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Summer 2019 is winding down, which means the department faculty are ever more frantically trying to finish some writing and research while also polishing their fall syllabi and getting ready for the arrival of first-year students. This last spring, we marked the departure of two long-serving faculty members, Marjorie Murphy and Stephen Bensch, though Marj will be teaching part-time for one or two more years. We were also given permission to hire a specialist in 20th and 21st Century U.S. history. We will begin reviewing applications this fall for that important position—if you know alumni historians who might be interested in the job, encourage them to apply! We also completed another round of discussions about the structure of our major, which we hope will lead to some modest revisions in how Swarthmore students study history at the College at some point in the near-term future. For myself, the best news is that I’ve come to the end of a five-year term as department chair, a responsibility I now gratefully pass to my colleague Robert Weinberg. The future of history at Swarthmore is in good hands, even as the urgent importance of studying the past remains unchanged.

“...the urgent importance of studying the past remains unchanged.”

Timothy J. Burke
Professor and Chair
LAST YEAR’S QUILTING CLASS CULMINATES WITH A GALLERY EXHIBIT AND TALKS

By: September Porras Payea

Filling the McCabe Atrium was a diversity of the most beautiful quilts you had ever seen. The walls held the smaller ones, intricate in design and bright in color; hanging above were large, traditional quilts. These larger quilts came from the women and traditions of Gee’s Bend, Alabama, a small African American community that has handed down their quilting tradition for generations. The smaller quilts were the result of a call for submissions to this art project, which, because of its amazing size, was moved from the List Gallery to the McCabe Atrium. This presentation functioned as the culmination of a quilting class, co-taught by Professor Allison Dorsey and professional quilter and Swarthmore resident Alicia Ruley-Nock, as well as students Yixuan “Maisie” Luo ’19 and Cathrine Williams ’19, who ventured to Gee’s Bend to collect the oral histories of the quilters who live there. Andrea Packard, who supported the various parts of the event, described it as a celebration and evidence of “...what a community of people can do even under the harshest conditions of oppression and poverty.”

Professor Dorsey introduced Alicia Ruley-Nock, who explained the dimensions of the course, which began as a mission to teach in the collective tradition that the women of Gee’s Bend observe.

The goals of the course included a deeper understanding of the roles of social institutions in the lives of individuals, the creation of quilts in the African American tradition, and an interrogation of myths and stereotypes. These skills were especially relevant given the course’s function as a tribute to Gee’s Bend. The class was a success, and as an addition to it they also began to plan a gallery event to display the students’ work and to call for submissions from across the country. Maisie Luo, an Art major who attended the quilting course, spoke next. She told the story of her work over the summer with her peer Catherine Williams, a Black Studies major, as they met, lived, and recorded the lives of the women of Gee’s Bend. There, the older women imparted the wisdom of quilting as “a spiritual act,” and saw themselves not as artists, but rather as women communicating the blessings from God. All of the material is re-purposed from other things—old and loved pieces of cloth, which are sometimes made in honor of a person. More often than not, these quilts are gifts which the women give back to their community. Luo then talked about the quilt she made as a part of the class, hand sewn to represent the three pieces of her family—a theme very important in the Gee’s Bend tradition.

The community component of the Gee’s Bend quilts extends far beyond the small African American enclave in Alabama, and presented itself even in the McCabe Atrium, as members of the Swarthmore community lent themselves to the creation of this event. Walter and Christina Johnson worked to have the exhibit made into an artist’s book; Susan Dreher stepped in from the library to set up the exhibit; and submissions to the project came from Swarthmore in addition to the rest of the nation. The collaboration of faculty, staff, and students alike brought the legacy of Gee’s Bend to campus, where the community was able to engage not only through coursework at Swarthmore, but with a long and beautiful tradition passed down through generations.
Farid Azfar spoke at Merton College, Oxford, at the Neptune’s Children: Early Modern Waterways conference in May. Prof. Azfar presented a paper entitled, “From Madagascar to Buenos Aires: How to Narrate the Indo-Atlantic.” He also spoke at his naturalization ceremony on April 30th, attended by colleagues from Swarthmore and Haverford.

Diego Armus found himself all over the globe, per usual, speaking at conferences in Italy, Latin America, China, and Estonia.

Timothy Burke wrapped up his time as chair with this newsletter. The Department honored him at the year-end senior reception.

Bruce Dorsey will be teaching a Lifelong Learning course in Philadelphia this fall on the Civil War.

Bob Weinberg recently presented a paper in Warsaw, but his was one of only two presented in English. He also managed to spend a good portion of the European heatwave in Europe. This has led him to swear off travel. For now. But he managed to spend a good portion of the summer as chair with this newsletter. The Department honored him at the year-end senior reception.

Finally, Professor Stephe Bensch celebrated his retirement at the end of this academic year. He was acknowledged by the president at our final faculty meeting and celebrated with a reception thereafter.

Martin Palomo ’19 presented his paper, “A Resistance from Hell: The Carter Administration and the Struggle for Human Rights,” at this year’s Greater Philadelphia Latin American Studies Consortium student conference. He wrote the paper during Prof. Armus’ Dirty Wars class. Palomo also took home the 2018 Newton Book Award for his collection, “Steal this Collection! A Collection of Radical History and Activism.” It started when he was told he wasn’t allowed to read Slaughterhouse-Five in middle school and grew from there. The History Department has had numerous winners of this award, including Kaysha Corinealdi ’02, Sasha Issenberg ’02, Jake Brunkard ’08, Mark Kharas ’08, Julian Chender ’09, Meredith Firetog ’10, and Ben Goossen ’13.

Amy DiPierro ’15 has been named a Knight-Hennessy Scholar at Stanford University, where she’s pursuing a degree in communications.

Ben Termaat ’18 is working on a campaign, again, this time for Nusrat Rashid ’93 down here in Delaware County.

Mohammad Bappe ’20 was honored at this year’s IC Awards Dinner for his Low-Income and Class Advocacy. Killian McGinnis ’19 and Tiffany Wang ’21 were honored for their Race and Ethnicity Activism at the same event.

The Women’s Indoor Track and Field team placed 2nd at the Conference Meet this year. Major Emma Novak ’21 is a member of the team.

Alexander Jin ’19, in addition to winning our Robert S. DuPlessis Prize this year, also won Philosophy’s Brand Blanshard Prize for the best essay on any philosophical topic.

Emma Otheguy ’09 published her second book, Silver Meadows Summer, this spring. You can read an interview she did about it, as well.

Rachel Leifield ’19 was awarded The Heinrich W. Brinkmann Mathematics Prize for service to the department.

Honors major Naomi Caldwell ’19 earned this year’s Paul H. Beik award for her honors thesis, entitled “The Making of the Early 21st Century Smoker: Translating the Global Anti-Tobacco Agenda to Argentine Landscapes, 2000-2018.” Naomi presented her thesis on May 7th to friends and faculty who were there to celebrate her achievement. She also took home the Pan American Association of Philadelphia’s Janice Bond Memorial Award.

Spriha Dhanuka ’17 was awarded second prize for this year’s Alice L. Crossley Prize in Asian Studies. You may be able to find her at Vrije Universiteit Brussels working on her masters in digital communication.

In addition to a successful season for the Men’s Basketball team, winning the conference championship, earning MVP accolades individually at said tournament, coming in runner-up at the national tournament, Cam Wiley ’19 was recognized by the Athletics Department with the Lew Elverson Award for the highest degree of excellence in his sport. Honors Major Abbass Sallah ’21 and Special Major Lee Martin ’19 also made contributions to the true team effort this year.

Two of our majors were awarded the Music 48 Special Awards, otherwise known as Freeman Scholars: Eleanor Naiman ’20 and Emma Novak ’21. Eleanor was also awarded the Simon Preisler Memorial Endowment and the Starfield Student Research Endowment.

Max Gruber ’20 was awarded The Class of 1961 Fund for the Arts and Social Change. Max was also recently published in the University of Chicago’s Chicago Journal of History. His article, “Revealing the Invisible: The Visual Culture of AIDS in the United States (1980-1996),” comes out of his Disease, Culture, and Society course with Prof. Armus.

Anna Abruzzo ’20, September Porras Payea ’20, and Mo Xiong ’20 have been awarded Joel Dean Fellowships, which should help them research their 91 papers and theses this summer.

Marisa Mancini ’20 was awarded a Giles K. ’72 and Barbara Guss Kemp Student Fellowship Endowment and will be digging into archives in the south of France...
“BOILING OVER: RACE, POST-RACE, AND POST-ISMS IN TEA PARTY NEWS”

By: September Porras Payea

Chair of Political Science, Professor Keith Reeves approached the microphone with an excited smile. With great pride, he introduced the speaker for the event, Dr. Khadijah Costley White.

Class of 2004. A fifth-generation Jersey girl, Costley White graduated from Swarthmore and went on to work in radio and media, earning her doctorate and publishing her research on race in the Tea Party and conservative activism. As her advisor and friend, he graciously welcomed her back to campus and turned the room over to her.

Costley White entered her field as a media moderator for the White House under the Obama administration, watching news from a variety of outlets in order to update the presidential office and create rapid responses. It was there that she began to notice increased reporting on a seemingly enormous, white working-class movement calling itself the Tea Party. Upon further investigation, she quickly realized that things were not all as they seemed. The Tea Party was actually much smaller than reported and was made up of generally middle- to upper- class, educated white folks who had branded themselves as some grassroots campaign. Her talk, and her new book, The Branding of Right-Wing Activism: The News Media and The Tea Party, explore the role of media and race in propagating the Tea Party “brand.”

She posits that the media saw this brand as profitable in its sensationalism and was able to use the image of a white working class and the presence of women to modernize its approach. The first wave of branding was, of course, the Boston "Tea Party" itself, not coined as such until years after the event. The second wave came with the 2008 election of Barack Obama, which began its trend in reference to race. A prime example of this can be found in the “origin” of the Tea Party: an anti-government, free-market rant by news anchor Rick Santinelli. Costley White played the clip for her audience, emphasizing the racist dog-whistles he uses, like calling out those who “drink the water” when men like him “carry the water.” Though a rant like this in previous news media would have been seen as unprofessional and crude, Costley White notes that Santinelli was celebrated, showing a break towards sensationalist journalism.

She delved deeper into her analysis of race within the Tea Party, calling attention to their habit of gas lighting those who call them out as racist. If the NAACP calls a Tea Party member racist, the Tea Party fires back that they use “racist” as a way to shut anyone down with a differing opinion. Costley White’s main example of this was Mark Williams’ racist satire letter, where he posed as a black man asking to reinstate slavery. She compared this with the treatment of Shirley Sherrod, who was fired and condemned by the NAACP after an edited Breitbart video of her saying she was reluctant to help a white man went viral. Costley White called this the “impossibility of proving racism,” as the media popularizes the image of the Tea Party despite its small number and many failings.

She ended her talk with perhaps the most pressing question: why does this matter? With the rise of white populism, the efficacy of Trump, and the growing sensationalism of the media, it becomes more important now than ever to understand the impact of branding and identity politics in the national arena. Costley White’s methods of research and continued on page 5...
The History Department continued to host events into the Spring. The Contending Visions series, co-sponsored by the President’s Office, the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility, and the Departments of Political Science, History, Peace and Conflict Studies, and Sociology/Anthropology, continued into the spring. On February 21st, Ahmad Shokr and Osman Balkan of Political Science hosted Dr. Robert Vitalis of the University of Pennsylvania for a talk entitled “Oilcraft: The Folkways of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism.”

The Responses to Gee’s Bend Reception and Curator’s Talk took place on October 23rd. September Porras Payea wrote an article about the talk on page 2.


On February 28, Professor Diego Armus brought Dr. Julia Stock Sarreal ’94 back to campus to give a talk entitled “Tupamba’e and Amamba’e: Communitarian Socialism and Theocratic Capitalism in the Guaraní-Jesuit Missions of South America, 1609-1767.”

On March 20th, Professor Shokr participated in a teach-in on decolonization with Professors Edwin Mayorga of Educational Studies and James Padilioni of Religion as a part of Swarthmore’s Culture and Identity Appreciation Week.

Asli Zengin presented her lecture on March 21st as part of The Contending Visions series, entitled, “Caring for the Dead: Intimacy, Abandonment, and Transgender Funerals in Turkey.”

March 26th saw the closing event of the Contending Visions series when Professor Joel Beinin joined us for his talk, “Politics and the Study of the Middle East.”

Nafisa Essop Sheik presented her Cornell Lecture on April 2nd. Entitled “Entangled Histories from Segregated Archives: Sex, Gender, and Writing the History of Colonialism in South Africa,” Professor Sheik reminded us of the complicated history of South Africa, particularly KwaZulu-Natal, and how gender and sex were used to control women and the non-whites.

You can read about Khadijah Costley White’s lecture about Tea Party branding and right wing activism, which took place on April 4th, on page 4.

On April 11th, we joined the Friends Historical Library for Professor David Harrington Watt’s talk about Henry J. Cadbury entitled, “The Quaker Peace Testimony in the 20th Century.”

Professor Shireen Hassim joined us for a lecture on April 22nd, rescheduled from February due to a snowstorm, about Winnie Mandela. Shireen’s talk, entitled “Landscape for a Rebel Woman: Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Violence & the Intimacies of Gender in South African Politics,” argued, as much of her recent research does more generally, that women in South African political movements deserve to be studied as political actors in their own right and often represent the social and political dynamics of South Africa itself, of a life lived within the public landscape of apartheid as well as within a more intimate landscape of violent relationships between people, and between an illegitimate state and its subjects. Professor Sheik brought Professor Hassim in for this talk.

...continued from Student & Alumni News on page 3

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A number of alumni joined us to examine our students for honors this year. Monica Patterson ’97 examined the students for Prof. Burke’s Colonial Africa seminar while Timothy Stewart-Winter ’01 examined students for Prof. Bruce Dorsey’s Gender & Sexuality in America seminar.

A Eugene M. Lang Summer Initiative Award was awarded to Gabriel Brossy de Dios ’20 while a Lenfest Student Fellowship Endowment was awarded to Abby Diebold ’20.

Luis Marchese ’20 won this year’s James H. ’58 and Margaret C. Miller Internship for Environmental Preservation, and Libby Hoffenberg ’20 was awarded the Arthur S. Obermayer ’52 Summer Internship.

Roy Greim ’14 also had an article published. Of course, as a member of our Communications office, Roy often has articles published, but this one is in the International Journal of Naval History and is a version of his History 91 paper prepped for publication titled, “Old Salts in the New Steel Navy.”

Nirav Mehta ’20 earned the J. Roland Pennock Undergraduate Fellowship in Public Affairs.

An interesting connection to history can be found in the new building going up on campus, now known as Maxine Frank Singer Hall. Amy Singer ’82 is an honors graduate of the department and has news of her own as she is headed to Brandeis in the fall to head up their Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies Program.

...continued from Tea Party on page 4

interrogation of media provide a template for how to think critically about the sources around you.

Professor Allison Dorsey invited Dr. Costley White to campus for this talk.
## Faculty Talks

### Summer and Fall 2019

#### July, 2019

| 7/16 | Allison Dorsey | “Slaves, Soldiers, Citizens: The Black Freedom Struggle in Coastal Georgia” as part of the Multiple Dimensions of Black Freedom Struggles panel at the [2019 Australian and New Zealand American Studies Association Conference](https://www.anzsas.org/) at the University of Auckland | Auckland, NEW ZEALAND |
| 7/25 | Diego Armus | “Culture and Society in the Modern Latin American History of Soccer”, Institute for Latin America, [Chinese Academy of Social Sciences](https://www.cass.cn/) | Beijing, CHINA |

#### August, 2019

| 8/5-8/9 | Farid Azfar | “The Global Enlightenment,” at Georgetown University Summer Institute for Educators: The Enlightenment as a Global Phenomenon | [Georgetown University](https://www.georgetown.edu/), Washington, DC, USA |

#### September, 2019

| 9/1-12/1 | Bruce Dorsey | The American Civil War course for [Lifelong Learning Program](https://www.upenn.edu/lsr/life-long-learning-program/) | Philadelphia, PA, USA |

#### October, 2019

| 10/3-10/5 | Megan Brown | Hosting [Alliance to Advance Liberal Arts Colleges’ workshop](https://alliance.to), [Empire on the Move: Teaching and Researching Colonization and Mobility](https://alliance.to/events/empire-on-the-move/) | Swarthmore, PA, USA |
| 10/3-10/5 | BuYun Chen | “Making History: Technologies of Production in East Asia’s Past” workshop at [Harvard University](https://www.harvard.edu/) | Cambridge, MA, USA |
| 10/15 | BuYun Chen | Global Middle Ages seminar at [Bard Graduate Center](https://bardgradcenter.org/) | New York, NY, USA |
| 10/16 | Allison Dorsey | “The Case for Reparations” at the [Lovett Memorial Library](https://www.upenn.edu/lovett/) | Philadelphia, PA, USA |
| 10/18 | BuYun Chen | Talk at [OIKOS working group on kinship and economy, Institute for Public Knowledge, New York University](https://www.pik.org/) | New York, NY, USA |
| 10/21 | Bruce Dorsey | Symposium on Michel Gobat's [Empire by Invitation: William Walker and Manifest Destiny in Central America](https://www.pitt.edu/) at the University of Pittsburgh | Pittsburgh, PA, USA |
| 10/24-10/27 | BuYun Chen | Chair and co-organizer, “Glossing over Things: Objects and Methods (A workshop on object-sources),” at the [Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) 2019 Annual Meeting](https://www.shot.org/) | Milan, ITALY |

#### November, 2019

| 11/14-11/17 | Farid Azfar | “Racial Capitalism, the War against Pirates, and the Smuggling Legend of the South Sea Company,” at the [North American Conference on British Studies](https://www.nabcbs.org/) | Vancouver, BC, CANADA |
| 11/15 | Ahmad Shokr | “Capitalism After Empire? Nationalism and Economic Thought in Egypt circa 1919” at the [2019 Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting](https://www.mesas.org/) | New Orleans, LA, USA |

#### December, 2019

| 12/5-12/6 | BuYun Chen | “The Maker’s Space: Place, Person, and Production in Early Modern China” workshop at [Johns Hopkins University](https://jh.edu/) | Baltimore, MD, USA |