

# UC BERKELEY DEPARTMENT *of* HISTORY

WINTER 2020 NEWSLETTER



# CONTENTS

<b>03</b>	CHAIR'S MESSAGE	<b>17</b>	CAREER DIVERSITY
<b>04</b>	DEPARTMENT NEWS	<b>18</b>	ALUMNI NOTES
<b>09</b>	FACULTY AT LARGE	<b>19</b>	IN MEMORIUM
<b>13</b>	BOOK REVIEWS	<b>20</b>	GIVE TO HISTORY

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# Dear Friends of Berkeley History,

Like all our Winter Newsletters, this issue spotlights the achievements of Berkeley History faculty during the past year including our publications, prizes and fellowships, as well as new developments in our research and teaching. Underlying this record of conventional academic accomplishment, however, is the real story of our faculty's success during 2020 – a story of finding a way to carry out the basic mission of the History Department in the face of COVID-19 and a punishing mix of adjacent crises. From moving abruptly to online teaching mid-semester in Spring 2020 to converting full courses to a virtual format the following Fall, our faculty have adapted and endured in remarkably creative ways. Many continued to work at an extraordinarily high level from home despite small children underfoot, tending to sick relatives, and coping with extended periods of social isolation. And all have embraced a heightened responsibility to serve students as mentors, advisors, and supporters as well as teachers during this most difficult and disorienting period in our department's recent history. While this has been far and away my toughest academic year out of twenty-five in the History Department, I have never felt prouder or more awestruck by the talent, the buoyancy, and the kindness of my colleagues.

Among the happiest developments in our ranks this past year is the addition of two remarkable colleagues in Asian History. The first is Puck Engman, a native of Sweden, and specialist in post-1949 China who completed his Ph.D. in Freiburg, Germany in 2020. Puck's dissertation examines the history of actual existing Maoism by exploring relations between China's revolutionary government and the class of people labeled "capitalists" in the People's Republic. Drawing on a massive trove of material from Chinese provincial and municipal archives, Puck's reconstruction and analysis of the socialist state's "capitalist problem" provides a novel and fascinating angle of vision into China's post-1949 history, the field that he will be teaching at Berkeley when he takes up his position in Spring, 2020. Recruited from the University of Indiana, our second new Asianist is Stacy Van Vleet, an historian of Central Asia with a specialty in early modern Tibet. Stacey is currently revising for publication her Columbia Uni-

versity Ph.D. dissertation titled "Medicine, Monasteries and Empire: Tibetan Buddhism and the Politics of Learning in Qing China." Based on two years of fieldwork in Tibet, Stacy's manuscript offers a pathbreaking history of Tibetan medicine and medical institutions during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) and their relationship with both Buddhism and the State. As the department's only Central Asianist, Stacy promises to reanimate within Berkeley's storied Asian history program a subfield that has been dormant since the retirement in 1992 of John Masson Smith Jr., a pioneering historian of the Mongol Empire who passed away last year.

An unusual triumph for Berkeley History this past year is the completion of the website Women in the Department of History, a labor of love, conceived and carried out by Mary Elizabeth Berry, Class of 1944 Professor of History Emerita (with help from Preston Hotchkis Professor Emeritus David Hollinger and History's peerless Communications Coordinator, Maya Sisneros). It features data on the gender composition of our faculty over time, a chronology of faculty appointments of women between 1958 and 2020, profiles of History's first nineteen women faculty members, a collection of original memoirs produced exclusively for the site, and an accounting of female Ph.D. recipients from 1950 to 2000. Featured on the History webpage, the website is part of the Campus commemorative initiative Celebrating 150 Years of Women at Berkeley, launched in 2019 to honor "the remarkable women who have studied at, worked for, and contributed to UC Berkeley" since co-education was authorized by the Board of Regents in 1870.

Other elements of the Winter Newsletter speak for themselves and need no special introduction, but I would like to draw attention to reviews by Margaret Anderson, Nick Dirks and Janaki Bakhle of two fascinating new faculty books by John Connelly and Abhishek Kaicker. Please join me in celebrating the resilience and the brilliant work in our History community!

*Peter Zinoman*  
*Department Chair*

# MEET THE NEW FACULTY

## PUCK ENGMAN

### EAST ASIA



"As someone interested in China's recent past, it is not hard to come up with reasons to be enthusiastic about joining the UC Berkeley faculty. The university stands out not only as the birthplace of outstanding work on Chinese history but also as a central node connecting Chinese students and scholars with peers from around the world. On a personal level, I was struck by the spirit of inquiry among faculty and students alike during my visit to the Department of History earlier this year. Although our present moment is poorly suited for speaking of exciting prospects, I will admit that I very much look forward to continuing our conversations, in the virtual classroom for now and on the campus grounds when the time comes."

Puck Engman is a historian of China in the postwar era, with a particular emphasis on the history of socialism. His research covers the socialist reorganization of state and society in the early People's Republic as well as the transition from socialism to capitalism towards the end of the twentieth century. As a member of the Maoist Legacy project, Engman helped build a [digital archive](#), which collects, curates, and translates documents on historical justice from the People's Republic of China.

## STACEY VAN VLEET

### INNER ASIA



"Berkeley has a distinguished legacy in the study of Inner Asia.

I am excited to build on Berkeley's incredible current resources in the fields of East Asia, South Asia, and Buddhist Studies (among others) to develop channels for transregional and interdisciplinary scholarship."

Stacey Van Vleet is a historian of Tibet and Inner Asia. Her research and teaching are concerned with the place of Tibet in regional and global histories, and with how Tibetan historiography—and relatedly, that of contemporary states including China, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia, and Russia—has been shaped by modern transformations in knowledge, economy, culture, and governance. Her book in progress, *Plagues, Precious Pills, and the Politics of Tibetan Learning in Qing China*, examines the rise of a vast network of Tibetan medical institutions across Inner Asia during the period of Qing Empire (1644-1911), and its central role in imperial governance as well as in early twentieth-century state-building projects across the Tibetan Buddhist world. By charting different approaches to medical and social reform in the wake of Qing imperial disintegration, her work considers how efforts to redraw the boundaries of knowledge and community became constitutive of the politics of modern China and Tibet.

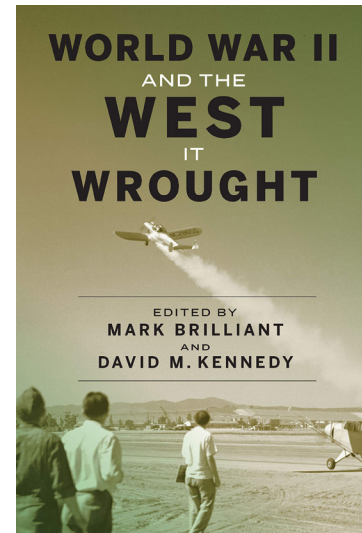
# FACULTY UPDATES

Earlier in the year, in **TONY ADAMTHWAITE'S** *Britain, France and Europe, 1945-1975* (Bloomsbury 2020), Tony responded to Brexit with an analysis of how and why, despite a promising honeymoon, UK relations with Europe soured. Now he's writing a sequel – *The Selling of Britain* – a study of soft power, asking whether different strategies might have slowed or even stopped Britannia's slide from power after World War II. "Archives are the problem. Current restrictions to the British National Archives, as one researcher remarked, mean that 'booking a visit is about as haphazard and difficult as booking Oasis tickets back in the 1990s' ("Broken Records", *The Spectator*, 24 October 2020)."



*Britain, France and Europe, 1945-1975*, Adamthwaite (Bloomsbury 2020)

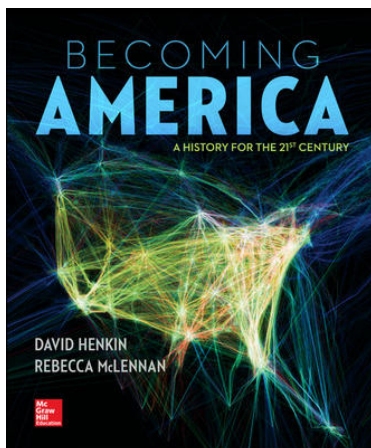
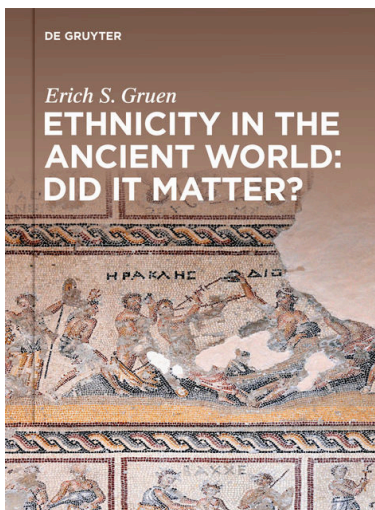
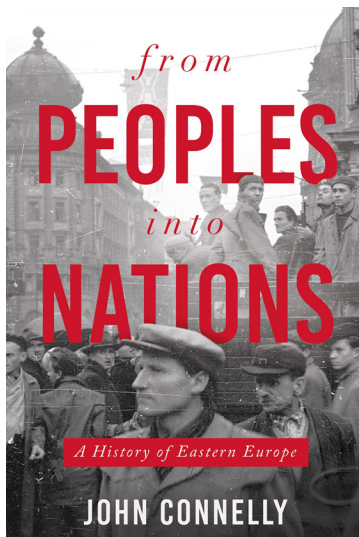
In April of this year Stanford University Press published *World War II and the West it Wrought*, which **MARK BRILLIANT** co-edited with Stanford's David M. Kennedy. The edited volume grew out of a conference to mark the 75th anniversary of U.S. entry in World War held at Stanford's Bill Lane Center for the American West, and in which a number of UC



*World War II and the West it Wrought*, Brilliant (Stanford University Press 2020)

Berkeley colleagues (Cathryn Carson, Sandra Eder, Rebecca Herman, Christian Paiz - Ethnic Studies - and Daniel Sargent) participated.

In August the editorial board of Princeton University Press approved **MARGARET CHOWNING'S** manuscript (title, still tentative: *Catholic Women, the Church, and Mexican Politics, 1750-1940*). Margaret will be making final revisions over the winter break. She published a fun article in *Colonial Latin American Review* in February 2020, using some of the delicious and funny rebukes leveled by religious women at men and priests to make an argument about how "enlightened" ideas seeped into the consciousnesses of nuns. "I will be totally revising my Mexican history lecture class for spring 2021, probably a crazy thing to do in another COVID semester when everything to do with teaching takes so much longer than in the pre-pandemic days; and I'm also teaching a new graduate course on the urban history of Latin



**Top to bottom:** *From Peoples into Nations* *From Peoples into Nations: A History of Eastern Europe*, Connelly (Princeton University Press 2020) ; *Ethnicity in the Ancient World—Did it Matter?*, Gruen (De Gruyter 2020); *Becoming America: A History for the 21st Century*, Henkin and McLennan (McGraw Hill, 2014)

America, lending more credence to the idea that I have lost my marbles.”

**JOHN CONNELLY** has been giving talks on his recently published *From Peoples into Nations: A History of Eastern Europe* (Princeton, 2020), virtually of course, in Washington DC, Stanford, and London, and has talks planned in the coming months in Seoul, Maastricht, and Warsaw. “Am really missing the jet lag!”

**JOHN EFRON** is currently working on a new book entitled *All Consuming: Germans, Jews, and the Meaning of Meat*. It’s a cultural history of the role meat played from the Middle Ages to the modern period in the ordering of social relations and mutual perceptions between Germans and Jews and among German Jews.

The pandemic has shut down **ERICH GRUEN’S** travels. He managed to get in a visiting lecture at the U. of Colorado, Boulder at the beginning of March, just before the virus called everything to a halt. He managed to make a guest appearance to lead a seminar (by Zoom) at Harvard and to participate remotely in a couple of conferences. Otherwise, it has been “shelter in place.” But the extra time available did allow Erich to see his book, *Ethnicity in the Ancient World—Did it Matter?* through to publication, as well as two articles: “Was Hellenism a Jewish Heterodoxy?” and “The Sibylline Oracles and Resistance to Rome.”

**DAVID HENKIN’S** book on the history of weekly time consciousness in the United States is slated for publication in 2021 by Yale University Press. The title remains undetermined. Around the same time, the second edition of *Becoming America: A History for the 21st Century* (co-authored with Rebecca McLennan) will be arriving in campus bookstores, with new chapters on the dizzying events and developments that have unfolded since the book’s initial publication.

Verso Press published a collection of **MARTIN JAY’S** essays entitled *Splinters in Your Eye: Frankfurt School Provocations* in July, 2020. U. of Penn Press will publish another to be called *Genesis and Validity: Essays in the Theory and Practice of Intellectual History* in the fall of

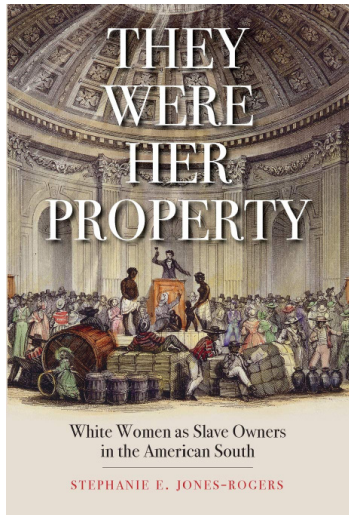
2021. Martin has returned to his long-delayed project on “magical nominalism, photography and the event,” and is sheltering in place until he gets it done (or the pandemic ends, whichever comes first).

**DAVID JOHNSON** is finishing a book called *The Stage in the Temple: Ritual Opera in Village Shanxi*. This was originally intended to be the middle section of his *Spectacle and Sacrifice: The Ritual Foundations of Village Life in North China*. The first half of the book is based on a reading of eight genuine village opera scripts (some dating to the 18th century) and a search for their sources (if any), while the second half looks at the history of southwestern Shanxi village operas, and their performance context.

**GEOFFREY KOZIOL'S** efforts to get control of two intractable books have been put on the back burner because of two more immediate issues: one, the coronavirus and the introduction of remote teaching; the other, his impending retirement. The combination of the two may have something to do with why Geoffrey has been doing some of his most adventurous teaching. This fall semester he restructured his course on later medieval history to focus almost entirely on the age of the Black Death. Next spring semester he'll be teaching a course on “Medieval Alterities,” which is designed to discuss the burgeoning scholarship on whether the middle ages created the foundations of modern racism. “However, the most important thing I've discovered since March 2020 (really, rediscovered) is how amazing our undergraduates are. Throughout this entire ordeal, they have remained consistently engaged and endlessly resilient. They are an inspiration.”

**STEPHANIE E. JONES-ROGERS'** book, *They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South* (Yale University Press, 2019), won the Southern Association for Women's Historians 2020 Julia Cherry Spruill Prize awarded for the best book in southern women's history, the Southern His-

torical Association's 2020 Charles S. Sydnor Award which is awarded for the best book in southern history published in an odd-numbered year, the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic's 2020 Best Book Prize, and the Organization of American Historians' 2020 Merle Curti Prize for the best book in American social history. She is also the first African-American and the third woman to win the Los Angeles Times Book Prize in History since the award's inception in 1980. *They Were Her Property* was just awarded the 2020 Harriet Tubman Book Prize by the Lapidus Center for the Historical Analysis of Transatlantic Slavery, and is also a finalist for the 2020 Frederick Douglass Book Prize from the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition.



*They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners*, Jones Rogers (Yale University 2019)

**MARIA MAVROUDI'S** 2020 publications include an essay on the modern historiography of Byzantine and Islamic philosophy in al-Masaq; and two articles on the Byzantine and modern reception of Homer in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans for *The Cambridge Guide to Homer*. A public lecture drawn from the Homeric essays (from the time they were still in the making!) can be [found here](#). In June 2020, she was invited by the Hellenic American Cultural Foundation in New York to give (from the coziness of her home office!) their first-ever virtual public lecture, titled “[How Byzantine Civilization Influenced Modern-Day Culture](#).” In fall 2020 she has been invited for virtual lectures at three UK

universities, for which she will not need to leave home, either: Oxford University, the University of Exeter, and the University of Edinburgh.

For the fall semester, **MICHAEL NYLAN** is in Munich on a Visiting Professorship, and just finished the Norton Critical Edition of Sunzi's *Art of War*, a Chinese classic. Along with four senior scholars who composed essays for the volume, four Berkeley History department graduate students contributed essays: Benjamin Daniels, Joseph Passman, Trenton Wilson, and Shoufu Yin. (Their essays would make anyone proud.) At the moment, Michael Nylan is

working on completing a lengthy translation of the most overtly political of the so-called Five "Confucian" Classics, for the translation series "Classics of Chinese Thought" that she edits for the University of Washington Press. During the Halloween-election week she was completing two essays with Trenton Wilson, the first describing the salutary dread said to underlie all ritual action, and the second exploring the figure of Dowager Empress Deng Sui (d. 125), as gender impacts law, ritual, and cosmological notions.

Since the pandemic still keeps **MAUREEN C. MILLER** from the archives in Italy, she pushed back her planned spring leave and is putting her energies into creating her own (remote) version of Tom Brady's HIST 152A: Ireland since the Union. "It seemed to me, in the wake of George Floyd's death, a perfect vehicle to get white people to think about race and colonialism. We'll explore Gerald of Wales' History & Topography of Ireland as a window into how the colonizers 'other-ed' the Irish as barbarous and later read Noel Ignatiev's classic on How the Irish Became White. Add music, dance, and film, plus some Seamus Heaney poems, and I imagine we'll all survive another COVID semester in good spirits!"



Image: Caitlin Rosenthal

After taking her course on the "History of American Capitalism" virtual in spring of 2020, **CAITLIN ROSENTHAL** became a "GSI" for virtual kindergarten. This fall she is bringing insights from kindergarten pedagogy to HIST 287, a professional development class for department graduate students. In between zooms, she has also published two new articles in 2020. The first critiques the ways historians use the word capitalism in the new journal *Capitalism: A Journal of History and Economics*. The second, on quantitative expertise in 19th century New England, can be found in the *Journal of Economic History*. Rosenthal's *Accounting for Slavery* also won the 2020 best first book award from the Economic History Society. Rosenthal continues research for her new book project on the

history of Human Resources departments, and she takes inspiration from her Spring 2020 101 thesis students who managed to write and research great papers under the most difficult of circumstances!



Image: James Vernon

**JAMES VERNON:** "Like many of us it feels as though I have spent my year trying to make sense of the carnage wrought across the world by COVID-19, racial injustice, environmental catastrophe, homelessness, the inequities of care-work, and the fragility of our democracies. And, of course, learning to teach remotely by zoom. Luckily I was able to finish an article for *Past and Present* about my new book on Heathrow Airport and the racialized and gendered forms of outsourced labor it depends upon before the world stopped. The highlight of the year has been co-teaching a lecture class this Fall on "The Crisis of Democracy" with my far more distinguished and truly brilliant colleagues Wendy Brown (Political Science) and Michael Watts (Geography). The class tried to situate the 2020 U.S. election in the context of a more global analysis of how democracies, always limited and partial, have been hollowed out over the past four decades. And, just to deepen my imposter syndrome still further, I assumed the title of the Helen Fawcett Distinguished Professor of History from my dear friend and irreplaceable colleague Thomas Laqueur. I have not been able to write a word since. It has also been a year of bitter-sweet departures. I miss Todd Kuebler although I think he deserved his Fall in the infamous Villages in Florida for leaving us. Sadly Sarah Stoller and Christopher Lawson finished their Ph.D.s so I talk with them less often. The bonus is I have met Sarah's beautiful baby daughter who reminds us all that we have no choice but to begin again, rebuild, and look to the future."



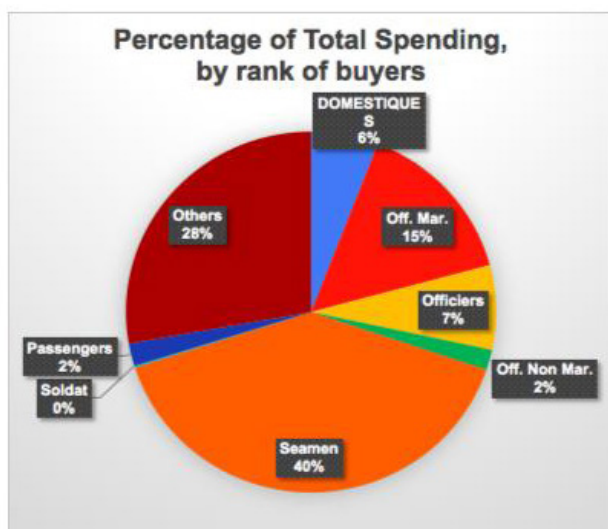
# Mapping Transoceanic Social Worlds in 18th Century France: A Student-Faculty Research Collaboration in the time of COVID-19

*Carla Hesse*

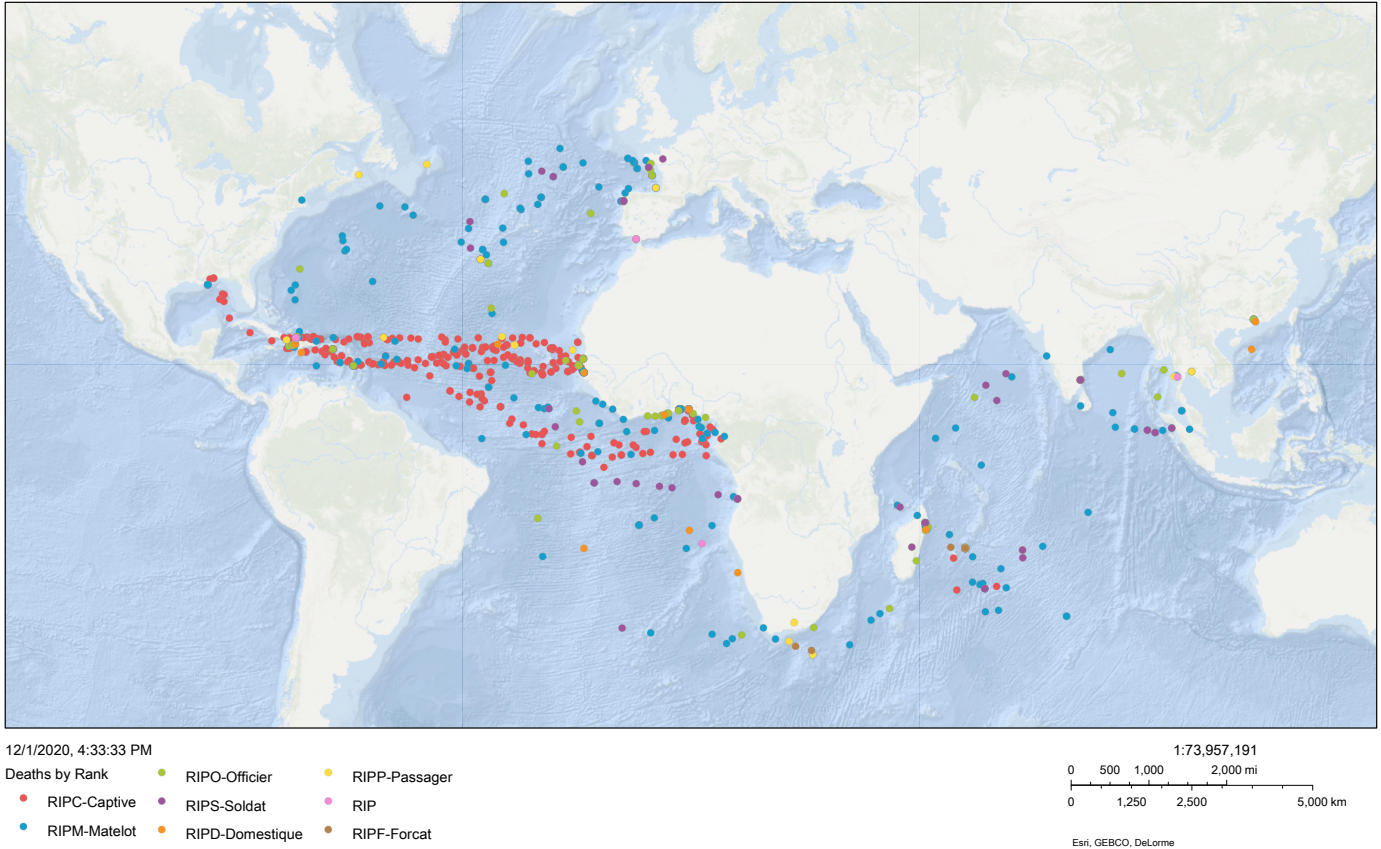
This past semester I have had the pleasure of creating and supervising a virtual research community along with one of my Ph.D. students, Hayley Rucker, who is reconstructing the social worlds of more than 500 French transoceanic voyages in the Atlantic and Indian oceans. With funds from the Peder Sather Chair in History I have been able to engage two remarkable undergraduate students, Sean O’Connell and Maggie Tsao, who have learned to read 18th century French shipping logs and records of probate auctions conducted aboard ship and at African, Indian, and West Indian ports. They are entering them into an ever-growing data-base of nearly 1000 transactions that will permit Hayley to complete the research for her remarkable Ph.D, “Thrown to the Sea: Death, deterritorialization and the construction of seaborne social worlds on 18th-century French transoceanic voyages,” and may spin out into undergraduate research papers. Tsao and

O’Connell have helped to plot the coordinates for burials at sea of officers, passengers, sailors and slaves, and to reconstruct the worlds of goods, markets, and social relations in what we can think of as an early example of a de-territorialized social world that emerged for early global capitalism. How was space imagined? How did communities reform themselves in the absence of physical horizons? How did markets operate? One of their most moving and morally urgent achievements has been to make visible, for the first time, the final resting places of 100s of 1000s of slaves who were lost in the middle passage. **Here is a sneak peak of some of their results:**

## Spending Patterns



Mapping Death: 33 Transoceanic French Commercial Voyages, 1704-1774



This little vertical learning community is just one example of what makes the Berkeley history department so special and an example of our resilience during the pandemic. These students—graduate and undergraduate—continue to find ways to discover, create, and to make a difference.



*From left to right: Ph.D. Candidate and Project lead Hayley Rucker, and UG student researchers, Sean O'Connell and Maggie Tsao*

# 150 Years of Women in History: A Letter to our Readers

## *Beth Berry*

150 Years of Women at Berkeley



*This past August, in conjunction with the campuswide 150 Years of Women at Berkeley, Beth Berry published the History Department’s own exploration of gender in the department, with first-person reflections, archival documents, and data on gender in the History Department. Below, Beth Berry shares exciting next steps for the future of our department’s digital archive.*

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Dear All,

Here’s a preview of some major additions we plan to make to the “Ph.D. Recipients” section of our 150W website (which is now no more than a 1950-2000 list of names).

First, numbers. With the caveat that our databases are not always consistent, the following (preliminary) figures trace the big picture from 1950 to 2000. (Still working on pre-1950, as well as diversity and field information.)

DECADE	# OF PH.D.S	# OF WOMEN	% OF WOMEN
1950s	129	4	3%
1960s	207	24	12%
1970s	274	55	20%
1980s	187	63	34%
1990s	249	109	44%

**Second, some bios.** Below, I sketch rudimentary profiles of just ten women recipients of history Ph.Ds before 1980. The selection is personal, largely random, and meant just as a taste of the treasure. More will come. And all volunteer contributions are heartily welcome. As I say, just a preview.

Warm regards all 'round,  
Beth Berry

**SAMPLE BIOS: PH.D. RECIPIENTS BEFORE 1980**

**ANNE PIPPIN BURNETT** (Ph.D. 1953, deceased), a distinguished scholar of classical Greece, joined the faculty first at Vassar and then at the University of Chicago, where she served as chair of the Department of Classical Languages and Literature. Appointed the Sather Professor at UCB in 1993-94.

**SISTER MARY ETHEL TINNEMAN** (1960, deceased), a local activist who walked the poorer neighborhoods of Oakland to register new voters and lectured the police on the multicultural history of Oakland, was inducted in 1999 to California's Voters Hall of Fame.

**LUCIA CHIAVOLA BIRNBAUM** (1964), Professor Emerita at the CA Institute of Integral Studies, won the 1987 American Book Award for *Liberazione della Donna: Feminism in Italy*, one of many awards for many books, including *Dark Mother: African Origins and Godmothers*.

**PATRICIA KENNEDY GRIMSTEAD** (1964), an authority on the dispossession and restitution of cultural materials during and after WWII, is affiliated with Harvard's Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies and the Ukrainian Research Institute.

**JOAN HOFF** (1966), a Berkshire Prize winner and prolific author of books on U.S. presidents and the presidency, foreign relations, and gender and the law, is a former CEO and president of the Center for the Study of the Presidency.

**HELEN NADER** (1972, deceased), an authority on medieval and early modern Castile, was department chair at Arizona and the chair of the AHA Committee on the Columbus Quincentennial.

**SUE FAWN CHUNG** (1975) worked for twenty years in the Hollywood movie industry before joining the UNLV faculty as a specialist on Chinese-American history. She is co-founder of Preserve Nevada and a consultant to many organizations, including the U.S. Forest Service.

**RUTH ROSEN** (1976), Professor Emerita at UCD and former columnist for the *Los Angeles Times* and the *San Francisco Chronicle*, is a trail-blazing historian of women whose prize-winning work includes *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America*.

**JANIS ARVEDS TRAPANS** (1976) has been the Minister of Defense, Republic of Latvia, since 1994. She was director of the Latvian broadcast service, Radio Free Europe Radio Station Liberty Inc., Munich, 1982-1994.

**LYNNE WITHEY** (1976) was director of the UC Press (2002-10) and president of the Association of University Presses (2005-06). She is the author of a celebrated biography of Abigail Adams.

## *The King and the People: Sovereignty and Popular Politics in Mughal Delhi* by Abhishek Kaicker

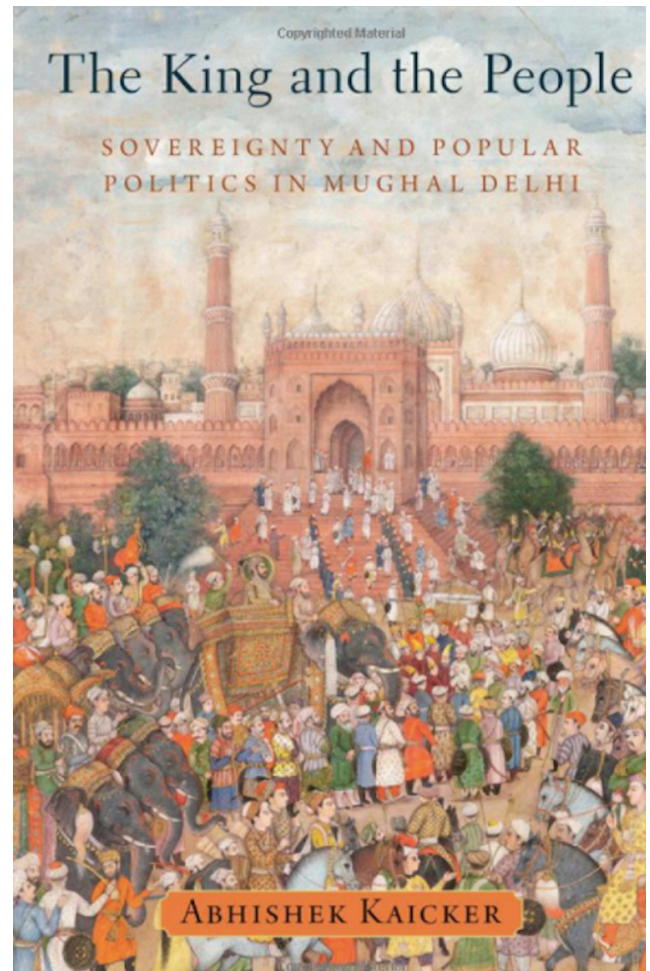
*Janaki Bakhle and Nicholas Dirks*

In this pathbreaking book, Abhishek Kaicker casts a large net to capture no less than the workings of Mughal state and society during late Mughal rule in India. Spanning the period from the last half of Aurangzeb's fifty year reign (1658-1707) through to the sack of Delhi by Nadir Shah in 1739, Kaicker writes a much needed social history of the capital city Delhi. His primary focus is on the relationship between the workings of sovereignty and the emergence of popular politics in the urban setting of the time.

Abhishek focuses on four broad themes. The first has to do with regnal succession, and Abhishek looks at this fraught process through the historical turmoil surrounding the first regicide to take place in Mughal India. His second theme is about the nature of popular revolt and contemporary expressions of urban unrest at the center of the imperial system. Third, he looks at how sovereignty is understood through a social historical lens. And fourth, he analyzes a range of popular depictions of sovereignty. His chief and most provocative claim is that popular politics was conducted in the language of Islam. For example, he shows how aspects of Islam were mobilized in the service of politics, including the regular reading of the khutba (sermon) at Friday prayers.

Old Delhi—or Shahjanahabad—was built as a literal expression of Mughal values and ideology, evident throughout the city's architecture and aesthetic layout. Even as the city's inhabitants were therefore "produced" as Mughal subjects, they also developed idiomatic forms of political expression that were shaped by and in dialogue with the values of an earlier period. They also, however, found that these same forms were fundamental as they engaged in protest and precipitated social unrest.

Abhishek makes several important arguments in the book. He shows that between 1712 and 1719 there was an elite attempt to change the basic constitution of the Mughal empire by tampering with the place of



OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

the Emperor and even with the question of succession. Important local magnates such as the Sayyids of Barha took on the role of kingmakers, as they sought both to strengthen their own power and undermine that of the imperial family. He also shows that this coincided with, and led to, a major popular uprising in Delhi in 1719, when for the first time we see mass political action that directly challenges sovereignty and catapults urban dwellers into the political contests of the time. In the years leading up to Nadir Shah's invasion, we see how a combination of these political forces shatter the fragile consensus about the earlier imperial system, ushering

in a continuing conflict between the interests of the Mughal elites and the people at large.

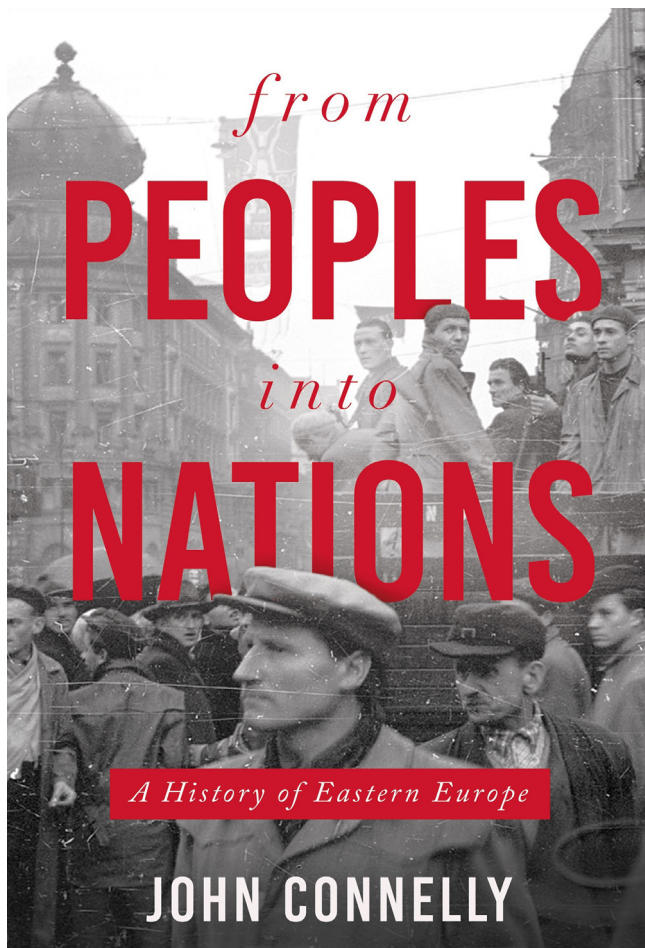
Abhishek uses this history to take on major questions in Mughal historiography, especially about the decline of empire. Did the empire decline, or did it undergo a more natural process of decentralization? How did empire understand itself? How can we use literary sources to say more than what is usually argued, namely that Mughal emperors patronized poets? Can we finally break the stranglehold of conventional imperial economic, political, and military history that dominates the field and subsumes most discussions of decline? By tracing the history of political culture in Delhi during this momentous period, Abhishek complicates our understanding of the Mughal state in the years before and after Nadir Shah's sack of Delhi. He also provides us with new ways of understanding the backdrop for the rise of the power of the East India Company in India, which justified its mercantile ambitions through the pervasive language of political decline.

This is a book that is not only important for what it does, but also for what it represents. *The King and the People* is one the first genuine attempts to take on the big questions of Mughal India through the lens of social history. We anticipate that it will serve as a critical model for much important work yet to be done.



*From Peoples into Nations: A History of Eastern Europe*  
by John Connelly

Margaret Lavinia Anderson



PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

Is it possible to tell the stories of ten countries (give or take a few) over two-plus centuries in a way that even those of us who find it hard to remember names with a profusion of consonants can not only follow, but actually enjoy? John Connelly has bet that it is, and *From Peoples into Nations: A History of Eastern Europe* - a work of imagination, sympathy, and wit; of bold arguments and a generous helping of maps - does just that.

Connelly is not shy with generalizations. "Eastern Europe," we learn, was "a space where more of the twentieth century happened - for good and for bad - than

anywhere else on the planet." Indeed, much of the global history of the past 75 years - "democratization, decolonization, 5-year plans, show trials, antifascist resistance" (Tito's partisans, he informs us, was "Europe's first antigenocidal army"), "ethnic cleansing, civil society, illiberal democracy" - all are here.

"Crossroads" is too weak a word to describe the region; a better metaphor, he says, would be Grand Central Station or Times Square - a place of migrations, of "massive, hardly controlled movement from all directions at all times;" Serbs from the South, Jews from the North, Germans from the West, to name a few. When you no longer find "multiple peoples living on the same square meter of land, appropriating history and imagination in radically different ways," you know that you are "no longer in East Central Europe, but in Moscow or Mannheim or Milan" - or any place dominated by a single language and culture.

Although Germans and Russians play large roles, this is a story of small nations; peoples whose "existence," Milan Kundera once testified, "is not a self-evident certainty but always a question, a wager, a risk; they are on the defensive against History, [...] which does not take them into account, which does not even notice them."

The story begins in the 18th century, when empires (Ottoman, Romanov, and especially Habsburg) ruled the roost and the word "natio" and its exemplars (e.g., "Pole," "Hungarian") denoted not ethnicity but class - gentry and nobility. The rest? "Peasants." By the 1920s, empires had been replaced by self-determination ("self" meaning, favored by the victors in the recent world war). The result was a multitude of polities, each one, to use the lingo of today's pollsters, "a majority minority" state - making every boundary, a gerrymander; every land reform, robbing Peter to pay Paul. In such states, "diversity" was a danger, not a boast.

What brought this about? While economics comes into its own after 1945, the start, and the heart,

of Connelly's story is language: language not only as vocabularies and syntax, but also as "symbol of a precious local way of being." Language was the longest-running, most contentious issue in the history of (especially) the Habsburg state. The fight began when the improving monarch Joseph II decided in 1777 to expand education in his realm by adding secondary ("middle") schools to the primary schools that taught in the local languages ("dialects"). These new schools, providing a path to university, would be taught in German. But the gate to upward mobility also led students to the humiliating discovery that the Habsburg state held "the language of their parents and grandparents to be substandard, not fit for use above the sixth grade." They could imagine a day when their homeland had disappeared from history, dead and irrelevant as an Etruscan village.

Nationalism in Eastern Europe was built on the fear of something that did not as yet have a name: genocide. And the revolutions of 1848-49, inspired by demands for representation, gave a foretaste of what was to come when outbreaks of "racial war" appeared from Vienna

to Transylvania. In the "shift from a latent and vague sense of nationality to an active and soon very aggressive one" Connelly discerns a transformation "as consequential as any in the previous half millennium."

This is a story in which every beneficent development inevitably boomerangs: a monarch's drive to educate his empire leads peaceful peoples to wish to escape it; the self-determination promised by a peace conference ends in a second world war; the euphoria of 1989 and the fall of the Iron Curtain is followed by the explosion of Yugoslavia and the genocide of the Bosnians.

Connelly ends his masterwork in our present, with "Europe" as the longed-for destination – and the EU as "the newest version of the Habsburg Empire," or at least the bankroll and dispenser of expertise for all those hoping to privatize, democratize, and (hardest or all) escape the corruption endemic to all previous regimes. "The story," Connelly warns, is not over," for it is "unclear whether Europe is too painful a place to remain."





## BERKELEY HISTORIANS IN THE WORLD

Jeffrey Ebstein '80, Partner at Real Estate Law Group, LLP

*Interview by Anya Essiounina, Director of Development, College of L&S*



*Image: the Ebstein family in France, 2019, courtesy of Jeffrey Ebstein*

***Tell us about yourself.***

I describe myself as a product of history, perhaps more so than others, who would not have existed but for the rise to power of Germany's Nazis. My father was a German Jew born in Breslau who, at 13, was forced to flee Germany with his family to Shanghai, China and spent WW II and post WW II in poverty in Shanghai. My mother was not as lucky, having survived the Stutthof concentration camp in Poland. My grandmother and the remainder of my mother's family was less lucky. My parents met in San Francisco. Growing up in San Francisco during the 1960s and '70s, viewing first hand

anti-war protests, the hippie movement and cultural changes affecting the US, and as the child of Holocaust survivors, made me value and respect the ideals on which the United States was founded, including freedom of expression and freedom of religion; perhaps making me more sensitive than others to perceived infringements upon those ideals. For example, after high school, I flew on my own to Philadelphia as a 17 year old to attend celebrations of the 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence (the highlight being seeing the Liberty Bell).

I attended a small high school in SF, class size of about 37 students, and attended Berkeley from 1976 to 1980, though my junior year was spent studying History at Edinburgh University—a wonderful experience, especially for studying Scottish and English History. And coming from Berkeley to Edinburgh gave me immediate credibility, which I may not have deserved, in the eyes of my professors in History at Edinburgh.

I likely would have sought a P.h.D. in History but during my time at Cal, my father became disabled and later died, leaving my mother, who had no education beyond age 13 or so, to provide for our family. So, I switched to a shorter career path after graduating Cal (3 years, instead of about 5 years) and became a commercial transactional lawyer. I've been practicing law about 37 years now (with some very cool clients, like Virgin Galactic), have my own law firm in Sausalito and try to bicycle across the Bridge most days as my commute. My wife Cindy, a Stanford grad, and I have 2 children, Jeremy now in the MBA/MPH program at Cal and Sam, a former Cal All Pac 12 soccer player, drafted by FC Dallas, now at U Chicago earning a Masters in Computer Science. *(Continued on next page)*

## CAREER DIVERSITY

### *How has your degree in History at UC Berkeley served you in your professional path and more broadly?*

Studying History, especially at a place such as Berkeley with its well-deserved reputation for quality of scholarship, gave me a deep appreciation for the importance of learning, and perhaps a sliver of a chance to gain a better perspective on the value of having some sense for where we are currently in the US, and wider world. Living abroad is a great way of gaining perspective. Berkeley also taught me the importance and value of planning and then executing a well-researched and well-written argument or thesis. And Berkeley and my upbringing instilled in me the desire to be a life-long student of History. There is so much to read and enjoy.

### *What was your fondest memory in getting your History degree(s)?*

Taking a seminar in labor history from professor Larry Levine, taking Professor Kenneth Stamp's class on origins and consequences of slavery in the US and researching my thesis in the stacks of Doe Library, which involved reading New York based newspaper articles from 1898 on microfiche (Lenin's Theory of Imperialism and the Spanish-American War).

### *What advice would you give to recent graduates*

Work hard, keep your eyes and ears open to possible opportunities and don't always rush through the next stage of your life/career, perhaps pause for a moment or two to reflect upon the past and try to view yourself from outside yourself.

# ALUMNI NOTES

SUBMIT AN ALUMNI NOTE:  
[HISTORY.BERKELEY.EDU/ALUMNI](https://history.berkeley.edu/alumni)

**SIEGAL LAWRENCE (A.B. '68; M.A. '69)** Work with remarkable teachers like Kenneth Stamp, Leon Litwack and others has assisted me throughout my career which has involved teaching and civil rights legal work, a Fulbright etc. While my *The Human Right to Language* (Gallaudet University) argues that the right language should be protected by the 1st & 14th Amendments, again my history training was invaluable. Fond memories of Berkeley in the late 1960s.

**FRANCES TOY (B.A. '56)** I was the first Asian American female ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church, USA in 1985.

**SAMUEL REDMAN (M.A. '08; PH.D. '12)** I'm still enjoying teaching at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. My second book, on the history and legacy of salvage anthropology, is scheduled to appear in August 2021.

## REMEMBERING DAVID SCHNEER

*Victoria Frede-Montemayor*



Many of us in the Berkeley History department have especially fond memories of David Schneer, who passed away on November 4, 2020 at the age of 48. He was of Berkeley. After double majoring as an undergraduate in History and Slavic Languages and Literatures, he transitioned straight into the PhD program in History. Upon graduation in 2001, he joined the University of Denver before moving to Boulder, where he taught at the University of Colorado as the Louis P. Singer Endowed Chair in Jewish History.

David was radiant, and he moved through the world with a special, heightened intensity. I well remember meeting him in my first year of graduate school—his second year (a difference that made a difference). He seemed to glow, with bright eyes that expressed his keen interest in people and his immediate environment, as well as in ideas and the artifacts of history. Every object and experience, whether it was a book from the library, or the traffic ticket he received for failing to make a full stop on his bike at a stop sign, was the object of energetic and creative deliberation.

One product of David's energy was an intimidatingly large record of scholarly productivity. He published four scholarly monographs, *Yiddish and the Creation of Soviet Jewish Culture* (2004); *New Jews: The End of the Jewish Diaspora* (with Caryn Aviv, 2005); and *Through Soviet Jewish Eyes: Photography, War, and the Holocaust* (2011); with the fourth released just over a week before his death, *Grief: The Biography of a Holocaust Photograph* (2020). A shorter work appeared in German, *Lin Jaldati: Trümmerfrau der Seele* (2014). He also published countless articles in all of the major journals in his field, together with a prodigious number of book reviews. In addition, David was instrumental in carving out the field of Jewish Queer Studies, coediting *Queer Jews* (with Caryn Aviv, 2002) and *Torah Queeries: Weekly Commentaries on the Hebrew Bible* (with Gregg Drinkwater and Joshua Lesser 2012).

Lesser mortals might conclude that this publication record came at the expense of personal relationships, yet David was impeccably loyal as a friend, a no less dedicated parent, spouse, and son, and he was unstintingly generous with his colleagues. This was the quality that fellow graduates from Berkeley remembered as a gift that kept on giving. "David was one of the kindest and most generous people I've ever met," Eleonory Gilburd recalled. "He never said no when asked for help, and he never had to be asked in the first place. He read drafts of my ms. He wrote recommendation letters for me as recently as this summer. He had such an expansive sense of responsibility for everyone." David always had time and words of encouragement, whether it was to help others with their research, or to help them through the loss of a family member. As Debbie Yalen testified, "I keep returning to how David took time, during a trip that brought him to Massachusetts, to sit shiva for my father back in 2004. Joining a group of strangers at a time of mourning, David brought a gentle warmth and serenity to the room. His presence greatly comforted me."

Those of us who knew David will also remember his enthusiasm for songs and photographs, which he shared as an extension of his deep love for history. The energy he dedicated to everything that interested him was a lesson to all he interacted with: he taught us to hear and see with the same intensity. His passion and punctilious self-exaction were on display in his performances of [Yiddish song](#).

David Schneer is survived by his spouse, Gregg Drinkwater, daughter, Sasha, and co-parent Caryn Aviv. Those of us who miss him most may take comfort in knowing that so many people share his memory, and that his being in the world touched so many of us in infinite ways, both privately and professionally.

Information about making donations in David's memory can be [found here](#).

# SUPPORT THE FUTURE *of* BERKELEY HISTORY



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Donors play a critical role in the ways we are able to sustain and enhance the teaching and research mission of the department. Friends of Cal funds are utilized in the following ways:

- Travel grants for undergraduates researching the material for their senior thesis project
- Summer grants for graduate student research travel or language study
- Conference travel for graduate students who are presenting papers or interviewing for jobs
- Prizes for the best dissertation and undergraduate thesis
- Equipment for the graduate computer lab
- Work-study positions for instructional support
- Graduate space coordinator position

Most importantly, Friends of Cal funds allow the department to direct funding to students in any field of study, so that the money can be directed where it is most needed. This unrestricted funding allows us to enhance our multi-year funding package so that we can continue to focus on maintaining the quality that is defined by a Berkeley degree.

To support the Department of History, please donate online to the Annual History Fund at [give.berkeley.edu](https://give.berkeley.edu)

# SAVE *the* DATES

## History Homecoming

Wednesday, March 3rd 2021 @ 5pm

## History Colloquia

Dylan Penningroth - "Race in Contract Law: A History"

Monday, Jan 25 @ 5pm

## Graduate research abroad roundtable

*Announcement forthcoming*

## History Commencement:

*Announcement forthcoming*

