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DEPARTMENT HISTORIAN



A NEWSLETTER OF PEOPLE AND EVENTS
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Greetings from the Chair

December 2017



W. Fitzhugh Brundage
Chair, Department of History

In my role as chair of the History Department I flatter myself that I am familiar with the activities and exploits of the students and faculty who make up this lively community of historians. Yet, each issue of the departmental newsletter reveals accomplishments by alums, students, and colleagues of which I was unaware. The newsletter provides a welcome opportunity to reflect on the breadth of engagement in scholarship and public life by all

us who have affiliations with this department.

In this issue you can read about the far-flung research travel of our undergraduates, as well as the globe-trotting adventures of our Global History doctoral students; our faculty's latest experiments in collaborative teaching; accolades won by our department's student-run history journal, *Traces*; the creative journey of one of our alumni, the novelist Katy Simpson Smith, and much more. This issue glances back in time, to the career of Kenan Professor of History Fletcher M. Green (1895–1978) and his devotion to student mentoring. It also showcases how our students and faculty are working together to influence the place of memory in today's civil society: in newspaper op-eds, public panels, and other forms of public scholarship, they are bringing historical expertise to

bear on debates about Confederate monuments, both on campus and around the South.

W. Fitzhugh Brundage
Chair, Department of History



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Department News

[Note from the Director of Undergraduate Studies](#)



Treasure Williams and Jimmy
Messemer in the Pit

Director of Undergraduate Studies

The Fall 2017 marked a number of firsts for undergraduate studies in History, starting with the creation of a new Undergraduate Lounge in Hamilton 551, a community space for majors, minors, and other history students along with activities relating to Phi Alpha Theta and the History Club. Many thanks to the History office assistant **Sharon Anderson** for helping to plan and install the new lounge. [Read more here.](#)

Brett Whalen

[History Department Calls for the Removal of Silent Sam](#)

The Department of History has added its voice to growing calls to remove the Confederate Memorial from campus. In the October 4 [statement](#), the Department urged UNC and state officials to “pursue every avenue to remove the ‘Silent Sam’ monument” from its “prominent place” on campus. The History Department joins several other departments and schools in this call for action, including Anthropology, Religious Studies, and the School of Law, as well as the Chapel Hill Chamber of Commerce. [Read more here.](#)

Joshua Tait



The controversial Confederate memorial “Silent Sam.” (credit: Martin Kraft)

[History Majors Undertake Summer Research Near and Far](#)



Lacey Hunter stands on the Thames foreshore in front of St. Paul's Cathedral during her research trip to London.

While many undergraduate History majors have the opportunity to mine archival collections in Wilson Library, a few lucky students are able to travel the world for research during their time at UNC. Thanks to the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) offered by the Office for Undergraduate Research in the College of Arts and Sciences, students like **Lacey Hunter** can pursue projects that take them beyond the collections available on campus. [Read more here.](#)

Aubrey Lauersdorf

Prizes, Honors, Accolades

[Awards Propel Carolina Students Abroad](#)

Two students in the History Honors Thesis program—a demanding year-long course that requires students to produce a 70 to 100-page work of original research—have won prizes to support their dives into the archives. [Read more here.](#)

UNC History journal *Traces* Wins National Recognition

Phi Alpha Theta, the National History Honors Society, has once again awarded the Nash History Journal Prize for 2017 to *Traces*, the UNC-Chapel Hill journal of history. Our student editors and contributors continue to demonstrate their commitment to excellence in historical research and writing. [Read more here.](#)

Alumni Spotlight

Novelist Katy Simpson Smith Says Her History PhD Informs Her Fiction

Who says a historian has to stick to the facts? When [Katy Simpson Smith](#), PhD '11, got a major book advance from HarperCollins, she left her adjunct teaching position at Tulane University to write fulltime—and now she's the author of two acclaimed historical novels. Her historical training continues to inform her work, and historians and novelists might learn from one another's approaches, she said. [Read more here.](#)

Joshua Tait



Katy Simpson Smith, PhD '11 (Credit: Elise Smith)

Out of the Archives

[History professor Fletcher M. Green directed over 100 dissertations](#)



Fletcher M. Green smiles from behind his desk.

Aubrey Lauersdorf

Professors in the Department of History usually advise numerous graduate students, but few have had as much influence on graduate education as **Fletcher M. Green**, a Kenan Professor of History from 1927 until his retirement in 1968. Green, a specialist in the history of the American South, directed over 100 doctoral dissertations and 150 master's theses during his time at UNC—and left a lasting legacy in the study of the American South. [Read more here.](#)

Faculty Spotlight

[Co-Teaching Brings Benefits and Challenges to the Classroom](#)

Last fall, professors **Katherine Turk** and **Benjamin Waterhouse** combined forces to teach a sixty-person undergraduate course on “America in the 1970s.” They alternated lectures and took turns leading weekly recitation sections. Despite some challenges, both saw great benefits for both students and faculty. The experience was “very much worth it and I think the students got that as well,” Waterhouse said. So why don't we do it more often? [Read more here.](#)

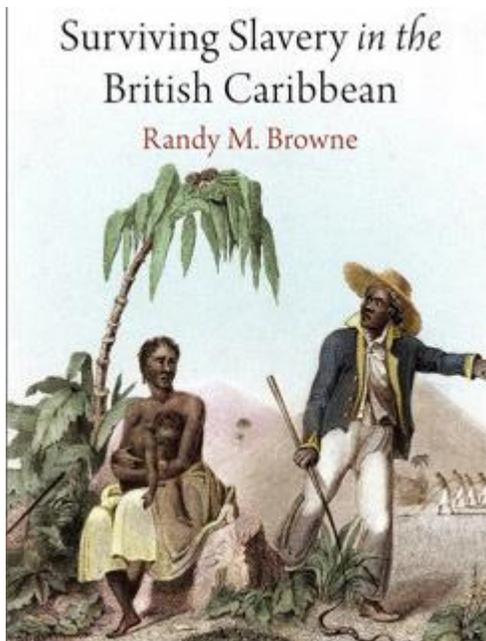


Ben Waterhouse and Katherine Turk

Joshua Tait

Graduate Student News

[Note from the Director of Graduate Studies](#)



I am grateful to have an opportunity to serve as Director of Graduate Studies. The students continue to delight me with their fascinating projects, their insights, their cooperative spirit, and their enthusiasm—to say nothing of their very hard work. It is truly a pleasure to succeed someone as supremely competent and wonderfully innovative as Chad Bryant, and he has been quite generous with his time and expertise during the transition. [Read more here.](#)

–Sarah Shields, Director of Graduate Studies

[Where in the world are UNC's global history graduate students?](#)

If you ask **Alyssa Bowen**, a PhD candidate in History, to tell you about her travels for her dissertation research, you better have some time on your hands: she's visited Belgium, Chile, Cuba, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. For global historians like Bowen, it is not uncommon to visit archives on multiple continents to better understand processes that transcend nations or even regions. [Read more here.](#)

Aubrey Lauersdorf



Alyssa Bowen visits El Chiflón del Diablo, or The Devil's Blast, a coal mine and former center of Marxist organizing in Chile.

Gifts to the History Department

The History Department is a lively center for historical education and research. Although we are deeply committed to our mission as a public institution, our "margin of excellence" depends on generous private donations. At the present time, the department is particularly eager to improve the funding and fellowships for graduate students.

Your donations are used to send graduate students to professional conferences, support innovative student research, bring visiting speakers to campus, and expand other activities that enhance the department's intellectual community.



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The Department also receives tax-deductible donations through the Arts and Sciences Foundation at UNC. **Please note in the "memo" section of your check that your gift is intended for the History Department.** Donations should be sent to the following address:

**UNC-Arts & Sciences Foundation
Buchan House
Attn: Ronda Manuel
523 E. Franklin Street
Chapel Hill, NC 27514**

For more information about creating scholarships, fellowships, and professorships in the Department through a gift, pledge, or planned gift please contact Ronda Manuel, Associate Director of Development at the Arts and Sciences Foundation: ronda.manuel@unc.edu or (919) 962-7266.

This email is for friends of the UNC Department of History, through the Arts and Sciences Foundation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL