

ALUMNI NEWS

QUEENS COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY • SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER



A Message from the Chair

Greetings! After a year in which my colleague Peter Vellon did a fine job as acting chair, it was a pleasure for me to return last autumn after a sabbatical. (I spent 2022–23 doing research in Hamburg and writing a short history of West Germany.) Campus has been abuzz with student life and in-person events, while Zoom continues to allow us to connect in virtual space as well. As we continue to adjust to new realities, it's heartening to see our wonderful community in Powdermaker 352 continue—from Marilyn and Alex in the office, to our adjunct instructors and graduate teaching fellows, to our accomplished faculty.

Spreading the word about what we do and the value of studying history feels more important than ever. History is essential for helping us make sense of today's unsettled world. Data also show that history majors do well in the job market in a broad range of careers, from the usual suspects like education and law to journalism, public service, and entertainment. Our MLSMA program, in which students earn both an MA in history and a master's in library science, has been particularly successful helping students land jobs that put their history skills to use. Students have also done internships at institutions such as the Museum of Jewish Heritage and the New York Historical Society.

Rest assured that all of us appreciate your support and remain committed to keeping history at Queens strong. You can keep up with us at www.qc.cuny.edu/academics/history/

Sincerely,

Julia Sneeringer, Chair of History

Department News

The department welcomed a new member this year, Assistant Professor **Andrew Amstutz**. Hired as a historian of Islam, Andrew is also an expert on South Asia, particularly Pakistan and Bangladesh. Andrew grew up in South Carolina, where he acquired a love of hiking and Dolly Parton's music. College took him to Middlebury, where he studied Italian and history. After completing his PhD at Cornell, Andrew taught at the University of Arkansas-Little Rock. His research also brought stints living in India where he explored Urdu libraries in Delhi, Lucknow, and Hyderabad. Now at Queens, Andrew is thrilled to get to know our diverse borough (the Hindu Temple canteen is already a favorite lunch spot). He's happy to be near family and friends in the region, among them his toddler nephew in Brooklyn. And he's already made a splash as advisor to the History Club, helping to revive the group after its pandemic-era dormancy.



History also welcomed visiting scholar **Nourit Zimerman** here on a fellowship from the Israel Institute. Nourit is an expert on modern Israeli law based at Sapir Academic College. In addition to teaching, she recently shared her reflections on Israel between the war in Gaza and the constitutional crisis at an event sponsored by the Jewish Studies program.

This semester, **Grace Davie** paired her African History course with one at the University of Abuja, allowing joint work between students in New York and Nigeria. This is part of the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) program, an exciting example of the potential of online teaching. Grace reports that the collaboration is a smashing success she hopes to repeat in future semesters.

On a sad note, we lost several faculty since the publication of our last newsletter. **Isaac Alteras**, historian of modern Israel and US foreign policy, passed away in April 2022. **John O'Brien**, who brought the world of Alexander the Great to legions of students and readers, died in July 2022. And esteemed historian of urban planning in New York (and former chair of History) **Jon Peterson** passed away in July 2023. We mourn their loss.

Faculty Accomplishments

Kara Schlichting won a major grant from the Wellcome Institute in the UK as part of the international research project "Melting Metropolis: Everyday Histories of Health and Heat in London, New York, and Paris since 1945." She'd love to hear your stories of summertime in New York.... **Morris Rossabi** delivered a series of lectures at Cambridge University last fall on Mongolian and Inner Asian Studies. He also lectured in Shanghai and celebrated the Lunar New Year with the Mongolian Ambassador to the UN.... **Fidel Tavarez's** book, *The Imperial Machine: Assembling the Spanish Commercial Empire in the Age of Enlightenment*, is under contract with Oxford University Press.

On the publication front, **Elissa Bemporad** co-edited a collection on Jewish women in modern Eastern and East Central Europe (Springer, 2022)... **Francesca Bregoli** guest-edited a volume of the journal *Quest* on Italian masculinities, 1200–1800... **Elena Frangakis-Syrett** published an article on religion and identity in eighteenth-century Izmir in the volume *Islamic Ecumene* (Cornell U Press, 2024)... **Grace Davie** has an article on struggles for equal pay in South Africa in *The Value of Work since the 18th Century* (Bloomsbury, 2023)... **Julia Sneeringer** has a piece on 1980s West Berlin in a volume about the German television series *Babylon Berlin* (Bloomsbury, 2024)... **Andrew Amstutz** published an article on the WWII-era travel writings of Mahmooda Rivzia and another on Urdu visions of Persian pasts... Former graduate teaching fellow and adjunct **Lindsay Krasnoff** published *Basketball Empire: France and the Making of a Global NBA and WNBA* (Bloomsbury, 2023).

Student Achievements

Several of our students are going on to PhD-level study. **Deborah Tulloch** has been admitted to doctoral programs in history at both Northwestern University and the CUNY Graduate Center...After retiring from a career in the New York court system, **Wanda Harris** won a full scholarship to study the history of Nubian art at UCLA...**Isaac Simon** interned at the Museum of Jewish Heritage and runs the Instagram account [@onthisdayinjewishhistory](https://www.instagram.com/onthisdayinjewishhistory)... **Dani Stampor** has been working for Queering the Archives, a project of QC Library's Special Collections and Archives division to uncover and present LGBTQ+ holdings in their collections...Students from Professor Duncan's HIST 392W colloquium visited the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture last Fall (see photo on page 2).

Alumni Notes

MLSMA graduate **Chris Bendall** landed a job at the Winthrop Group, a New York company specializing in applied historical research for businesses, organizations, and families. He'll be speaking to current students this spring about the value of a history degree on the job market...Another recent MLSMA grad, **Carolina Acosta-Clark**, curated an exhibit at the New York Historical Society on religion and the American West. If you're a QC History alum and would like us to know what you've been up to, please email julia.sneeringer@qc.cuny.edu so we can brag about your achievements!

Upcoming Events

Our favorite departmental event, the annual Honors Luncheon, will be held this year on campus on Monday, May 13.



