

# Department Gets New Environmental Historian

APPROPRIATELY FOR THE 40th anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement, the History department has added a new environmental historian to its roster.

Asst. Prof. Peter Alagona was hired last Spring as a joint appointment with the department of Environmental Studies. He is on leave this year on a postdoctoral fellowship at Stanford's Bill Lane Center for the West and will begin teaching full-time next year.

With wide-ranging interests, Prof. Alagona has specialized training in history of science and geography as well as environmental history.

"My research focuses on the histories of land use, natural resource management, environmental politics, and ecological science in the North American West and beyond," Prof. Alagona reports. "I have a particular interest in endangered species and biological diversity."

At UCSB, he plans to teach courses on "The Politics of Nature," "Science, Technology, and the Environment" and "Wildlife in America," in addition to standard courses

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Prof. Peter Alagona.



Plains Indian hunting a buffalo. After a colored lithograph by George Catlin (1844).

## Did Comanches Call the Shots?

THE STANDARD NARRATIVE of America's westward expansion goes something like this: Native Americans were valiant fighters but uncivilized, and certainly no match for the superior military, economic and organizing skills of the European colonial powers.

Now History Prof. Pekka Hämäläinen has called that story to account in his new book, *The Imperial Comanches: How the Rise and Fall of an Indigenous Empire Shaped the Course of American History* (Yale, 2008).

After extensive review of a wide range of documentary material, Prof. Hämäläinen has concluded that, for a major part of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Comanches surpassed Europeans in all of these categories, building a powerful empire that lasted until 1875.

UCSB History Associates will get a chance to hear Prof. Hämäläinen explain what led him to this dramatic conclusion on Sunday, Nov. 16, during a special meeting in the archives of the Santa Barbara Mission, 2201 Laguna St.

In his talk, Prof. Hämäläinen will explain what led him to conclude that Comanches actually were able to make Spanish, French, English and, later, American traders do their bidding and build a strong economy based on horses and buffalo hunting.

Cost of the program, which will begin at 2 p.m. and includes a post-lecture reception, is \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members.

Reservations may be made through the

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# Research Takes History Grads

## *Be Prepared, But Don't Forget the Human Side*

By Lily Welty

*Ed. Note: In History, dissertation research frequently means travel to distant climes. But not all our time is spent in archives. We asked two PhD candidates to describe for our readers what else they are encountering.*

I RESEARCH THE identity formation of multiracial people of Japanese descent in Japan and the United States during the period following World War II. Immediately following the war, many children sired by the U.S. military were left behind to be cared for by their Japanese mothers and the Japanese government.

Thousands of these multiracial Japanese-born Americans, *konketsuji*, neither received citizenship from the Japanese government nor were acknowledged by the U.S. government, and were legally stateless.

Many were objects of intense discrimination and physical abuse because their visible American features made them politically marked bodies and a symbol of Japan's defeat.

My research objective is to

document the history of Japanese born multiracial people following the post-war period through oral history.

This approach, in combination with archival data, will provide a complete historical framework of this unique population.

This generation of American Japanese is now entering their sixties, and their history is yet to be told in English.

Having lived in Japan to teach English prior to beginning grad school, and returning for yearly family visits, I was able to experience many of the unexpected situations of living overseas before I got here.

This time around, I was fortunate enough to be able to begin my journey in Tokyo (later I will be in Osaka and Okinawa) and stay at the home of my maternal grandmother and uncle.

I usually help with the shopping and the cooking, and this allows me to have dinner in a family atmosphere. Being in a city where there is so much light pollution, I long to see stars at night.

I have learned that making sure to sincerely stay in touch with people is key. Before going anywhere, I send emails and made phone calls to give the people at the libraries or archives advance notice.

Here in Tokyo, I am not

*A student of Prof. Paul Spickard, Lily Welty is currently in Japan on a Fulbright fellowship, conducting research for her dissertation on Japanese children sired by American soldiers at the end World War II.*



*Lily's daily train ride.*

always granted access, and having an introduction letter from the librarian at the Davidson Library is always a plus.

During the course of my research I have been introduced to scholars, archivists, or people to interview through networking and or being introduced by someone else.

My research would not be possible had I not relied on my adviser, Paul Spickard, as well as many scholars in my field and out of my field. In order to make a good impression, I make sure to effectively represent myself and the UCSB History department.

Prior to coming to Japan I had alerted archives, libraries, and potential interviewees that I would be coming. Upon meeting them, I was ready with a *meishi* or business card, and for more personal contacts I brought an *omiyage*, a small gift of appreciation, with me.

Part of this exchange is cultural in Japan, but the other part also serves to foster good relations anywhere.

After going, I send a handwritten thank you card rather than an email to make sure my gratitude for their help is acknowledged.

It might seem like overkill,



*A quieter moment with Grandmother.*

but the success of my research depends not only upon my conducting the research, but also the human interaction involved in making it happen in the first place.

This year I have a lot more freedom to focus on my research. Having 100 per cent of my time to do research is a lot harder than I thought it would be.

For one thing, the only structure in my schedule is the structure that I put into it. Hours of nerding out can pass and I don't even realize it.

Trying to begin a project sometimes seems like a monumental task because I don't know where to begin. Therefore I have begun creating

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**Undergrad Editor**

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# to All Corners of the Globe

AFTER TRAVERSING Ontario and Quebec in sub-arctic temperatures, I arrived in London in February 2007 hoping for something a little milder. But unseasonable weather had followed me across the north Atlantic.

I was no longer in temperate Santa Barbara; my second night in London it snowed!

For a week I holed up at Goodenough College in London's upscale Bloomsbury district. Named for founder and Barclay's Bank chairman Frederick Goodenough (and not a departing curse from a disgruntled postgrad), the college has been London's premier residence for international graduate students since 1930.

Originally a home for students from the British Dominions, Goodenough now welcomes even Brits and Americans, though Canadians such as myself still remain among its most prolific residents.

The original college building, London House, had clearly been the cat's meow around the time when people still used such expressions. And like its contemporaries, London House was showing its advanced age.

Nonetheless, I had an Internet connection and a view of both the beautiful quad and the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral.

All seemed at least tolerable until I was woken some time after midnight.

Drowsy, and suffering from jetlag, all I could hear coming from my hall was a cacaphony of commonwealth co-eds pleading, "Oh Omar, won't you show me, I want to see it!"

And they wouldn't relent, but neither would poor Omar. And so the din continued well into the blustery London night. "Pleeeeeease Omar! Won't

## *He Just Can't Get Enough (of Goodenough College)*

By Justin Bengry



*Justin in the Goodenough quad.*

you show it to us?"

What they wanted, I never discovered, as Omar never wavered in his resolve.

By morning I hated Goodenough, I hated its residents, and most of all I hated Omar for withholding until well past 2 a.m.

But now, 20 months later, I've returned to London to finish my research and write my dissertation.

I've also returned to Goodenough College as a full-time resident at London House.

Rather than the view of St. Paul's, now I look out upon the ancient trees of Coram's Fields, an immense children's park, but in the nineteenth century site of an equally immense home for abandoned children.

I'm also getting the full im-

perial British experience that the college was built on: grand campus spaces, an international student body, college collegiality... World War Two era plumbing, hot water radiators, and cold air drafts, even that great marker of respectable Victorian leisure, a croquet lawn.

Dining at the college is also an historical experience in its Harry-Potter-esque wood-paneled Great Hall.

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*Justin Bengry is finishing his dissertation on the Pink Pound, homosexuality and the marketplace in twentieth-century Britain, under the guidance of Prof. Erika Rappaport. He wishes to thank the History Associates whose generous support has made possible his stay in London.*

I sip my soup beneath portraits of aristocratic college governors and college patron Queen Elizabeth II.

It is a distinct change from Santa Barbara's campus, where surfer dudes and skate boarders were common sights, now to find myself in the quad of an Oxbridge-modeled college which bears more in common to the days of Empire than today's world of YouTube and blog posts.

A distinctly old-world flair pervades its stone halls and paneled rooms.

And college directors have definite military bearings—even our current director, Andrew Ritchie, was a Major General in the British Army and former Commandant of Sandhurst Royal Military Academy.

But only time will tell whether the General will protect poor Omar.

## Grads Gain With Papers, Scholarships

MARILENE BARROS (Dutra) has had a paper accepted for presentation at the Latin American Studies Association meeting in Rio de Janeiro. Entitled "The Largest Radio Accident in the World: Goiania, Brazil," Marilen's paper will be part of a panel dealing with natural or political disasters and urbanism.

Tim Daniels (McGee) has received a James Davis Scholarship to attend the Rare Book School in Charlottesville, VA, this summer, where he will do research on the Stationers' Company as part of his dissertation on the role of the English fleet during the Civil War (1642-1648).

# President's Corner

## Inquiring Minds

For some reason I am always taken by surprise by how quickly time passes, especially once school starts.

My students at Westmont are in the midst of their midterms, struggling to make it through until their Thanksgiving vacation. I am struggling to keep up with them.

I am thankful every day I have with them because they remind me of the promise those few years of college hold. They also remind me of how they struggle to make sense of the world around them. They take me back to my days in Professor Marsak's historiography class my first year in the graduate program. I'm sure I will misquote him, but he warned against buying into the adage that

those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it, trying to drive home the importance of historical context in understanding historical developments.

While history is never entirely repeated, nor will it help us predict what the future will bring, what has happened in the past can help with context for our present.

So as my students learn about the erosion of Athenian ideals during the Peloponnesian War they contemplate their own world. With our discussions of the development of nationalism and "new imperialism" in the 19th century, they reflect on the significance for the world today.

And as they look at how the Cold War played out in US foreign policy in Latin America, they consider the implications for our hemispheric relations now.

These experiences drive home why supporting historical inquiry is so important.

We have many students in the history graduate program whose work will help us and understand our past and provide context for understanding our present.

Please continue to be an integral part of ensuring that they can continue to contribute to the discipline by contributing to the History Graduate Fellowship Fund, or any of the other funds we sponsor.

In the meantime I look forward to seeing you at Prof. Hämäläinen's lecture in November!

Monica Orozco  
President



# She's Ready For Her Close-up

EVERYBODY KNEW something was different this past Halloween when they saw a nun sitting at Catherine Salzgeber's desk. They were sure of it when the nun slapped them with a ruler.

But that's the way Donna Craig, Catherine's replacement as Personnel Secretary, does things.

"When I was calling for references, people always said two things," said Office Manager David Passoff. "Donna is always trying to help, and she is just a lot of fun to have in the office."

There were plenty of places to call. At UCSB since 1979, Donna has worked for venues as varied as campus police and Religious Studies, with stints in the Alumni office, Grad



Personnel Secretary Donna Craig.

Division and two Engineering departments as well.

"I came to History because I heard so many wonderful things about the staff and faculty and was intrigued when I heard people come here to work and don't leave until they retire," Donna says.

With two grown children (one graduated from UCSB last year, the other is at SBCC), Donna has more than enough experience to keep Undergrad Secretary Mike Tucker in line.

Especially if she holds on to the ruler.

## Environmentalist

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on the history of ecology.

Prof. Alagona received an MA in Geography from UCSB before going on to complete an MA and PhD in History of Science at UCLA.

For the past two years he has been a Harvard Environmental Fellow at the Kennedy School of Government.

"Peter's interests in environmental history, history of science and policy history make him a great addition to our faculty," History Chair Ken Mouré said.

A massive oil spill at a Union Oil platform in the Santa Barbara Channel in January of 1969 is widely credited with launching the modern environmental movement.

In response, UCSB launched its Environmental Studies Program in 1970, with History Prof. Roderick Nash as its first chair.

# LET US HEAR FROM YOU

If you are a grad trying to get in touch with an old classmate, or a community member or alum with an article or story, why not drop us a line?

Send your letters to:

Editor, *Historia*

Department of History

University of California

Santa Barbara, CA 93106-9410

or email:

drake@history.ucsb.edu





*Phi Alpha Theta members meet with Prof. David Rock. Pictured (l. to r.): Katherine Jonson, Lauren Foebr, Prof. Rock, Frank Palomera, Prof. Ann Plane (chapter adviser), Kristine Silva, George Whittlesey IV, Cathy Kwon, chapter Pres. Jason Smith, Adrienne Minor, and Mike Uhl.*

# Phi Alpha Theta Chapter Lays Plans for Busy Year

BY MIKE UHL

UCSB's GAMMA IOTA chapter of national history honorary Phi Alpha Theta is planning an exciting year of professional development and social events.

Prof. David Rock kicked off a series of informal talks with History faculty and grad students on Oct. 29. He was followed on Nov. 5 by a screening of "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" and discussion of the medieval period.

All interested students are welcome to attend the meetings, which will be held every other Wednesday at 5 p.m. in HSSB 4020.

The aim is to learn about

## Oops!

FROM AN ESSAY ON the relationship between science and religion during the Scientific Revolution: "To understand the way religion and science was thought of at the time one would need to know the religion. During this period there were a few religions that were dominant. There was Protestants, Puritans, and Christians." (Anita Guerrini.)

different ways to pursue a career in teaching and research, and also to provide a common meeting ground for students who share an interest in the study of history, said chapter Pres. Jason Smith.

"Ongoing historical film nights are a cornerstone of the social atmosphere the club wishes to foster outside of the classroom," he said.

Other officers this year are Cathy Kwon, George Whittlesey IV and Mike Uhl.

In addition, future meetings will focus on public history and other careers outside of academia that history majors can pursue.

Field trips and barbecues are also in the works for winter and spring quarters.

Farther down the road, the chapter is making plans to participate in the national Phi Alpha Theta convention, which will be held in San Diego in January, 2010.

Membership in Phi Alpha Theta is open to both graduate and undergraduate History major, said Prof. Ann Plane, who is serving as chapter adviser this year.

"While there are minimum

GPA requirements for membership in the national chapter, there is no requirement for membership at UCSB except a love of history and interest in participating in a number of fun field trips and other history-related activities," she said.

Chapter organizers are optimistic about the number of interested students thus far and believe that such fun and informative activities will attract not only the participation of undergraduates but of grad students and faculty as well.

## Hämäläinen Empire Talk

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UCSB Office of Community Relations, (805) 893-4388.

A graduate of the University of Helsinki's famous American Studies program, Prof. Hämäläinen taught at Texas A&M before joining UCSB's History department in 2004.

Since its publication earlier this year, *The Imperial Comanches* has drawn critical attention and highly favorable reviews. David J. Weber called it "a landmark study" and David McMurtry, "Cutting-edge revisionist western history."

## Doing Research In Japan

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deadlines and to-do lists. Skills I acquired during seminars, such as speed-reading and précis-writing, have all come in handy.

A big *arigato* (thank you) to the professors who have taught me how to become an efficient researcher.

As a UCSB student and being on a bicycle-friendly campus, it was easy to adjust to the bicycle lifestyle here.

Within a few weeks of arrival, I acquired a used bike for free and began riding it to the subway station.

The streets are quite narrow, so navigating a bike and not hitting anyone and avoiding getting hit is the daily challenge.

One day when I returned to the station after a full day at the archives, my bicycle was gone. I found out it had been impounded—for illegal parking no less—and I had to pay a 3000 yen fine (about \$30) to get it out of the impound!

I learned my lesson, and have been parking legally, well mostly, ever since.



*Prof. Pekka Hämäläinen*

# Ready to Join?

Another great year of UCSB History Associates' events is under way. You'll want to keep posted about events in the History Department as well. To renew your membership or join for the first time, just fill out this form and mail it with your check or money order (payable to UCSB History Associates).

Enclosed are my annual membership dues of \$

- ☐ Active \$30  
☐ Corresponding 15

(Available to residents outside of Santa Barbara County only)



## In addition to my membership dues, enclosed is:

- ☐ \$25 to obtain a UCSB Library card  
☐ \$ gift to the History Associates Graduate Fellowship Fund.  
☐ \$ gift to the History Associates Dick Cook Fund.  
☐ \$ gift to the History Associates Fund.

(specify other scholarship fund)

Note: Gifts of \$1,000 or more qualify for one-year membership in the Chancellor's Council.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Membership dues are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Gifts to the scholarship fund are considered charitable donations.

Please make your check payable to the UCSB History Associates and return it to:

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 University of California, Santa Barbara  
 Santa Barbara, CA 93106-1136  
 Questions? call (805) 893-4388

# Fashion Statement?



*History Grad Student Assn. officers Tara Tubb, Rachel Winslow and Colleen Ho model the new department T-shirt, which features a painting of the siege of Rome and the slogan "When in Rome...Do as the Visigoths" (closeup, right). Created as an HGSA fundraiser, the shirts are available in both unisex and women's styles and can be ordered at [hgsa.ucsb@gmail.com](mailto:hgsa.ucsb@gmail.com) or from HGSA officers. Cost is \$15.*



## istoria

NEWSLETTER OF THE UCSB HISTORY ASSOCIATES  
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