

HISTORY GRAD NOTES
INTELLIGENCER

**FOURTH ANNUAL JAMES A. RAWLEY
CONFERENCE IN THE HUMANITIES**

By Brent Rogers

On March 29, 2009, the UNL History Graduate Students' Association hosted the 4th Annual James A. Rawley Graduate Conference in the Humanities at the Teacher's College building. "Contrasts & Commonalities: Expanding Perspectives Through Comparative Study" comprised the conference theme and provided an excellent forum for budding scholars to present their comparative analysis and discuss these approaches and methodologies. In this way, the conference certainly expanded the perspectives for all those who attended. The inviting atmosphere of the Rawley allowed all participants and the audience an opportunity to share in gaining valuable knowledge and experience.

Following some quips regarding Sooner pride, University of Oklahoma's Dr. Sterling Evans, the Louise Welsh Chair of Oklahoma, Southern Plains, and Borderlands history, delivered a rousing keynote address entitled "Nothing New about NAFTA: The Great Plains and North American Connections." With perhaps the highest attendance for a Rawley keynote filling the Love Library Auditorium, Evans articulated the history of the major global transformations generated based on minor economic commodities and trade in the Great Plains region of Canada, Mexico, and the United States. Sterling concentrated on binder twine as the commodity that precipitated many of these transformations and even encouraged the use of gunboat diplomacy by the United States. For more on his argument, check out his book *Bound in Twine: The History and Ecology of the Henequen-Wheat Complex for Mexico and the American and Canadian Great Plains*.

This year's conference highlighted a diverse array of quality papers from places such as Africa and Mexico to topics that included largemouth bass, the Marias Massacre, and perspectives on the separation of church and state. Papers came from a handful of regional institutions including the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, University of Oklahoma, University of Kansas, and

THIS ISSUE:

4th Annual Rawley
Conference.....1-2

Grad Student Awards &
Honors.....2-3

Fall 09 Seminar
Highlights.....3-6

Alumni News.....6

Note from the Graduate
Chair.....7

Remember!

Master's students must submit a **Memorandum of Courses** to the Office of Graduate Studies PRIOR to completion of over one-half of the required coursework.

Contact your advisor with questions or visit the website of the Office of Graduate Studies at:

<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/>

(Continued on page 2)

FOURTH ANNUAL JAMES A. RAWLEY CONFERENCE IN THE HUMANITIES

(Continued from page 1)

the University of Nebraska-Kearney. The Conference also featured presentations from several UNL graduate students including Robert Jordan, Sean Kammer, David Nesheim, Brenden Rensink, Brent Rogers, Christopher Steinke, Shayla Swift, Brianna Theobald, and Andy Wilson. Members of the UNL history and anthropology faculty, as well as an outside member of the academic community commented on papers, providing important suggestions and feedback that prompted vigorous discussions on scholarly approach, content, and analysis. With so many outstanding papers delivered, the Rawley committee continues its deliberation on awarding the best paper and runner-up prizes.

Each year the Rawley Conference requires countless hours of preparation to ensure its success. With another laudable effort put forth by the entire History Graduate Students' Association, this year's conference was certainly successful. The HGSA gives many thanks to the presenters, panel chairs, and commenters for their invaluable contributions. The faculty of the UNL History Department always provides incredible support, guidance, and time, which helps raise the conference's high level of quality. Conference and committee chairs, namely Leslie Working, Brent Rogers, Shayla Swift, Christopher Steinke, and David Nesheim, are owed a special debt of gratitude for their hard work, service, and long hours of preparation. Critical support was also received from the Plains Humanities Alliance, UNL Graduate Studies, the UNL College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office, and several other departments and offices from within the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Thank you to all who help make the Rawley possible.

GRAD STUDENT AWARDS & HONORS

David Nesheim, Ph.D. Candidate, was invited to give an address at a Charles Mix County Lake Restoration Organization fundraiser on April 18th in beautiful downtown Lake Andes, South Dakota. His talk is entitled, "Maintaining Lake Andes: How an Intermittent Prairie Depression became 'Famous for Fishing.'" Nesheim has also worked under the direction of Dr. Mark Awakuni-Swetland on the Omaha-Ponca Digital Dictionary Project, a joint NEH-National Science Foundation-Smithsonian Institution "Documenting Endangered Languages" funded initiative.

Tonia M. Compton has completed her dissertation "Law of the Land: Federal Legislation and Women's Property Rights in the Nineteenth-Century American West." She will defend her dissertation on April 20, 2009 at 2:30 in Oldfather Hall 638 and she invites everyone to attend. In addition, Compton has accepted a tenure-track position as assistant professor of history at Columbia College in Missouri where she will begin in Fall 2009.

Ph.D. Student Robert Jordan has been selected to participate in the Oaxaca Summer Institute, a month-long seminar and field school on Modern Mexico. Robert is one of approximately 10 graduate students from Canada, Mexico, and the United States chosen for the prestigious institute. Jordan also presented for the third straight year at the 2009 Rocky Mountain Council for Latin American Studies Conference (RMCLAS) which was held in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

(Continued on page 3)

GRAD STUDENT AWARDS & HONORS

(Continued from page 2)

Robert Voss, Ph.D. Candidate, was awarded a fellowship to the John W. Barringer III National Railroad Library at the St. Louis Mercantile Library for 2008. This fellowship allowed Voss to pursue further his dissertation research on the interactions of Native Americans, railroads, and immigrants in Indian Territory from 1866-1907. Voss had a terrific experience with this research fellowship. Voss is also part of contingent of Nebraska history graduate students including Jason Heppler, Brent Rogers, Nic Swiercek, and Michelle Tiedje that presented a panel on digital scholarship and the virtues of digital history at the 2009 Western Social Sciences Association Annual Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on April 17, 2009.

Brenden Rensink, Ph.D. Candidate, recently published "The Sand Creek Phenomenon: The Complexity and Difficulty of Undertaking a Comparative Study of Genocide vis-à-vis the North American West," in *Genocide Studies and Prevention: an International Journal* 4:1 (April 2009). Rensink also earned the Addison Sheldon Fellowship from the UNL Department of History for 2009-2010. In addition, Rensink added a Certificate of Recognition for Contributions to Students from the UNL Teaching Council and Parents Association and a Grant-in-Aid Research Fellowship from the Center for Great Plains Studies.

FALL 2009 HISTORY SEMINAR HIGHLIGHTS

HIST 941, Reading Seminar: American History Since 1877 with Dr. Tim Borstelmann

Mondays, 12:30 to 2:20 p.m., 638 Oldfather Hall

HIST 941 offers an introduction to major problems in the interpretation of United States history from 1877 to the beginning of the 21st century. The course is designed primarily for first-year students in both the M.A. and Ph.D. programs in History, as the second half of a two-semester graduate-level survey of U.S. history. It aims to provide the foundation for all further study in this period of U.S. history at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. We will pay particularly close attention to the methodologies—the kinds of questions, evidence, and approaches—used by American historians, as well as how historical interpretations have changed over time. The course requirements include extensive readings plus three analytical essays. Each member of the class will also lead the seminar for the first hour of one class meeting, guiding the discussion of the assigned readings with appropriate questions. Evaluation of students' performance will weigh the three essays, discussion leadership, quality of participation in the weekly discussions, and evidence of intellectual growth across the course of the semester.

Required readings include:

- (1) Thomas Bender, *A Nation Among Nations: America's Place in World History*, (2006).
- (2) Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration*, (2003).
- (3) William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*, (1991).
- (4) Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race*, (1998).

(Continued on page 4)

FALL 2009 HISTORY SEMINAR HIGHLIGHTS

(HIST 941 required readings, continued from page 3)

- (5) Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, (1999).
- (6) Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920*, (2003).
- (7) Alan Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War*, (1995).
- (8) Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, (2005).
- (9) Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*, (1995).
- (10) Timothy B. Tyson, *Blood Done Signed My Name: A True Story*, (2004).
- (11) Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960's*, (2000).
- (12) Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer, eds., *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970's*, (2008).
- (13) Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*, (1985).

HIST 942, Research Seminar: The North American West with Dr. John R. Wunder

Tuesdays, 3:30 to 5:20 p.m., 638 Oldfather Hall

HIST 942 has as its ultimate goal a research paper on a subject in the history of the North American West that is of publishable quality. Such a paper must use a significant body of original source materials and secondary literature. The subject of the paper must be approved by the professor. The paper may be a completely new project or a part of an on-going research initiative leading toward a thesis or dissertation. The paper will be approximately 15-20 double-spaced pages not including endnotes.

The course will be divided into thirds. The first third will involve readings and discussions of cutting-edge books, completion of a comparative journal assignment and one critical book review, and selection of the paper topic. Three of the four books will be collections of essays, and the class will pay particular attention to essay structure and substantive construction. The second third will involve discussions of research challenges, preparation of a working bibliography, and strategies for writing the essay. The last third will result in everyone reading everyone's paper plus one person offering commentary on one paper in class.

Evaluations will be based on class discussion, one book review, the journal assignment, a written commentary, and the research paper.

Books assigned for the course include:

- (1) Timothy R. Mahoney and Wendy J. Katz, eds., *Regionalism and the Humanities* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009) - NOTE: It is hoped that when this book is discussed, the class will have as its guests Professors Mahoney and Katz.

(Continued on page 5)

FALL 2009 HISTORY SEMINAR HIGHLIGHTS

(HIST 942 required readings, continued from page 4)

- (2) Shirley A. Leckie and Nancy J. Parezo, eds., *Their Own Frontier: Women Intellectuals Re-visioning the American West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008) - NOTE: This collection of original essays combines original source material and historiographical information around a gendered view of the American West; note it also includes essays about historians, anthropologists, and ethnohistorians. (Dr. Wunder penned the essay on Mario Sandoz.)
- (3) Pekka Hamalainen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).
- (4) John R. Wunder and Joann M. Ross, eds., *The Nebraska-Kansas Act of 1854* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008). It is hoped that when this collection is discussed, Brenden Rensink, a current UNL Ph.D. student who wrote one of the essays, will be a guest.

HIST/WMNS 951, History of Women and Gender with Dr. Margaret Jacobs

Wednesdays, 2:30 to 4:20 p.m., 638 Oldfather Hall

Theme: Women, Gender, and Empire

This class will study the history of women, gender, and empire in comparative perspective. Key issues will include imperial representations of indigenous women and gender in colonized areas, the role of western/white women in colonization, changes in indigenous gender systems with colonization, colonialism, and the realm of "the intimate," colonization of "the body," controlling sexuality and reproduction, and the role of science and medicine in colonization and empire. Given the professor's area of expertise, the course will particularly compare the history of women and gender in the North American and Canadian Wests—as key sites of settler colonialism—with other colonial/imperial settings in the world, including Australia, Indonesia, Africa, and India. No prior knowledge of any of these areas of the world is required. This seminar fulfills a requirement for Comparative/World History.

Required Texts:

- (1) Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Duke University Press, 2006). ISBN: 0822338432.
- (2) Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). ISBN: 0520232585.
- (3) Sarah Carter, *The Importance of Being Monogamous: Marriage and Nation Building in Western Canada to 1915* (University of Alberta Press, 2008). ISBN: 0888644906.
- (4) Katherine Ellinghaus, *Taking Assimilation to Heart: Marriages of White Women and Indigenous Men in the United States and Australia, 1887-1937* (University of Nebraska Press, 2009) (paperback). ISBN: 0803224877.
- (5) Victoria Haskins, *One Bright Spot* (New York: Palgrave/MacMillan, 2005). ISBN: 1403947449.
- (6) Kristin Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (University of North Carolina Press, 2007). ISBN: 0807857939.
- (7) Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo* (Duke University Press, 1999). ISBN: 0822323664.

(Continued on page 6)

FALL 2009 HISTORY SEMINAR HIGHLIGHTS

(HIST 951 required texts, continued from page 5)

(8) Lisa Lindsay, *Working with Gender, Wage Labor and Social Change in Southwestern Nigeria* (Heinemann, 2003). ISBN: 0325001871.

(9) Colleen O'Neill, *Working the Navajo Way: Labor and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005). ISBN: 0700613951.

(10) Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2002). ISBN: 0520231112.

(11) Lynn Thomas, *Politics of the Womb: Women, Reproduction, and the State in Kenya* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2003). ISBN: 0520235401.

For more information, contact Dr. Jacobs at mjacobs3@unl.edu or at 472-9300.

ALUMNI NEWS

By Jason Heppler

Pekka Hamalainen, associate professor at the University of California-Santa Barbara, received the Merle Curti Award for 2009 for *Comanche Empire* (Yale, 2008) at the Organization of American Historians conference in Seattle. The book has previously won the Bancroft Prize for 2009 and the Tullis Memorial Prize from the Texas State Historical Association for the best 2009 book on Texas history.

The Center for Great Plains Studies has announced the six finalists for the 2008 Great Plains Distinguished Book Prize and the winner will be announced on May 6. Three of the finalists include three former students: Andrea Radke-Moss for *Bright Epoch: Women and Coeducation in the American West* (Nebraska, 2008), Mark Scherer for *Rights in the Balance: Free Press, Free Trial, and Nebraska Press Assn v. Stuart* (Texas Tech, 2008), and Pekka Hamalainen for *Comanche Empire*.

Kurt Kinbacher and John Wunder just published their co-edited volume *Reconfigurations of Native North America: An Anthology of New Perspectives* (Texas Tech, 2009), a collection of essays addressing the latest trends in indigenous studies as it relates to identity, cultural perseverance, economic development, and urbanization.

Kristin Ahlberg, who earned her Ph.D. from UNL under the direction of Lloyd Ambrosius, recently published her first book *Transplanting the Great Society: Lyndon Johnson and Food for Peace* (Missouri, 2008). Ahlberg was also appointed to a three-year term on the editorial board of *The Public Historian* and serves as a member of the American Historical Association's Professional Division and the Organization of American Historian's Newsletter Advisory Council. She is currently the historian in the Europe and Global Issues Division of the Office of the Historian in the U.S. Department of State, where she researches, compiles, and edits volumes in the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series.

A NOTE FROM THE GRADUATE CHAIR...

The Spring semester in 2009 in the graduate program has been exciting. We launched our first core graduate readings courses aimed at preparing students for comprehensive examinations. We hosted the 4th Annual James A. Rawley graduate student conference. And we have admitted and recruited a new class of graduate students entering in the fall of 2009.

The incoming class is especially strong and includes students working in Great Plains, North American West, Early Modern Europe, Latin American History, Native Studies, Digital History, Civil War, and Women and Gender Studies. Seven out of ten of our Ph.D. students admitted into the program have accepted our offer of admission and are coming in the fall. They are coming from UNC-Greensboro, Kent State, Wyoming, James Madison University, and UNL. Eleven new Master's students have indicated they are coming into our program as well. They hail from a variety of strong undergraduate institutions: the University of Notre Dame, Creighton, Northland College, North Dakota State, Kansas, Tulsa, UNO, and UNL. We are fortunate to have such a strong and diverse class coming into the program, and I am especially excited to see our graduate program grow in depth and strength. I know you all will welcome these new colleagues when you meet them either when they visit this spring or when they arrive in the fall.

Finally, we have restarted the History Teaching Forum this semester and set up a schedule for the fall semester. The forum is aimed at improving our teaching and sharing ideas about teaching. The forum is a roundtable discussion and all are welcome to attend. Led by Amy Burnett on "What Should Students Learn," our first forum in April was a big success, with over 30 graduate students and faculty attending.

Next fall, the tentative schedule includes: Tim Borstelmann on teaching seminars, Tara Wood on teaching courses online, and Jason Heppler, Leslie Working, and I on teaching writing with wikis in the survey courses. The schedule will be coming out soon for next fall's History Teaching Forum. In all of these opportunities we hope to promote the development of our graduate students in every way possible.

Dr. Will Thomas

Have a great summer!

If you have any news or other items for publication in future Intelligencers, please contact Michelle Tiedje at mtiedje@huskers.unl.edu. We welcome your comments and suggestions.