return as well. She ended up going back in 2019 to SMU and completing her history degree before coming to Dalhousie to complete her Masters.

Judith has learned through her Master's that she is a researcher herself and enjoys it. This was while taking a class with Dr. Sarah Spike, who based her course around studying primary sources, which Judith said was 'fabulous'. The experience working with the primary sources changed the direction of her Master's entirely. Judith is not planning to continue and get her PhD as she has other plans. She wants to continue her writing journey and research and write articles about aspects of history that should not be lost, like the amendment to section 49a of the Indian Act. Judith has found the opportunity to continue her education an extraordinary experience and encourages everyone to continue their learning journey.



Chioma Abuba, a PhD student working on the history of African national identities, was selected as one of Dalhousie's 2023/24 'OpenThink' cohort.

Read her blog posts on her research [here](#).

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

The Department of History extends heartfelt congratulations to all our 2023/24 graduates for their dedication, hard work, and many achievements. Good luck with all your future endeavours!

MASTER'S GRADUATES

Evan Jennex

SJ Jones

Amaan Kazmi

Ciara Quigley

Adam Shannon



SJ Jones and Evan Jennex



Adam Shannon



Amaan Kazmi and Barirah Hasan

UNDERGRADUATES (BA OR BSc, DAL OR KING'S, WITH A MAJOR OR HONOURS IN HISTORY)

Yasmin Abd El-Rahaman

Liam Alabiso-Cahill

Reuben Bonney

Elli Brown

Morgan Campbell

Julia Clarke

Emma Cooper

Emily Frank

Matthew Heard

Ronan Giguere

Victor Grandy

Nicholas Grecco

Noah Green

Matthew Hamilton

Sarah Johnson

Emma Kelly

Brooklyn Kemp

Ana Kirby Breen

Damian Kochmanski

Tomas Krynicki

Marah James

Noah Lawless

Mathew MacEachern

Cameron MacIsaac

Justin Mager

Joshua Menchions

Sophie Miliner

Gideon Morton

Isabelle Parshuram

Marion Simmons

Erin Sinclair

Matthew Stemmler

Rafe Taylor

Cory Williams

DEPARTMENTAL STUDENT AWARDS, 2023/2024

In addition to congratulating all prize winners, the History Department would like to offer its thanks to the alumni and donors whose generous gifts have made many of these prizes and scholarships possible. This support enables the continued celebration and encouragement of academic excellence among History students.



UNIVERSITY MEDAL

For the Honours student in History with the highest overall academic standing.

Emily Frank

GEORGE E. WILSON SCHOLARSHIPS

Prize for a meritorious essay by a first-year student.

Ian Monchesky

FIRST-YEAR SCHOLARSHIP

For a student with high standing in an introductory History class.

Mary Beke

SCHOLARSHIPS

For students completing an honours or major in History with high standing.

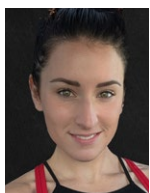


Romain Herbinger

Samuel Kennie

COMMONWEALTH ESSAY PRIZE

To facilitate and encourage the study of Commonwealth or British history. This prize is awarded annually for the best undergraduate essay on a topic



relating to the history of Britain and/or the Commonwealth countries and is funded by a gift from Dr. David Jessop and Dr. Karen Ostergaard.

Alana Thibault

SUSAN BUGGEY ATLANTIC WORLD HISTORY SCHOLARSHIP

Awarded to a History major in recognition of the importance of studies in history that connect Atlantic Canada and its people to a multicultural world outside its region, nation and continent.

Sophie Keddy

EDITH AND ROSE GOODMAN SCHOLARSHIPS

For students with the highest marks in Canadian history courses.



Sophie Keddy

Kaia Magerman

TOM & ADA JENNEX UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN HISTORY



For a History major finishing third or fourth year who demonstrates academic excellence in the study of the Atlantic World.

Alice Twa



LVK SCHOLARSHIP

For students who excel specifically in History.

Katelyn Topshee

Other awards to undergraduate students

David Cowx won this year's **Forsey Prize from the Canadian Committee on Labour History** for the best undergraduate essay. His paper, "An Economic History of the Yukon: Capitalism and Class in the North, 1800-2000," was written for Mike Bjorge's HIST 4223: Capitalism in Canada course.

Jillian Moggy won the **Halifax Overseas Club Essay Prize**, awarded by the Faculty of Arts and Social Science, for a paper entitled "Strands of Identity and Resilience: Unraveling the Experiences of Indigenous Masculinity in Canada Under British Dominion Through the Microhistory of Hair."

Donor-Funded Graduate Prizes

Many of our graduate students have donor-funded entrance scholarships or fellowships awarded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council or the Faculty of Graduate Studies. We are also fortunate to have two donor-funded prizes to award to students for achievements while in the graduate programs:

BOWES GRADUATE AWARD

To provide an annual award to a graduate student in History whose academic focus is on Halifax or Nova Scotia history and whose work overall demonstrates a high level of academic merit.

Alex Robben

JOHN FLINT PRIZE

For the best paper presented at the annual graduate students' conference

Richard Yeomans

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

DR. AMY BELL

*Amy released her book, **Life Sentence: How My Father Defended Two Murderers and Lost Himself**, in 2023. She is currently a full professor at Huron University College in London, Ontario. She studied at the University of King's College for her BA and at Dalhousie for her Master's degree.*

Q: Thank you for taking the time to be involved with this year's newsletter! Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and about your studies at Dalhousie?

A: I did my undergraduate degree at King's College in English and History, and took most of my classes at Dal. I went on to do a Masters at Dal in History with Stephen Brooke in 1995-7. It was a wonderful experience - the other graduate students and profs were very welcoming and social. I learned so much not just about my own field of British history, but about what everyone else was studying as well.

Q: Congratulations on your new book **Life Sentence!** I understand that it has a very personal connection to yourself and your family. Would you mind telling us how you came across this idea to write about your father's involvement with the case against Richard Ambrose and James Hutchison?

A: I came across this idea when my dad was in hospital, and I found Polaroid photographs of a bruised Richard Ambrose in his files. I knew my dad had been a lawyer and had stopped practicing, but had no idea that he had defended two men accused of murdering police officers. I showed him the photographs, but he was very reluctant to tell me more about the case, so after he died, I decided to do my own research into the trial records and find out more. As I read more into it, the idea of writing a book that was both personal and historical took shape, and became *Life Sentence*.

Q: How does this personal story connect with your field of historical studies?

A: My own field of expertise is the criminal history of modern England, around the time of the Second World War (I am publishing a book on wartime murders in London this fall with University of Yale Press). I am very interested in the history of forensics, and how people in the wider community react to violent crimes in their midst. The Ambrose and Hutchison case was remarkable in both those areas. The standard of forensic specimen collecting and the chain of evidence was incredibly poor, even for the 1970s. And the kidnapping first of teenager Raymond Stein then Const. Michael O'Leary and Cpl. Aurele Bourgeois evoked enormous fear and anxiety in Moncton and across the Maritimes. When the policemen were found murdered three days after their disappearance, there was an outpouring of grief and compassion for their families, an official funeral and a civic-day of mourning in Moncton. The memory still evokes strong feelings.

Q: Has there been anything particularly surprising or interesting that has come from this research?

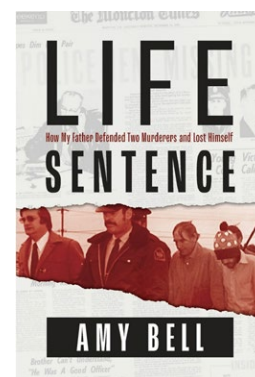
A: Two responses to the book were incredibly rewarding. Firstly, I heard from many of my father's friends, especially from his early life- including his first girlfriend! I loved hearing their anecdotes and stories about him. And many who were involved in the case at the time, or their children, wrote to me and asked me to share with them some of the documents, photographs and recordings I had gathered for the book. It means a lot



to think that my research was able to give them something personally meaningful. I also heard from several of the forensics specialists who worked on the case, who confirmed my suspicions about the standards of evidence-gathering at the scene of the crime. I usually work with older cases, so being able to talk with living people who were there was amazing!

Q: Do you have any advice for current or future Dalhousie history students?

A: My advice would be to savour your time as a student- to read, listen, talk and share as much as you can! Take your time, follow your curiosity, and enjoy the company of your fellow travellers. Universities are wonderful communities, where people are free to pursue their intellectual passions, and share them with others. I feel privileged to have been a student at Dalhousie, and to still be researching, teaching and learning today.



DR. HILARY DODA

Hilary is a professor in Dalhousie's Costume Studies program at the Fountain School of Performing Arts. She wrote *Fashioning Acadians: Clothing in the Atlantic World, 1650-1750*, released in 2023. She completed her Master's and PhD at Dalhousie.

Q: Thank you for taking the time to be involved with this year's newsletter! Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and about your studies at Dalhousie?

A: Sure. I originally came to Dal in September of 2004, to take a two-year Diploma in Costume Studies. I ended up falling in love with Halifax in general and with Costume Studies in particular, and ended up staying local instead of going back to Montreal. I worked in theatre and dance costume for a few years, and ended up working as a TA for some courses at Costume Studies as well.

I already had a BA from McGill in Anthropology, and wanted to try for an MA in History here at Dalhousie, so started picking up some classes to fill in some gaps. In 2010 I started my Masters program with Krista Kesselring. I graduated from that in 2011 with a thesis on Mary I of England's use of clothing as a political tool – see how that's all starting to come together? And after that I worked for a while, in theatre as well as in my other love, which is writing and publishing.

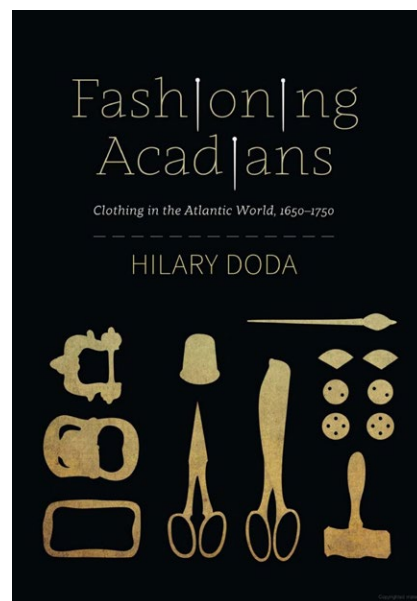
I began teaching in Costume Studies as a part-time instructor, teaching the fashion history course sequence, and then became a student again in 2015 as well, and did an Interdisciplinary Ph.D. (IDPhD) with Jerry Bannister and Lynn Sorge on pre-Deportation Acadian dress and textile culture. That was where I finally managed to merge all of my academic interests – archaeology, material culture, dress studies, and premodern history. That's also the project that became my book, *Fashioning Acadians*.

Q: I understand that your new book, *Fashioning Acadians: Clothing in the Atlantic World, 1650-1750*, discusses Acadian garment making and fashion. How did you find yourself immersed in this topic?

A: My passion is for material culture – looking at people's stuff to figure out who and what they are, and what they valued – and my specific focus is dress and textiles. I think we can learn a huge amount about societies from how they adorned their bodies and represented themselves, and that can be incredibly useful for societies for which we have limited information otherwise. I found myself drawn more and more towards studying the ways in which we can use dress studies to fill in the gaps in the historical record. As a society that did not leave extensive written records behind, pre-Expulsion Acadia made for a fantastic case study.

We're also incredibly fortunate to have the work of some excellent archaeologists who have done excavations on Acadian homesteads over the past sixty years, and their site notes and the artifact assemblages they collected – lots of pins, scissor bits, cufflinks, and buckles – were perfect for the kind of analysis I wanted to do. I'm standing on the shoulders of some giants who did the real fieldwork.

Then, of course, the more I read and the more I spoke with people from the Acadian community, the more I came to admire their resilience and strength. I'm very proud to have been able to contribute my little piece of the puzzle to our understanding of their past.



Q: What was your favourite or most interesting finding in your research?

A: There are too many interesting ones to pick a favourite, which sounds like a cop-out, but is honestly true. I spent four years in various states of bewilderment and amazement as the story just kept unfolding and I chased ideas down rabbit hole after rabbit hole.

I think the biggest thing is the amount of difference that kept opening up, the more that I looked at the different Acadian communities. The artifacts from one settlement after another didn't match the descriptions from French and English visitors to those communities, nor did they match each other. It turned out that there was so much more going on with the Acadians than the folksy images of striped skirts and wool bodices that we see in more recent representations. There's so much going on in terms of personalities, family connections, and ways of constructing visual identity!

We tend to think of the colonies as being behind the times when it comes to fashion, but there were a decent number of Acadians, both out on the farms and in places like Louisbourg, who seemed to keep themselves very up to date on the latest European styles, at least as far as we can tell from the inventories and jewelled cufflinks that they left behind.

Q: Congratulations on being short-listed for the CHA's "Best Scholarly Book in Canadian History" Prize! How did you learn that you were short-listed, and would you mind describing what this prize is?

A: Thank you very much! I'm afraid the story isn't terribly exciting, unfortunately. I received an email from the Executive Director of the Canadian Historical Association letting me know that *Fashioning Acadians* had been short-listed, and a little explanation of what that meant. I was in my office – alone at the time, thankfully, because I may have hyperventilated and screamed a little bit. It was a wonderful interruption in the middle of marking end of term projects!

The CHA prize is an annual prize given by the Canadian Historical Association for the work which has made the most significant contribution to "an understanding of the Canadian past" in the previous year. It's one of the Governor General's awards for excellence in scholarly research, which makes it one of the highest accolades out there for scholarly writing about Canadian history.

We've been very lucky at Dal to have had winners in the History department before – both Shirley Tillotson and Jerry Bannister have received the prize in previous years – so we're doing something right here!

The short-listing is really a wonderful accolade in and of itself. I'm going to do the annoying thing and say that it's an honour just to be on that list, but it truly is. The other books on the list this year are so good that I really won't be unhappy if one of them wins instead of mine. Disappointed and envious, yes, of course! But not unhappy.



Q: Do you have any advice for current or future Dalhousie history students?

A: Don't be afraid to be weird. The most interesting projects can come from running headlong off the beaten path, especially if you find a question that you're really passionate about.

Take courses in areas you're not familiar with. We've all got that One Thing we really love to learn about, whether it's a region or a particular period of time, but you can't understand it fully until you understand what else is going on – before and after it, and in other areas of the world. Some of the best classes I took at Dal were those where I knew very little about the subject going in, so I had many fewer preconceptions. Here's an example from my own life – as a researcher,

I'm primarily focused on the early and pre-modern Atlantic world. I took Colin Mitchell's course on 'Orientalism and Occidentalism' in 2008, as I was getting ready to do my MA, and it blew my mind. I still come back to that material and the perspectives he introduced us to in my own teaching and research.

And lastly, think interdisciplinary! There are some really interesting and useful theoretical frameworks and ideas out there in other disciplines, and we can't be afraid to talk to each other. The future of academia is going to come from breaking down the old silos and engaging whole-heartedly with other ways of seeing, thinking, and knowing, and I can't wait to see the incredible scholarship that's going to emerge.

NICHOLAS JAMES KAIZER

Nicholas is currently a high school teacher at Bay View High School in Tantallon, Nova Scotia and has published two books on naval history since completing his MA at Dal.

Q: Thank you for taking the time to be involved with this year's newsletter! Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and about your studies at Dalhousie?

A: I was born and raised in the Annapolis Valley, and did my undergrad degree at Acadia. I then came out to Halifax for a MA degree. I wanted to research maritime history, specifically naval history during the Age of Sail, a passion I have held since I was young when I first learned to sail. Recently, I have become an avid sailor again, and in that way, I do live and breathe the sea!

Q: What inspired you to pursue your B.Ed. and go into teaching?

A: I was intrigued by the possibility of turning my love of history into a fulfilling career. First, as a substitute teacher, I taught as much science as I did history and social studies. Now I'm teaching English. I still enjoy it, and am content with my choice and where it has led me.

Q: How does your undergraduate degree in History and your MA aid in your profession as a high school teacher?

A: Both degrees shaped the way that I think, the way that I approach work and engage on an academic level. When I am teaching about writing, for example, I am often thinking back to the writing coursework that I did, particularly at Acadia. I have also incorporated a number of practices that I observed as a student while at Acadia and Dalhousie. My history coursework, particularly the MA from Dalhousie, was also very important on a career level; it is the reason that I am a term teacher today. Ask any young teacher in Nova Scotia and they'll tell you that getting into the system is incredibly difficult. My break came because of my professional relationship with an IB History teacher at Halifax West.

I guest lectured in her classes many times because of my history credentials. In the spring of 2022 she invited me to job share with her, and that was how I got my foot in the door!

Q: Tell us about your 2020 release, *Revenge in the Name of Honour*?

A: This came about right after my MA. My dissertation was on the impact of a series of single ship action losses suffered by the British Royal Navy during the War of 1812. The thing to understand is that at this time, the Royal Navy wasn't used to losing. The press in England and in Nova Scotia (at the time they thought of themselves as thoroughly British) was definitely not used to hearing of them losing. But lose they did, and against the smaller and newer United States Navy. My study was an examination of how the British world dealt with these losses (generally, not very well), and how the naval establishment sought either to minimize their significance (in the case of the Admiralty, concerned with the overall course of the war) or to avenge them (in the case of individual captains, war effort be damn'd!).

Shortly following my defense, an editor with Helion & Company, a specialist military history publisher, reached out and we agreed on a book contract based upon the thesis, as part of the 'From Reason to Revolution, 1721-1815' book series. It was a very fun project: it was an expansion of the timeline and scope of my original work, taking it to the end of the War of 1812 and examining the impact of naval losses and victories on the Royal Navy and the British world – particularly Halifax – in more detail.

Q: I see that you also wrote up the proceedings of a naval history conference, *Sailors, Ships, and Sea Fights (2023)*. Do you have any future projects that you are currently planning or working on?



A: I am focusing on a couple of historical novel manuscripts that follow a Nova Scotian-born officer in the Royal Navy during the War of 1812.

Q: Do you have a favourite memory from your time at Dalhousie?

A: My favourite memories were the Friday guest lectures hosted by the History Department. Historians were invited to give talks on works in progress, and the graduate students were always in attendance. The talks were usually interesting in and of themselves, but I most enjoyed going out to the pub with the other History MAs afterwards, where we followed with interesting discussions and debates.

Q: Do you have any advice for current or future Dalhousie history students?

A: One piece of advice is for students to get as involved as they can in social or academic events throughout the year. This is especially true if social anxiety, or even just nervousness, is something you're afflicted with. Networking in the real world is a challenge but it is also a must, and getting practice early, in a more relaxed setting, is a great way to dip your toes in. And, because you'll be hanging with a group of fellow history nerds, I promise it'll be worth every moment!

FACULTY UPDATES

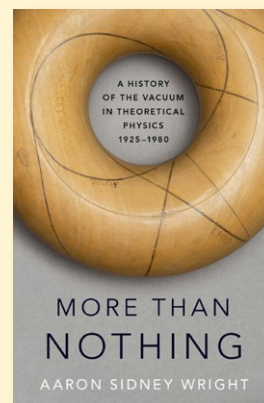
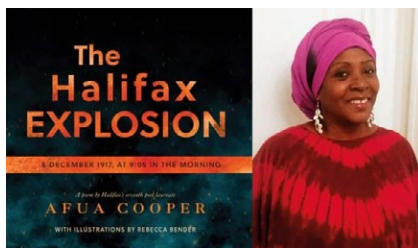
WE WERE JOINED THIS YEAR by three faculty members on limited term appointments, **Drs. Mike Bjorge, Simon Fisher, and Nevcihan Ozbilge**. An expert in Canadian labour history with a PhD from Queen's University, Mike helped us fill in for a parental leave by teaching courses on Canadian law, crime and justice as well as advanced seminars on capitalism and the history of migration. Simon came to us with a PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison on the African American activist Pauli Murray to teach a wide range of courses in U.S. history. Nev did her PhD at McMaster in environmental history; most of her teaching consisted of humanities courses for Computer Science students but she also offered a new course within the department on Turkish political history.



AS PART OF A SSHRC-FUNDED research project, *Makazinanag: Remapping the Fur Trade through Anishinaabe and Métis Footwear*, **Dr. Lisa Binkley** travelled to London, Oxford, and Edinburgh to explore the collections of Anishinaabe moccasins held by various museums, and the archival documents of fur trade explorers who brought moccasins home to the UK after their travels. Her study will aim to repatriate information on the lives of these objects to contemporary communities along the fur trade route, who continue to make moccasins.

Students in Dr. Binkley's second-year course, *Introduction to Art History and Visual Culture* got to experience a life-size camera obscura, made by an Milne, an artist and student in the class. Each student had the opportunity to sit inside the camera and experience this early image technology that dates back thousands of years.

IN ADDITION TO HER ONGOING WORK with the Heritage Canada project to expand K-12 education on Black Canadian history, **Professor Afua Cooper** also published an illustrated text for children on Black Haligonians' experiences of the Halifax Explosion. She also helped organize the Universities Studying Slavery (USS) conference in October. Hosted by Dalhousie and the University of King's College, in partnership with the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia, the USS was a major international conference on slavery's role in higher education and its legacies. Discussions foregrounded the history of slavery in Nova Scotia and the experiences of African Nova Scotians particularly. The event included keynote addresses from Professor Cooper (sadly leaving Dal this year) and from Professor Amani Whitfield (who will be returning to Dal from 1 July.) For more about the conference, see the [CBC report](#).



DR. AARON WRIGHT had his new book appear: *More than Nothing: A History of the Vacuum in Theoretical Physics, 1925-1980* (Oxford University Press, 2023).

'The vacuum is central to physicists' best theories of subatomic particles, gravitation, and cosmology. Nothingness provides the reference point with which to compare new particle creation and annihilation. Cosmologists use empty universes to study the causal structure of spacetime. Paradoxically, our best physical theories of particles, gravity, and spacetime are theories of nothingness. Stranger still, the physicists' vacuum is a hive of activity. Quantum fluctuations fill empty space with particles, and astronomers measure gravitational waves, the vibrations of empty spacetime itself.

More than Nothing uses the history of the vacuum to show how technical concepts in physics are made real through everyday practice. It provides new insight into the development of twentieth-century theoretical physics through sustained analysis of understudied figures including John Wheeler's geometrodynamics and Sidney Coleman's false vacuum. It reveals the surprising influence on physicists from the psychology of impossible objects to drawings of the black hole, and the ways in which the development of the physics of the vacuum became inseparable from the development of larger cultural movements in aesthetics, art, psychology, and fiction. Across decades and across disciplines, *More than Nothing* shows how physicists over and over again chose to study the vacuum for insight into the world around them.

Drawing on newly unearthed laboratory notes, private letters, and published material, *More than Nothing* offers a scoping history of the vacuum as a lens into the development of modern physics.'



A NEW COURSE FOR 2024/25: Papal Rome in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

Professor Greg Hanlon will be teaching a new course next year and sends along this description:

Rome was arguably the capital of Western Civilization during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The popes adapted quickly to the advent of Protestant churches and facilitated Catholic missionary work around the globe. Rome underwent tremendous demographic expansion in this era, and, in the process, became the most modern city in Europe, with cutting-edge infrastructure and a panoply of social services. Roman cardinals and Italian aristocrats simultaneously competed to erect prestigious monuments to the glory of their dynasties, laid out along new thoroughfares crisscrossing the space once belonging to the ancient capital. In so doing, the city became the unchallenged capital of Western art and architecture for the better part of two centuries.

An experimental seminar course for first-year students, it will combine four strategies designed to maximize the acquisition of intellectual skills. A dozen PowerPoints, embellished with plentiful images, will lay out the basic information about Rome and the government of the Catholic Church. Period primary sources of many different kinds will help students get a better feel for that era. Course readings will consist of two different kinds. One research article each week written by specialists of Renaissance and Baroque Rome (Italian, European and North American) will teach students important analytical skills. The course will also offer instruction on the nature of objective knowledge in History, sketched out in David Hackett Fischer's classic book "Historians' Fallacies".

PROFESSOR KRISTA KESSELRING

hosted the annual meeting of the Northeast Conference on British Studies in October, an event made all the more enjoyable thanks to the presence of several Dalhousie alumni who took the opportunity to make their way back to the city. The University of King's College generously hosted the Friday evening public lecture by Dana Rabin on "The Jewish Atlantic: Colonization, Circulation, and 'Emancipation' in the British Empire, 1650-1830." Former Dal prof Daniel Woolf gave the second plenary, "Experiences of Defeat: Loss, Exile and Dissent as Themes in British Historiography." The President's Office supported the Saturday reception at the Halifax Citadel. She extends her thanks to everyone who helped with the event. In November, she was inducted as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. A chapter she co-authored appeared in *Gender and Divorce in Europe, 1600-1900*. In January she gave a talk at The Ohio State University's Humanities Institute on "Lawless Women in the Court of Star Chamber." Finishing her term as chair and beginning a sabbatical in July, she'll take up a fellowship at All Souls College, Oxford, in the autumn. She continues to blog at legalhistorymiscellany.com.

DURING HIS 2022/2023 SABBATICAL, Professor Gary Kynoch made three research trips to South Africa to continue work on a project investigating the history of riots and riot policing. This research produced two published articles - "We get Sucked into Everybody's Mess': Protests and Public Order Policing in South Africa" in the *Journal of Southern African Studies* and "Raids, Resistance, and Retribution: South Africa's Cato Manor Killings, 1960-61" in the *Journal of African History*. A third article on the use of force in protest policing is underway. Future research plans involve a departure from South African crime, policing and violence as he intends to assess the impacts of ecotourism projects in different African and South American contexts.



CROSS-APPOINTED TO BOTH History and the College of Sustainability, **Dr. Will Langford** had a busy year. He organized the History Department's Stokes Seminar Series as well as the annual Mackay Lecture in History. Students in his courses took part in activities beyond the classroom. "Public History" students conducted research in the Dalhousie University Archives and attended a session of the Universities Studying Slavery conference in Halifax. "Environmental History" students made blueberry scones at the Loaded Ladle in an activity related to the history of vegetarianism and political activism.

Dr. Langford spoke to the CBC for articles about controversial scholarships at Western University and former PM John S.D. Thompson. He was also awarded the 2024 Canadian Committee on Migration, Ethnicity, and Transnationalism Article Prize for an article in the *Canadian Historical Review* (2023): "Apartheid Internationalism: Canadian Activism in Defence of White Rule in Southern Africa, 1965-1994."



THIS WAS AN ACTIVE academic year for **Dr. Colin Mitchell**. He concluded his sixth (and final) consecutive year as Graduate Coordinator for the Department, while also teaching in the winter semester a newly-refurbished Modern History of Iran course, as well as an entirely new seminar (HIST 4577), *Books of Wonder, Tales of Amazement: Travel, Fantasy and Cosmography in the Islamicate Lands, 800-1650*. On the research front, he delivered aspects of his new research project (on the prophetography of David and Solomon in medieval Persian culture) at the Middle East Studies Association meeting in Montreal (Nov. 2-5, 2023) as well as the Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies at the University of Toronto (Feb. 16, 2024). Dr. Mitchell was also invited to deliver two lectures and serve as a discussant at a series of small conferences hosted in Kyoto and Tokyo in April 2024; these events were organized by The Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Tokyo, Japan. At the end of June, Dr. Mitchell conducted research at the British Library (London) and the John Rylands Library (University of Manchester) as well as presented a research paper (on late 15th-century Iranian epistolography) as part of two themed panels he organized on late 15th-century crisis in the Timurid Empire for the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, UK (July 1-4).

Dr. Denis Kozlov continues archival research for his book project on Jewish migrations from the Soviet Union to the West during the 1970s and 1980s. As part of the project, this spring he gave two invited talks in Italy, at the University of Milan and at the University of Naples / Scuola Superiore Meridionale.

DEPARTMENTAL EVENTS

MACKAY LECTURE SERIES

The 2023/24 Mackay History Lecture was given by Kate Brown, Distinguished Professor in the History of Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

In October, Professor Brown delivered the 2023-24 MacKay Lecture in History at an event co-sponsored by the Environment, Sustainability, and Society Lecture Series. A distinguished historian of science at MIT, Dr. Brown is the author of four enthusiastically-received books. She is known for her path-breaking research on the production of nuclear weapons within planned communities, the health and environmental consequences of nuclear fallout, and the intersections of science, technology, and biopolitics. She is also an effusive writer and great storyteller who often positions herself in relation to the histories she explores. Her works have won numerous prizes.

In a lecture titled “The Interminable Cycles of Chernobyl’s Catastrophes: War, Accident, and War Again,” Dr. Brown traced the complex and long-lasting environmental and health consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear accident. She also noted that nuclear power generation is not so easily walled-off from nuclear conflict. Dr. Brown explained how the effects of the Chernobyl disaster were widespread, impacting people who lived and worked in Ukraine and Belarus far more than authorities have publicly acknowledged. Residents were long exposed to radioactive isotopes when they processed local wool, ate locally-grown foods, or used local water sources. And residents came to understand that their health was being adversely impacted. Dr. Brown underscored her grim yet fascinating talk with an anecdote about how, while she was conducting research, she picked radioactive blueberries, which were sold commercially despite growing in still-contaminated soils.

While on campus, Dr. Brown also participated in the Department of History’s Lawrence D. Stokes Seminar, delivering and discussing an essay on the history of urban gardening and self-provisioning in Berlin. She also made time to meet with students of the History of Science and Technology program at University of King’s College

The 2023-24 MacKay History Lecture

From Nuclear Power to Nuclear War:
**Ukraine’s History
as a Nuclear Colony**



Kate Brown,
Distinguished Professor in History of Science,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Thursday, October 26, 2023 | 7:15PM

Ondaatje Auditorium, Marion McCain Arts
and Social Sciences Building
6135 University Avenue, Halifax

For information contact: Will Longford
(w.lanford@dal.ca), Department of History



STOKES SEMINARS 2023/2024

The Larry D. Stokes Seminar aims to stimulate productive discussion about history and historical practice. It takes place most Friday afternoons during term time, with departmental presenters joined by invited guests from Halifax and beyond, usually presenting works-in-progress. Seminars are open to the public and now, since COVID, are run as hybrid sessions. If you're interested in joining next year's seminars, keep an eye on our website for the Fall and Winter 2024/25 schedules as they appear, or email gradhist@dal.ca to be added to the email distribution list. Our thanks to Will Langford for organizing and chairing this year's sessions.

22 SEPT

Colin Mitchell (*Dalhousie University*) – Solomonian Proximities and Davidic Distancing: Old Exemplars and New Priorities in the Safavid Historical Imagination (15-17th c.)

29 SEPT

John E. Crowley (*Dalhousie University*) – Mathematical Alchemy: Decimalisation in Early Modern England

6 OCT

Denis Kozlov (*Dalhousie University*) – On the Choice and Freedom of a Transnational Migrant: European Trajectories of Soviet Jewish Emigration during the 1970s and 1980s

27 OCT

Kate Brown (*Massachusetts Institute of Technology*) – Tiny Gardens Everywhere

3 NOV

Katie Carline (*Dalhousie University*) – Sewing the Revival Tents: Black Women's Christian Organizations and the Public Duties of Home-Making in an Apartheid City, 1950-63

10 NOV

Aaron S. Wright (*University of King's College/Dalhousie University*) – "I am neither": Lewis H. Douglass and Racial Categories at the Origin of Electronic Data Processing

24 NOV

Xiaoping Sun (*Saint Mary's University*) – Building Agricultural Modernity on China's State Farms

1 DEC

Stefanie Slaunwhite (*University of New Brunswick*) – Residential Reform at the Dr. W.F. Robert's Hospital-School, Saint John, New Brunswick, 1965-85

26 JAN

James During (*Dalhousie University*) – Contested Memory Spaces and the Want to Forget: The Canadian Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Public and Political Discourse

9 FEB

Nevcihan Ozbilge (*Dalhousie University*) – "Violence" and "Multiculturalism" in the Far North: Reinforcing the Colonial Discourse in the 1970s

16 FEB

Jonathan Roberts (*Mount Saint Vincent University*) and **Oluwatoyin Oduntan** (*Towson University*) – Decolonizing Medicine in Africa

1 MAR

Donna Trembinski (*St. Francis Xavier University*) – Travelling Eye Doctors: Intercultural Knowledge Sharing in the High Middle Ages

15 MAR

Clint Bruce (*Université Sainte-Anne*) – Africans and Acadians in Francophone Louisiana: The Mélançon Family in the Heart of the Sugar Empire

22 MAR

Heather Green (*Saint Mary's University*) and **Liza Piper** (*University of Alberta*) – Province Built on Coal: Environmental Regulation of Post-War Alberta Strip Mining

5 APR

Jamila Ghaddar (*Dalhousie University*) – Refusal in Research: An Anticolonial Feminist Stance to History Writing and Archiving on Stolen Land



BEST CURLERS IN HISTORY? THE ANNUAL BONSPIEL

Some 24 curlers showed up to compete in this year’s bonspiel. Some were serious. After all the sliding, falling and partying, the results look like this.

The Best Curlers in History won two games decisively, made some shots, and will be forever in the Department archives: Jamieson Urquhart, Kaila Nesbitt, and Ava Clarke.



After two very decisive losses, another team of students went home with the coveted “Losing with Grace” trophy: Zachary Lowrie, Laura Van de Venter and Alex Robben.



Ronny Blanchard earned the MVP title with on-ice style and a big finish to his second game.



Meaghan Bulger earned her Best Fall earnestly, but survived to win some Acadian champagne.

Hannah Beaulieu and her rice won “Best Potluck Dish” hands down.

And, as ever, thanks to Phil for organizing and showing us how it’s done.

RETIREMENTS AND DEPARTURES



PROFESSOR AFUA COOPER received her PhD in History from the University of Toronto and will be leaving us to return to Toronto for a post-retirement appointment. With honours too many to list, Afua is perhaps best known for her prize-winning and widely-read book, *The Hanging of Angelique: The Untold Story of Canadian Slavery and the Burning of Old Montréal* (2007). Afua came to Dalhousie in 2012 as the James R. Johnston Professor in Black Canadian Studies; she retires as a Killam Research Chair. In between, she helped create the Black and African Diaspora Studies Minor and the new Major. She chaired the Lord Dalhousie Scholarly Panel on Slavery and Race, examining the history of the university's links with slavery and racial injustice. She led the *Black People's History of Canada* project, funded by the department of Canadian Heritage to rectify gaps in History education in the schools. The Royal Society of Canada awarded her the J.B. Tyrrell Historical Medal for outstanding work on the history of Canada. In addition to her many other publications and projects of a historical nature, she also served as Halifax's poet laureate and continues to publish creative works, such as the recent illustrated text of her poem on the Halifax Explosion. We wish her all the best as she moves into the next phase of her career.



DR. JOLANTA PEKACZ is also moving into retirement. Dr. Pekacz received her first PhD in Musicology, in 1987 from the Institute of Fine Arts at the Polish Academy of Science. Her second was in History, from the University of Alberta in 1998. After several years at the University of Saskatchewan, Dr. Pekacz joined the department in 2003, becoming a Canada Research Chair in European Studies. Her major publications include two monographs: *Music in the Culture of Polish Galicia, 1772-1914* (2002) and the book for which she is best known, *The Conservative Tradition in Pre-Revolutionary France: Parisian Salon Women* (1999). An early interest in digital humanities led to an online database of early world maps, the Mappaemundi project. Her most recent work has focused on musical biography, with a special focus on the life and works of Frederic Chopin. We wish her all the best for all that comes next.

Jill Durkee, our graduate program administrator (and an alumna of the program), has taken up a new position in Student Advising in the Faculty of Management. Our thanks to Jill for her work with us over these past two years and we wish her all the best in her new job. We'll miss you – and your plants and bad puns and medieval sense of humour. :)

>> *Jill heading off into the sunset, or at least across the road to Management.*



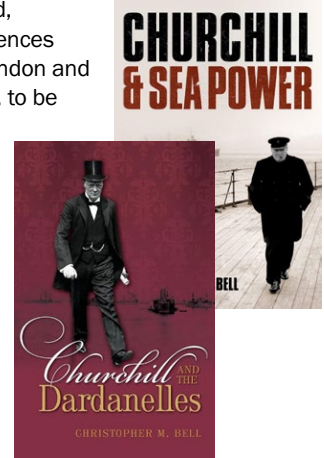
IN MEMORIAM

DR. CHRISTOPHER M. BELL (1966-2024)



CHRIS JOINED THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT in 2003, after earning his PhD at the University of Calgary in 1998 and working for several years as a research analyst at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. He went on to become an internationally respected historian of Winston Churchill and the Royal Navy, with a long list of articles and book chapters, three co-edited collections of essays, and three monographs to his credit. His books *Churchill and Sea Power* (2012) and *Churchill and the Dardanelles* (2020) were especially well-received, establishing his reputation in the field and reaching audiences beyond academia alone. Colleagues at King's College London and Brunel University are working to help finish his final book, to be published posthumously. Chris enjoyed his time in the classroom and was a highly regarded teacher. In 2009 he received the FASS Award for Excellence in Teaching. His classes on, e.g., the First World War, War and Society since 1945, and a senior seminar on Churchill were always very popular. He supervised 18 Honours students, 12 Masters students, and one PhD student who produced works on various aspects of naval and military history. He is and will be widely missed.

We extend our deepest condolences to his family and friends. Read Dr. Bell's [obituary](#).



TINA JONES (1960-2023)



TINA WORKED AT DAL from 1989 until 2021, first as an administrative assistant in English but for most of that time in History, where she helped generations of students, faculty, and fellow staff not just with her legendary efficiency, knowledge, and professionalism but also her abundant good humour and steady kindness. We were heartbroken to have lost Tina so soon after her retirement. Tina didn't only earn the immense gratitude of those she worked with most closely: she also won both the Faculty of Arts and Social Science's Excellence in Service award and the University's Rosemary Gill Award for outstanding commitment to students. Upon receiving the latter, she noted that for her "It's all about the students. If you can help one student, that what it's all about for me...You really feel like you accomplished something important." Tina certainly did accomplish much over the years and is much missed. We offer our deepest condolences to her family friends.

Read Tina's [obituary](#).



DR. JOHN GODFREY (1942-2023)

The Honourable Dr. John Godfrey, PC, CM, DCL'06, received his DPhil from Oxford in 1975, with a dissertation that formed the basis of his book *Capitalism at War: Industrial Policy and Bureaucracy in France, 1914-1918*. He had already begun teaching European History at Dalhousie where he earned a reputation as a very popular lecturer. Before long, he was appointed as President of the University of King's College, serving as the youngest president in the College's history, from 1977 through to 1987. While there, he helped start its journalism program and provided notable leadership in the effort to have universities help address the food crisis in Ethiopia. He then went on to an extensive career in journalism and public service: editor of the *Financial Post* from 1987 to 1991, he later served as a Liberal Member of Parliament (1993-2008), as Parliamentary Secretary, and as Minister of State for Infrastructure and Communities. Upon retirement from politics, he became head of the Toronto French School and worked on environmental issues, including as Chair of the Government of Ontario's Climate Action Group. In recognition of his many contributions to public life and to a variety of cultural and educational organizations, Dr. Godfrey was invested to the Order of Canada in 2019. *The Globe and Mail's* obituary aptly called Dr. Godfrey a "[renaissance man](#)." Read the [memorial notice](#) shared by King's.

DR. JAMES BERTIN WEBSTER (1927-2024)

Dalhousie's African history program began in 1968, sharing the spirit of an international scholarly movement to correct longstanding misrepresentation and plain lack of knowledge of Africa's history. Bertin was right in the thick of it. After taking an MA in modern Nigerian political history at UBC in 1958 and then a PhD in the history of independent African churches in Nigeria from the University of London in 1963, Bertin taught at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria until 1968, one of the most dynamic centres of this exciting movement. While there Bertin helped answer the urgent need for teaching material, co-writing what became a classic textbook on West African history (revised in 1980), and co-founding *Tarikh*, a journal designed to provide students with accessible and compelling studies of important themes in African history. He also edited the influential *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* and continued his work on Nigeria's modern religious, intellectual and political history. He then moved to Uganda to chair Makerere University's Department of History. There his second scholarly passion blossomed, pioneering an oral research methodology intent on generating chronologies for Africa's precolonial period. The "Uganda History Project" he inaugurated at Makerere opened new chapters in the early history of East Africa's great lakes region. He arrived at our Department in 1972, where he directed his oral history expertise towards Nigeria through his ambitious Benue Valley Project. Bertin accepted a post at Chancellor College in Malawi in 1976 to help advance African historical studies in central Africa, returning to Dalhousie in 1979 until his retirement in 1993. He continued to publish on oral research methodology and early African history while contributing to our African Studies Centre, which drew many visiting scholars to its weekly seminar. With John Flint specializing in the colonial period as Bertin specialized in the precolonial, our graduate program in African history enjoyed its most vibrant decades. Students drawn from Bertin's African networks graduated to form a noteworthy Dalhousie diaspora, cementing Dalhousie's reputation as a site of African historical scholarship.

Phil Zachernuk

Read Dr. Webster's [obituary](#).

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Do you have an interesting story to share?
Know of a former classmate who is doing
something exciting and newsworthy?

Email us at:
HISTORY@DAL.CA

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