

HISTORY DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

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Publication of the
History Majors
Committee

Professor Jeremy Ball speaks on new course "Public History"

Interviewed by:
Isabella Jurcisin '20

IJ: What is Public History?

JB: Public history encompasses the many ways history is put to work in the world. Public history is more about the history you see in museums or national parks - "if history is a house, public history is a room". Public history should be accessible, digestible information. The study of "public history" grew out of minority groups not seeing their history in textbooks, thus, starting to tell their stories to the masses.

IJ: What does this new course entail?

JB: The course will focus on looking at the field of public history and learning about its methods. Specifically, the students within the course will carry out a project on the Carlisle Police Department. The CPD has asked Dickinson College to further research its rather unknown history. This will entail students looking through archives and putting together a digital story board. The course will also take a field trip to DC to see the historical African American district "U Street Corridor" and a meet and greet with a curator at the Smithsonian Museum. Furthermore, students of the course will interview several public historians to get a sense of the field and to learn about the prestigious public history graduate program at the University of California - Santa Barbara.

CONTENTS

Check out the new
course on "Public
History"

01

Cooper Wingert '20 and
Australia

02

Get to know
Professor Song Han

03

Justin Burkett '20 and
the Smith Creek
Archaeological Project

04

HISTORY DEPARTMENT FUN FACT

Professor Commins'
great-great-aunt was Emma
Goldman a very famous
anarchist and feminist of
the early twentieth century!



COOPER WINGERT '20 AND THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Interviewed by:
Isabella Jurcisin '20

IJ: How did being a history major impact your experience abroad?

CW: I chose to go to Australia, in large part due to my interest in Australian history. I took a range of history classes while at the University of Queensland, studying both Australian history and Australian cinematic history. While there, I was able to conduct original research in archives in Brisbane, and visit historic sites such as Port Arthur in Tasmania.

IJ: Say more about a valuable class-room experience you had abroad.

CW: Studying Australian history and Aussie cinema simultaneously really made my educational experience abroad. I was able to connect themes and events on the screen to the events or trends we were discussing in my Australian history class. (On top of that, the film course also helped me be more familiar with pop culture references).

IJ: How has studying abroad impacted your understanding of history?

CW: If anything, studying abroad heightened my awareness of the power of historical narratives. While history offers an important opportunity for critical self-reflection, it can also be wielded to suit political agendas. Even in 2018, Australia is still grappling with the nation's complicated past, namely the controversy surrounding the so-called "Frontier Wars," bloody conflicts between white colonists and aboriginal peoples. Politicians, including a recent Australian PM, have attempted to cast doubt on the work of serious professional historians, who have documented the series of violent massacres of aboriginal men and women.

IJ: What do you miss the most, now that you're back?

CW: The coffee culture. Aussies are serious about their caffeine intake, and I took back a lasting reverence for the famous Flat White.



PROFESSOR SONG HAN

Interviewed by:
Isabella Jurcisin '20

IJ: Where are you from?

SH: I was born in Seoul, South Korea. Although, my family originates from North Korea and migrated to South Korea during the Korean War. As a family when I was three months old we moved to the United States but moved back to Korea when I was five. I returned to the United States to finish up my graduate studies at Princeton University.

IJ: What is your area of study?

SH: I focus on the intellectual and cultural history in modern Korea, which spans from the age of imperialism of the late 19th century and ends with the early 20th century. This period interests me because during this time Koreans began to rethink their culture and language in order to define themselves as a unique country.

IJ: Why did you choose Dickinson?

SH: The first reason was Dickinson's history as the first American chartered school after the American Revolution. The founders of this college wanted to continue the revolution's spirit of "intellectual impulse" and to use the college's platform to continue their goal of progressiveness in educating their youngest citizens. Furthermore, the scale of international influence at Dickinson amazes me as more than 60% of students study abroad. The ability for students to spread across the world and later bring their new view of education back to campus excites me.

IJ: What are you most looking forward to this semester?

SH: I am most looking forward to interacting with students outside of the classroom. I believe that students' activities out of the classroom help them complete their class objectives. Therefore, I would like to become involved with a student group or club in order to get to know the Dickinson student body better!





JUSTIN BURKETT '20 AND THE SMITH CREEK ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

Interviewed by:
Isabella Jurcisin '20

IJ: How did being a history major impact your internship experience?

JB: So, since my experience has been on an archaeological dig for two years now, it might not seem like my history half has mattered much to me in looking for internships. But last year, with the Smith Creek Archaeological Project, we actually helped set up a museum exhibit of some of our work in the town we work out of, Woodville, Mississippi. We did a lot of community outreach for the event, and I drew a lot from my History 204 experience in helping the museum.

IJ: Say more about a valuable connection you made with someone in the workplace.

JB: This last summer I go to work for the second year in a row on the Smith Creek Archaeological Project with the University of Pennsylvania. This being the second year, a lot of people from last year were asked to return, and I actually road-tripped down to and back from Mississippi with four good friends. Besides them, I knew pretty much the entire crew from that summer before. It's just good to know that, in the field I plan to work in, I already know so many professors, graduate students, and undergraduate colleagues from working in the field with them.

IJ: How did your internship align with subject matter you've studied in the classroom?

JB: Of course, my work has aligned with the archaeology's courses. However, I have to give a great deal of credit to Professor Bilodeau's Native Peoples of Eastern North America class and Professor Dragone's Native American History classes for helping me think about the work I am doing. I can't just dig up artifacts for fun after all. I need to understand that I'm dealing with important objects from past societies, and I have to be conscious that those items aren't just for museum archive - they tell a story the world should know.

IJ: What do you miss the most, now that you're back?

JB: I think what I miss the most is the feeling of "being on the front-lines". With archaeological work and research, you literally pull things out of the ground that the world has not seen for hundreds of years.