

PAST AND PRESENT

Newsletter of the CSB/SJU History Department

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Greetings from the History Department!

The Tegeder-Berg Society has been very active over the last few months. History alums, students, and faculty gathered at Kieran's Kitchen on Tuesday, March 28 for the first in-person Tegeder-Berg Society lecture in the Twin Cities since our inaugural event in fall 2019. I presented on Aztec human sacrifice and its surprising legacy for us today (see a summary below), but the real activity centered on networking among alums and students. The conversations were lively and engaging. I want to thank our alums who attended for sharing your insights and advice with current students. Your active mentoring of students distinguishes the CSB+SJU History program and demonstrates your remarkable commitment and generosity.

Also, this past January, the Tegeder-Berg Society hosted our first letter-writing campaign to prospective CSB+SJU history students at Utepils Brewing in Minneapolis. I want to extend a very warm thank you to all the alums who generously gave their time to write personal notes to high-school seniors, encouraging them to study history at our schools. Our alums' dedication never ceases to amaze me. Look for more chances to connect with prospective students in the future.

I am also excited to announce that the Tegeder-Berg Society is launching a book club for alums. Dr. Greg Schroeder will lead our first book-club discussions this summer on the historical background to the Russia-Ukraine war (more information below). Alums can participate either in person or by Zoom. If you're seeking to understand this conflict or if you just want to talk about good history books, don't pass up this opportunity.



I hope to see you at our upcoming events!
Brian

Tegeder-Berg Society Spring 2023 Event

“Under the Knife: Aztec Religion and Human Sacrifice Reconsidered”

Professor Larkin's presentation on Aztec human sacrifice challenged popular conceptions of Aztec religion as cruel and bloody. He argued that this understanding of Aztec religion stems from early accounts of Aztec society written by Spanish conquerors and priests who were horrified by human sacrifice. These Spaniards demonized Aztec religion and greatly exaggerated the prevalence of Aztec sacrifice. They also used depictions of “satanic” Aztec religion to justify their wars of conquest and colonial labor demands from conquered Indigenous populations.

Professor Larkin argued that the Aztecs saw human sacrifice as an unquestioned good because they believed it sustained the cosmos's existence and preserved life. These ideas stemmed from the Aztec worldview, particularly the Aztec belief that they lived in the fifth era, or Sun, of the cosmos and that their era, Four Movement, would end in calamity just as the previous four eras had. Human sacrifice repaid the gods for their own self-sacrifice necessary for the creation of the universe's fifth era and helped delay its inevitable collapse, when violent earthquakes (movement) would destroy the world.

Professor Larkin also contended that human sacrifice was the culmination of a carefully orchestrated and costly ritual that could last days, weeks, or months. Although the Aztecs regularly sacrificed human beings, usually captive warriors defeated on the battlefield, the intricacy and prolonged nature of the ritual meant that human sacrifice was much rarer than early Spanish accounts portrayed.

You can watch a version of Professor Larkin's talk [here](#). Because of technical difficulties (the projector at Kieran's did not work), we have uploaded a Zoom recording of Professor Larkin's talk rather than the presentation at Kieran's Kitchen.

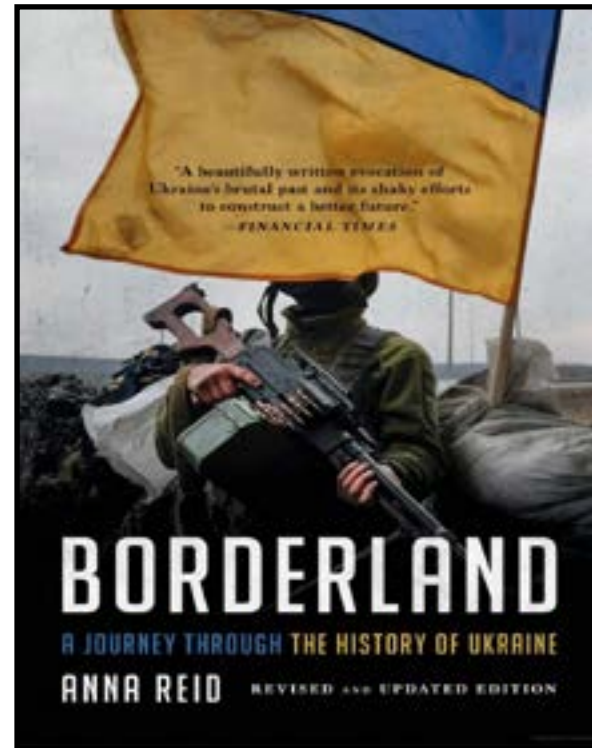


Dr. Gregory Schroeder will lead our first book-club discussion this summer on Anna Reid's *Borderland: A Journey through the History of Ukraine*. The book was published in 1997, less than a decade after Ukraine's independence from the Soviet Union, and updated in 2015 to include the 2014 Ukrainian protests and the Russian military invasion of eastern Ukraine and the Crimea. Reid's narrative presents a broad historical view of Ukrainian history from the beginnings to shortly before the current Russian war in Ukraine (February 2022-?). Alums can participate either in person or by Zoom.

The in-person meeting will be held in the Twin Cities (location: TBD) July 18, 6:00-7:30 PM. The Zoom session will be held July 19, 6:00-7:30 PM. Look for further details and RSVP information in future communications from the History Department.

Dr. Schroeder will provide a study and discussion guide, along with some other preparatory suggestions, approximately one month prior to the meetings. If you're seeking to understand the present conflict or if you just want to talk about good history books, don't pass up this opportunity.

[Sign up for more information](#)



Theresa Coskran, CSB '94

Theresa Coskran didn't always have her mind set on history. She changed her major at least three times during her freshman and sophomore years, and decided on history when she contemplated which classes she enjoyed instead of what she was going to do after college. She particularly enjoyed the storytelling aspect of history. Whether she was the storyteller or the listener, it was her favorite. She also recalled her favorite CSB+SJU one with Dr. Ken Jones about US history class focused on WW II to the present.

She enjoyed her professors who not just told the story, but structured their classes in a way that inserted their students into the story.

Recently, Theresa moved to Seattle and works as a Senior Human Resources Business Partner at a medical center. After graduating from CSB, she began working in HR, which was a great fit because she used her critical thinking skills and open-mindedness to different perspectives that she learned as a history major. In her free time, Theresa enjoys walking in the mountains and along the water, and wine tasting. When forest fires spread throughout Oregon and affected the taste of the grapes, she claimed, "Tasting the smokey notes in the wine was like tasting history."

Theresa's advice to current students considering a history major? "Do it!" She claims that college is the time to discover passions and interests. These will help lead to happiness in your life and career.

As an avid wine collector, Theresa enjoys visiting Oregon's Willamette Valley for wine tasting events.

~submitted by Jackson May '24



Charlie Bruber, SJU '13

Charlie Bruber started college as an accounting major. However, he learned quickly that accounting was not for him. So he switched to history, which had always interested him.

Charlie's favorite class was historiography on memory and post-war Europe with Dr. Schroeder, which he enjoyed in part because he had just returned from studying abroad in Austria. The connections he made between the class and the sites and experiences he had in Austria cemented his love for history. His favorite memory from history classes was coming up with his thesis statement in the basement of Marmion house while there was a party going on upstairs. The sense of fulfillment he had after completing his statement sent him for a long scenic walk to Maur house where he lived.

Charlie also claims that his history degree shaped him into a critical thinker, and that this skill has helped him throughout his adult life, including as an intern at the Washington County Historical Society in Stillwater, MN, and currently as a professional musician based in Minneapolis. He plays bass in an instrumental group, has a jazz trio/quartet with a fellow Johnnie alum, Jack Barrett, and has albums coming out over the next few years! Charlie also recently got married to his wife Kelsey. They honeymooned in Taos, New Mexico.

Some of his favorite quotes:

"Whatever you dream you can do, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now."

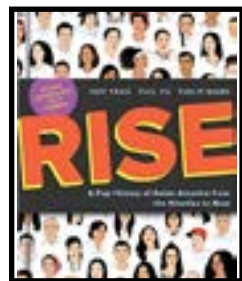
~ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

"One always has exaggerated ideas about what one doesn't know."

~ Albert Camus, The Stranger

~submitted by Jackson May '24

Suggested Books/Podcasts



You cheered as *Everything Everywhere All At Once* swept the awards, sipping on boba and chowing down on sushi (and man, that song from RRR was a bop), and suddenly you found yourself surrounded by Asian American popular culture. Didn't your mother love The Joy Luck Club? But that was how long ago? And where the hell were all of these amazing popular culture offerings hiding and how can I get *insert KPop idol* to notice me? If you have ever wondered about the haphazard trajectories of Asian American appreciation (and appropriation) in the United States to this point, who blazed the trails that were too long shaped by racism, bigotry, and xenophobia, and what other possibilities exist for our common future, you should check out

Rise: A Pop History of Asian America from the Nineties to Now. Don't let its vibrant presentation scare you—this is a repository of history, culture, and sources, primary and secondary, that deserve to be studied and discussed.

~submitted by Elisheva Perelman



"You're Wrong About" is an entertaining podcast that explores popular misconceptions about historical events and cultural phenomena. By engaging in thorough research and presenting nuanced perspectives, Michael Hobbes and Sarah Marshall invite listeners to challenge their pre-conceived notions and learn the "truth" behind well-known historical and cultural stories. The podcast's conversational tone make complex historical topics accessible and enjoyable. Check it out. You will not regret it.

~submitted by Jonathan Merritt Nash

Student Spotlight

Individualized Major & History - It's Pretty Cool Stuff!

Devean (Dee) Statum, a CSB+SJU sophomore from Los Angeles, is pursuing an individualized major in Africana/Black Studies under the direction of Dr. Brittany Merritt Nash, of the History Department. Dee individualized the history major by identifying classes in History as well as other departments, like English and Communication, that offer courses related to Africana/Black Studies. Dee is excited for this opportunity and wants to share his story on why HISTORY is the perfect home for his major.



"I chose to do my Individualized Major (Africana Studies) through the History Department because who doesn't love history? It's a beautiful subject that gives students the skills to think critically and interpret data properly, and provides good practice to those who love to write (like I do). At St. Ben's and St. John's, I've been fortunate to have taken classes in the History Department that relate to my area of study. For example, I took a history class that discussed the contributions of African women in revolts aboard slave ships. The diverse classes within the History Department gives me the chance to explore topics, and I'm able to develop skills to be a better historian for future projects. We NEED history!"

Dee is currently the president of the Black Student Union, a peer academic coach at The Study in Alcuin Learning Center, and a student assistant in the History Department.

~submitted by Norma Koetter

Meet our senior history majors and their capstone topics!

Joshua W. Bashore

"An 'Atomic' American Dream? Public Perception of Atomic Development versus Historical Reality in the Cold War"

Claire Boettcher

"Fact or Foe: Putin's Manipulation of Historical Memory and the Invasion of Ukraine"

Amira Elmi

"The Clans of Somalia, Identity, and Independence"

Sawyer D. French

"Impact of Racism, Urban Renewal, and Highway Construction on the Rondo Neighborhood of Saint Paul, Minnesota"

Nolan Morrey

"Biased Press: Newspaper Coverage of the National Assembly's Laws Regarding the Catholic Church during the French Revolution"

Jenna Kay Ritten

"Women Who Spied for the Blue and Gray"

Olivia Schleper

"'Pedestal to Politics': Southern Women and the U.S. Women's Suffrage Movement"

Nathaniel Wright

"Denying the Past to Change the Future: Poland's Fight to Globalize an Idealized National Identity"

Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Jason Schlude has taught history at CSB+SJU for 9 years now. Before coming here, he received his Ph.D. in Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology from U.C. Berkeley.



Jason discovered his love for history in both high school and college where he had fantastic teachers that he learned a great deal from. One of the best parts of history for him is learning about, "What happened before us, and how it led to us." This shows that history isn't solely a fact-finding activity, Schlude claims, as there are stories that can be told in many different ways, and the ways they are told shape history.

When asked which subjects he enjoys teaching the most, Jason replied, "Impossible to play favorites," but ended up choosing between two. First, he loves teaching about the Roman Empire, as there were so many diverse people and cultures all living within a small community. He also enjoys teaching archaeology, as he thinks it is important to include 'material culture.' "We are entangled in it, and learning about our relationship with it opens new vistas onto the human experience," Jason elaborated.

Outside of teaching, Jason enjoys trying any new thing he can. This extensive list includes cooking, biking, racquet sports, canoeing, photography, skiing, climbing, learning languages, and many more! He has also published *Rome, Parthia, and the Politics of Peace: The Origins of War in the Ancient Middle East*, which explores international relations between the Roman Empire and Parthian Empire of ancient Iran. In this book, Jason compares modern relations between the West and Middle East to those between the Romans and Parthians. Each Empire was conditioned to expect hostility from the other side, which led to war and disasters. "Images can become reality," Jason further explained.

When asked for advice to give prospective history majors at CSB+SJU, Jason said, "Your time at CSBSJU is an opportunity to literally build the intellectual landscape that you will carry with you throughout your life. The program you select will shape the scope of human experience you are familiar with, the questions you ask as a professional, how you collect and analyze evidence, make decisions, and tell a story (and everything is a story, make no mistake)." He also says that nothing is more important than to find a program that you love and that challenges you, as both will bring happiness to your life in college and afterwards.

~submitted by Jackson May '24

Clio's Corner



Clio enjoyed the Tegeder-Berg talk and is especially excited for our newest batch of soon-to-be alums presenting their capstone research at Scholarship and Creativity Day in

April. From America to Japan, China to Somalia, their research covers the globe and ensures that Clio can learn about the global history from the comforts of MN, because she's an awful traveler for a world conqueror.

~submitted by Dr. Ellie Perelman