Milton Plesur Conference
At this year’s Roundtable Discussion on the Future of the Humanities, Professors Erik Seeman and Carole Emberton encouraged grad students to be entrepreneurial, yet pursue their goals if they want to enter Academia.

Read more on Page 7

From the President’s Desk
This year has been a busy one for UB’s Graduate History Association. It started over the summer when the new officers came in and cleaned up and redecorated the grad lounge. We continued last year’s tradition of hosting a couple of themed brown bags each semester, as well as the Grad Student Research Showcase series where Masters students presented their thesis and received helpful feedback from their peers. Our largest project of the year was obviously organizing the 22nd Annual Milton Plesur Graduate History Conference. It was a lot of work, but I think this year’s conference was another success. Perhaps the project I’m most proud of is the New Student Guidebook that this year’s GHA Executive Board compiled over the summer. It’s a 47-page document full of important information about the Department’s academic program, as well as tips for living in Buffalo, such as our favorite places to eat, recommendations for where to live, things to do in the Nickel City, and even suggestions for day trips to nearby attractions. It can be shared with all new students, is available for download on our website (www.gsa.buffalo.edu/historygha), and a hard copy sits in the grad lounge. Amid brown bags, research showcases, and conferences, the GHA also managed to volunteer at a local Buffalo business and even just have fun at a few social events. We then ended the semester with another thorough cleaning of the grad lounge and complete makeover of the TA offices. And lastly, we composed the first annual spring newsletter of the Graduate History Association.

Throughout the semester, the GHA was able to support our students’ research and professional development by granting a total of $350 to help fund

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“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.”
~ Albert Einstein ~
Meet the 2012-2013 GHA Executive Board:

President: W. Jake Newsome

Jake is a third year Ph.D. student in UB's Department of History. Before moving to Buffalo from South Georgia, Newsome graduated *Summa Cum Laude* from Valdosta State University in 2009. While his Bachelor's is in History, he also studied International Affairs, German, and Cultural Anthropology. Jake studied abroad numerous times as an undergraduate, spending five weeks in Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany in 2006, the summer of 2007 with the VSU Anthropological Field School in Blue Creek Village, Belize, as well as the 2008-2009 academic year studying German history at Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany. Interested in the connections between History and memory, Jake is currently studying how the Nazi persecution of homosexuals has been remembered in the past 65 years. In his coffee-fueled free time, he likes to reminisce about the days when reading non-academic books like *Harry Potter* was not a source of guilt associated with unproductivity.

Vice President: Billy Pritchard

Billy is a Ph.D. Candidate in American History, with areas of specialization in 19th century, the U.S. South, African-American, and the Atlantic World. His dissertation looks at the demographic and cultural changes which resulted from increased African-American mobility between rural Louisiana and New Orleans in the immediate decades after emancipation. Billy is originally from Louisiana, and received his B.A. in History and French at Centenary College of Louisiana in 2003. In 2005, he completed his M.A. in History at the University of Mississippi (also known as Ole Miss). After a brief hiatus teaching middle-school French in Western New York, Billy entered the Ph.D. program at the University at Buffalo. Though it took him some time to grow accustomed to Western New York's winter weather, Billy has grown quite fond of Buffalo, particularly the area's wide variety of restaurants and cultural attractions.

Secretary: Averill Earls

Averill is a Third-year Ph.D. student in the UB history department. She hails from central Vermont, and earned a B.A. in Political Science and History (2008) and an M.A. in History (2010) from the University of Vermont. Specializing in Modern European history, with a focus in sex and gender and twentieth-century Ireland and Britain, previous research interests include "pedophile priests," Victorian pornography and homosexual persecution in Nazi Germany. Earls served as the Secretary of the UVM Graduate Student Senate from 2009-2010, and as a Senator for the History Department before that. In addition to studying history, Earls does some free-lance marketing work for Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Makers of the World's Best Cheddar, and aspires to moonlight as a writer of ridiculous teen fiction.

Treasurer: Kathryn Lawton

Kathryn is a second-year PhD student in twentieth-century U.S. history, particularly interested in the history of social policy, disability history, and activism. She is from a small town north of Syracuse called Fulton, NY, and received her B.A. in History at Hobart & William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY. After college, she worked for AmeriCorps and a local nonprofit that serves people with disabilities. Her goal is to combine these interests in history, policy, disability, and inequality to produce an innovative dissertation.
2012-2013
Ph.D. Student Cohort

This past year, UB’s History Department admitted five new students into its Ph.D. program. Better yet, all five survived their first year! Here’s a brief introduction to this year’s new Ph.D. students:

Qiong Liu comes to UB from China, where she completed her undergraduate education. She also earned her Master’s degree from Nanjing University in the summer of 2012. Her thesis, “Collaboration of Wang Jingwei Regime in an International Version” was advised by Professor Hu Cheng. While she was taking coursework this year, Qiong didn’t waste any time in presenting her research at a couple of conferences here in Buffalo. She remains interested in political history, but Qiong has started focusing on the (trans)formation of local homosexual identities in modern China. Qiong just received funding to spend this summer learning Japanese in Japan in China.

John Marsland graduated this past year with a B.A. in History from the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, where he was awarded the 2012 Outstanding Student Award in History & German. John spent his junior year in Munich at the Ludwig Maximllian Universität. His interests at UB have shifted slightly to include youth culture and social history in post-war Great Britain, including protest movements, music, squatting, and anarchism. John is active in the local community; he is a co-founder of Anarchy in Action, which promotes personal responsibility toward one’s local environment through education, and other initiatives like the Normal Ave. Community Garden and the Buffalo Save the Kids organization.

Marissa Rhodes is from the area, earning her B.A. in History from Niagara University. She completed her Master’s degree in Library Science at UB last year. Her focus is early modern England, and her interests include politics of the body and print culture. Her paper on wet-nursing was a big hit at the Plesur Conference this year. She has a beautiful baby daughter, Remy, who has made a few appearances in the Department hallways, and Marissa’s husband, a gourmet chef, has provided the GHA with some scrumptious food on occasion (we think we’ll keep them around!) Marissa will also be serving as GHA treasurer next year.

Joshua Schroeder did his undergraduate education at SUNY Geneseo, where he earned his B.A. in History last year. His senior thesis (advised by Prof. Justin Behrend) was titled, “Reluctant Rebels: Resistance to the Confederacy in Western North Carolina.” Though his thesis was on the Civil War era, Josh is studying colonial America now that he’s at UB, and he presented on the topic at this year’s Plesur Conference. Josh has served in the New York Air National Guard since 2007, and will be in a comparably honorable post next year when he serves as the GHA President.

Katie Smyser completed her B.A. in History from Notre Dame. She then earned her Master’s degree from Ohio University last year. Her thesis was entitled, “To Serve the Interests of the Empire? British Experiences with Zionism, 1917-1925.” Her interests include modern Europe, geopolitics, and environmental history, but one new direction that she’s excited about is the study of exploration and empire. Katie and her husband Andy, who is pursuing an M.Ed. at Canisius College, enjoy spending time outside, exploring Buffalo’s parks. Katie will serve as GHA’s secretary next year.

To read more about our students’ research and achievements from this past year, see our grad student showcase beginning on page 10!
GHA Events

Brown Bags

This year, the GHA hosted multiple brown bags per semester. Each brown bag was centered on a topic meant to help our graduate students during their time at UB, as well to prepare them for their professional careers. The GHA invited a faculty member to lead each brown bag, which was conducted more as a conversation over lunch. (A master copy of notes from each of the brown bags is available in the New Student Guidebook in the grad lounge; feel free to make yourself a copy of anything that you find particularly helpful.)

Our first brown bag of the year was held on September 14, 2012. In Getting through a Grad Course, veteran graduate students offered advice to the newer students on a range of topics: reading effectively and efficiently for your coursework, writing a good book review, writing a historiography paper, managing your time well, and tips for dealing with the inevitable stress. On October 10, 2012, we had our second brown bag. Dr. Patrick McDevitt led the conversation on Funding Your Research, which included specific places to find outside funding opportunities for your research. Dr. McDevitt's main piece of advice was: apply, apply, apply! Obviously, the more often you apply for funding, the greater your chance of getting it. And once you do receive a fellowship or grant (especially a larger one), you'll find that more money will soon follow. Dr. Carole Emberton led our brown bag on How to Write a Good CV on November 7, 2012. She provided us the CV of “Wanna B. Professor” as an example to demonstrate how a curriculum vitae should be clear and properly organized. By the end of the session, Dr. Emberton had also shared tips for submitting a journal article and for “advertising” our skills as a historian.

Spring 2013’s first brown bag, Tips for Leading a Good Recitation, was held on January 24th. Several TAs gathered to discuss the pros and cons of being the “middlemen” in large, general education classes. We also offered success stories about different ways of structuring recitations. Dr. Andreas Daum gave an excellent presentation on the March 5th brown bag, Writing a Good Syllabus. He offered his own syllabi as examples of different ways to structure a syllabus (which has a large impact on how the course itself will be structured). Dr. Daum also shared a helpful handout that included the link to a H-Net Syllabus Contest and Database. On April 10, Dr. Carole Emberton was back again to host From the Ivory Tower to the Office Tower, a brown bag about finding non-academic jobs with a Ph.D. in history. Though she pointed out that she, as a university professor, may not be the most qualified to speak about alternative career paths, this brown bag did have the highest attendance and resulted in useful and encouraging dialogue.

GHA Volunteers!

On Saturday, November 10, 2012, members of the GHA braved the cold to volunteer at a local business. Founded in 2006, Buffalo ReUse is Western New York’s first green demolition and salvage company and is the largest supplier of used building materials to the area. The material, salvaged from soon-to-be-demolished buildings or donated by members of the community, is then sold at low prices to people doing much-needed upgrades on their homes, or to people simply looking to find original fixtures as they remodel their houses. For more information see their Facebook page.

Jake Newsome, Averill Earls, Kathryn Lawton, Justin Donahoe, Elisabeth George, John Marsland, Josh Schroeder, Katie Smyser, and her husband, Andy, helped Buffalo ReUse organize material in their new warehouse (located at 296 E. Ferry St, Buffalo), unload trucks, and remove hinges from every shape of door possible so that the y could be more neatly stacked and stored.

This is the second year that the GHA has volunteered over 40 man hours with Buffalo ReUse.

The GHA also donated a large box of canned goods to the food pantry at Zion United Church of Christ in the fall semester.
Graduate Student Research Showcases

This year, the GHA also continued the Research Showcase series with the aim of providing our Masters students an opportunity to present their research and get feedback before submitting their thesis. We hosted two showcases a semester, and it’s safe to say that our students are producing some fascinating research.

Rachel Eshenour was the star of our first research showcase (Oct. 22, 2012), and she presented her Master’s thesis, “Unnatural Mothers”: the Politics of Mothering, Hartford, CT 1850-1900. In her thesis (advised by Dr. Susan Cahn), Rachel examines the way the narrative of infanticide changed during the second half of the 19th century, creating a moment where politics, class, and gender intersect. Her project also ties infanticide into a larger narrative of social change during this period. Rachel also shared information about the research process itself: what led her to this topic, what kind of sources she used, and where she had to travel to find them. Even though it was dealing with such a morbid topic (or perhaps because of it), everyone enjoyed Rachel’s presentation.

Next up was Lauren DeJoy. On November 26, she presented her Master’s thesis, FIGHT the Good Fight: A Black Power Organization’s Battle for Jobs with Rochester, New York’s Eastman Kodak Company, 1966-1967. Lauren’s project challenges the notion that the South was the only place where African Americans had to push for civil rights in the 1960s. Her thesis was inspired by the changing historiography on Civil Rights and Black Power history. Instead of focusing exclusively on either FIGHT or Kodak, her paper works to better understand the way the two groups related to one another in the hopes of better understanding the relationship between poor African Americans and the larger communities directed largely by corporate, white America during the Long Civil Rights and Black Power Era. Lauren has submitted her paper for publication, and we all have our fingers crossed that it will be accepted!

In Barnstormers: African American Baseball Players at Home & Abroad, 1920-1950, Brian Campbell used the lens of sports to approach race and identity formation in new and interesting ways (February 12, 2013). Before Jackie Robinson broke baseball’s color line in 1947, African American baseball players spent the preceding decades “barnstorming” throughout the United States, Latin America, and Canada. Major League Baseball’s unofficial segregation policy forced black players to play professionally in the Negro Leagues, but many traversed the country and crossed national borders in the offseason to compete against and among the best white and Latino talent. Brian’s research centers on barnstorming at home and abroad, and how black ballplayers challenged Jim Crow through their mobility. By playing against major leaguers in the offseason, the black player came to realize his equal status as an athlete and as a man. Thus, Robinson’s debut in ’47 served as the culmination of a decades-long struggle in which black ballplayers proved to themselves that they could compete alongside the best white talent.

Rick Elliott presented at the last research showcase of the year on April 22nd. In his thesis, “Through the Medium of Your Useful Paper:” Newspapers and the Formation of American Capitalism, 1790-1819, Rick explores the ways in which newspapers acted as a medium for condition Americans for the economic and social changes capitalism would bring. When the panic of 1819 struck, sending the United States economy into chaos, newspapers displayed remarkable versatility in how they covered the crisis. Rick’s project explores the roles that the rapidly expanding newspaper industry of the early republic played in American economic development leading up to, and during, this moment. When new trade and banking practices began to disturb the social landscape, newspapers provided the information and voiced the opinions that Americans used to understand, and eventually embrace, economic change. The roles that American newspapers came to serve within the economy between 1790 and 1819 would set the stage for the full emergence of capitalism over the course of the nineteenth century.
Social Events

The GHA made some time for some fun, this year, too. We started off the year with our annual Fall Beer Mixer on August 29, 2012. Thanks to all of the faculty, staff, and students who stopped by to catch up with friends and try some locally-brewed beers and homemade appetizers. On September 29, we took advantage of the last of the fall weather with a BBQ and potluck at the home of Averill Earls and Dan Beattie. Besides being able to enjoy the time outside before winter set in, it was a good opportunity for the new and returning students to get to know each other better. The GHA ended the fall 2012 semester with an End of the Semester Bowling Bash! On December 17th, the GHA provided a couple of pizzas and grad students enjoyed 50 Cents games at Tonawanda Lanes. Everyone agreed it was a good way to unwind after writing and grading final papers!

The spring 2013 semester kicked off with the Spring Wine Mixer on January 16. Again, faculty, staff, and students gathered to enjoy drinks and food while catching up on what went on over the break, while also mentally preparing for a new semester! On March 19, we had an informal Happy Hour @ Founding Fathers Pub. Located at 75 Edward St. Buffalo, Founding Fathers is decorated like something out of a historian’s dream: the whole pub is filled with American history paraphernalia, from busts of Ben Franklin to portraits of US Presidents and more old flags than you can count. It was nice to hear what everyone did over the spring break before inhaling for the final push of the semester. We ended the academic year with another potluck (when so many of our students can cook so well, it’s hard to want anything else other than a potluck!) Sarah Handley-Cousins and her husband, James, hosted the End of the Year Potluck at their home on May 11th.

“All in all, I think it was a good year for GHA members, with just the right mixture of work and play.”
- Jake Newsome
22nd Annual Milton Plesur Graduate History Conference
“Traversing the Borderlands: Past, Present, & Future”

This year’s Milton Plesur Conference was held on Saturday, April 6, at UB’s Center for Tomorrow (North Campus). The morning began with a Roundtable Discussion on the Future of the Humanities. A number of articles on the topic had been pre-circulated by the GHA to everyone who was invited to the conference in order to facilitate better discussion. Three panelists, Dr. Erik Seeman (Director, UB Humanities Institute), Dr. Carole Emberton (Assistant Professor, UB History Department), and Jake Newsome (President, UB Graduate History Association), gave opening remarks with their thoughts on the state of Humanities education in Academia. Dr. Seeman encouraged graduate students in the audience to read judiciously about the jobs and funding crisis in the Humanities. While you shouldn’t believe every alarming cry you read (he promised the Humanities would survive this crisis, as it has for years), you should take the state of the job market seriously and consider options besides Academia. Be entrepreneurial and make use of the skills you’ve acquired in graduate school. Dr. Emberton offered similar advice: if you know the reality and still want to become a professor, then do so, but look at the job problem in the face. Don’t, she said, treat it like a bad relationship and think that “It’ll be different for me.” Ultimately, she was optimistic, stating that we as graduate students chose to study history for a reason; we should follow our passion, but also have a Plan B lined up. Mr. Newsome concluded the opening remarks by recounting a thought experiment hosted in the fall by the UB Honors College. Six professors from different disciplines argued for why their expertise should secure them a spot on a hypothetical life raft to sail off and start a new civilization as the world descended into a nuclear apocalypse. The only professor from the Humanities, a poet, came in dead last when the audience members voted on whom to save. Mr. Newsome suggested that in a time when research in the Humanities doesn’t cure cancer or design the next iPhone, perhaps the biggest challenge facing humanities scholars is one of communication.

The audience was very responsive and participated lively in the discussion. One grad student expressed that some students may feel anxious when considering telling their advisor that they may want to pursue a non-academic career. Everyone agreed that departments should do more to make students feel more comfortable with planning for an alternative career path with their PhD, and one way to do that is to offer workshops on what alternative careers are available. Dr. James Bono, Chair of UB’s History Department, told students that their ability to think outside the box and imagine multiple scenarios, alternative narratives, and various solutions to problems were among their greatest skills as professionals, whether they become professors or pursue some other field. Dr. Jason Young, Director of Graduate Studies for UB’s History Department, picked up on a theme that Dr. Bono mentioned, commenting that students should not feel that they have to choose between being either professional historians (i.e., professors) or “something else.” Instead, one remains a historian, even while working outside of Academia. Non-academic experiences can greatly influence the way we think about and understand the past. Therefore, life outside of the Ivory Tower can provide valuable insight for writing history.

Read more about the Plesur Conference on the next page…
(Plesur Conference continued)

The GHA was pleased to have Dr. Barbara Krauthamer, Associate Professor of History at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, deliver the keynote address for this year’s conference. 2013 is the 150th anniversary year of the Emancipation Proclamation, and Dr. Krauthamer’s forthcoming book, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters*, is the first full-length study of chattel slavery and the lives of enslaved peoples in the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indian nations. In her talk, “Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery, Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South,” she divulged a complicated and surprising chapter of early American history. In all, over 7,000 Africans and African Americans were owned as slaves within Native American territory, and when the Civil War broke out, several Indian nations sided with the Confederacy to protect the institution of slavery. Even after President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation and the passing of the 13th Amendment, the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations refused to emancipate their slaves, claiming that U.S. laws had no jurisdiction on Indian land.

The day was full of fascinating and impressive research by graduate students from six different universities in the United States and Canada, representing three different academic disciplines (see the next page for a full list of presentations). Unfortunately, one of our Canadian presenters had to cancel at the last minute due to a passport and visa issue, which was cruelly ironic, given the conference’s theme of “Traversing Borders.” Once the conference wrapped up at 5:30, panelists were invited to an informal post-conference reception at Average Joe’s Pub in North Tonawanda, where our guests were treated to an impressive buffet and open bar.

The GHA Executive Board would like to take this opportunity to again thank all of our presenters and panel chairs for their hard work. We would also like to thank all of our co-sponsors: the Graduate Student Association Senate, the Graduate Americanist Group, UB SoFem, and the Graduate Student Associations of American Studies, Classics, Comparative Literature, English, Linguistics, Music, Political Science, Romance Languages & Literature, and Sociology. With such a long list of student association co-sponsorships, one cannot help but realize that even while budgets are shrinking across the board, students throughout the Humanities are willing to help each other out when it comes to our research. As in the past, the Plesur Conference would not have been possible without the financial help of the History Department. Dr. James Bono was incredibly helpful every step of the way. Because of the Department’s generous support, the GHA was able to save some of its own budget to award conference funding for our students throughout the spring semester. Thanks to the work and support of everyone involved, this year’s Milton Plesur Graduate History Conference was another successful, international conference that enables students from the United States, Canada, and elsewhere to share current research with fellow students and faculty members in a number of fields.
Roundtable Discussion on the Future of the Humanities
Roundtable Panelists:
- Dr. Erik Seeman: Director, UB Humanities Institute
- Dr. Carole Emberton: Assistant Professor, UB Department of History
- W. Jake Newsome: President, UB Graduate History Association

Panel I: Room A: “Transnationalism: Traversing Borders” – Chair: Dr. Barbara Krauthamer, UMass Amherst

Room B: “Sailing around the Atlantic World” – Chair: Dr. Jason Young, UB
- Joshua Schroeder, UB Department of History, “The Pope’s Indians: Fears of a Catholic-Indian Alliance in Seventeenth Century Colonial America”

Panel II: Room A: “Nationalism” – Chair: Dr. Kristin Stapleton, UB
- Peter Zona, UB Department of History, “Contention of National Identity in Italian Football”
- Mark Dodge, UB Department of History, “Beyond Enlightenment: Political Religiosity in Divergent Modernities”

Room B: “Twentieth Century Social Justice” – Chair: Dr. Victoria Wolcott, UB
- Kathryn Lawton, UB Department of History, “Negotiating Deinstitutionalization: The Public, Parents, and the State”
- Kevin Ryan, UB Department of History, “The Continued Limits of Catholic Interracialism in the 1960s”

Panel III: Room A: “Chivalry, Romance, & Myth in Europe” – Chair: Dr. Dean Pavlakis, UB
- Rachel Carpenter, UB Department of Anthropology, “A Tale of Two Castles: An anthropological investigation of castles as constructed places with changing senses through the contextualization and analysis of le Château d’ Angers, le Château de Josselin, and their intertwined human histories”
- Melinda Dolezal, UB Department of History, “Sailing to Valhalla, Settling in Vinland: The Norse Legacy on Atlantic History”

Room B: “Nineteenth Century Government & Society” – Chair: Dr. Patrick McDevitt, UB
- Stephen Smith, Queen’s University, Department of History, “Border Ruffians or Irish Emancipators? The Contest for Public Opinion During the Fenian Raids of 1865-1866”
- Sarah Handley-Cousins, UB Department of History, “The (Disabled) Lion of the Union: Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain and Disability in Post Civil War America”
- Billy Pritchard, UB Department of History, “The Most Dreadful Blow at the Hands of Their Yankee Friends” Black Mobility and the Limits of Wartime Emancipation in New Orleans”

Panel IV: Room A: “Gender & Sexuality” – Chair: Dr. Susan Cahn, UB
- John P. Riley, Binghamton University, Department of History, “Adjoining Spheres: Fatherhood and the Family in Victorian America”
- Rachel Eshenour, UB Department of History, “Unnatural Mothers: Infanticide and the Politics of Sexuality, Hartford, CT 1860-1900”

Room B: “Violence in the Twentieth Century” – Chair: Dr. Kenneth Orosz, Buffalo State University
- Qiong Liu, UB Department of History, “Saving the Nation Indirectly: the Collaboration of Wang Jingwei’s Regime”
- Matthew Janecko, Loyola University Chicago, Department of History, “Faced with Death, Even a Mouse Bites: Social & Religious Motivations behind Terrorism in Chechnya”
Grad Student Showcase

UB's History graduate students have been busy this past year. We have conducted original research, presented at conferences, passed exams, and even won national awards and grants. The GHA is proud to showcase all of these accomplishments! Congratulations to all of you!

Brian Campbell finished up his Master's degree this May. After travelling to Cooperstown, NY in March to conduct research at the National Baseball Hall of Fame, Brian was able to finish up his Master's thesis, “Jumping Jim Crow: African American Baseball Players and the Struggle for Equality and Manhood,” advised by Dr. Susan Cahn. Brian presented a version of his thesis at this year's Plesur Conference. Brian plans to work for a year and decide which PhD programs to apply to.

Mark Dodge is continuing with the Master's program. He presented a paper, “True Money Isn't Silver,” at the York Centre for Asian Research, and also presented “Beyond Enlightenment” at this year’s Plesur Conference. Mark is currently translating an interesting Chinese musical source into English. Apart from the MA Program, Mark is a volunteer docent at the Buffalo-Niagara Heritage Center and continues to teach at East High School in Buffalo.

Ph.D. candidate Michael Durfee presented his research at several conferences, including the Urban History Association (in NYC), the University of Rochester Graduate Conference, the New York State Political Science Association (Syracuse), the University of Michigan Grad Student Conference, and he will even be presenting at the conference Under Control? Alcohol and Drug Regulation, Past & Present in London this June. Michael received two grants this year: the Community Conversations Grant from the NY State Council for the Humanities and the College Committee on Teaching & Learning Grant from Niagara University CCTL. As a part of Black History Month, Michael gave a talk, “Rethinking Affirmative Action,” as a part of the Martin Luther King Jr. Week Speaker Series at the Niagara University Multicultural Center, and also put together an exhibit at the Niagara Power Vista entitled “Degrees of Freedom: Unpacking the Emancipation Proclamation.” Michael acts as a contributing editor for Points: the Blog of the Alcohol and Drugs History Society, and has received another one year appointment as a full-time faculty member at Niagara University for next year.

Colin Eager (Ph.D. candidate) received the John Naylor Fellowship and the Bordin-Gillette Fellowship from the Bently Historical Library at the University of Michigan to conduct his research this past year. While driving approximately 12,000 miles across the US for dissertation research, Colin discovered that he’s allergic to archival documents, convincing him that the past is trying to kill him in order to keep its secrets. Among his other accolades, Colin also mentions that he managed to trick his wife into thinking that being married to him was a good idea for the eighth consecutive year.

Ph.D. candidate Averill Ears served as the GHA Secretary this past year. In October, she presented “A Gay Old Time: Queer Tourism in Ireland” at the Mid-Western Conference for British Studies. She also passed her qualifying exams in February and defended her prospectus, “Queering Dublin: Same-Sex Desire in Modern Ireland” at the end of April. Averill received the Mark Diamond Research Fund grant and is currently spending ten weeks conducting research in Dublin.

Rick Elliott graduated with his M.A. this May and will be pursuing his doctorate in History at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Rick’s Master’s thesis, “Through the Medium of Your Useful Paper: Newspapers and the Formation of American Capitalism, 1790-1819” was advised by Dr. Adam Malka. Rick also served as a History Dept. Senator to the GSA Senate.

Rachel Eshenour graduated with her Master's degree this May. Her thesis, “Unnatural Mothers: the Politics of Mothering, Hartford, CT 1865-1900” was advised by Dr. Susan Cahn. Rachel also presented her research at this year’s Plesur Conference. She is currently working as a substitute teacher for area schools and as a SAT tutor for the Princeton Review.

Rachel Lawton finished her second year in the PhD program. She served as the GHA Treasurer this past year. Kathryn will be presenting her paper “Negotiating Deinstitutionalization: Parents, the Public, and the State,” at the Society for Disabilities Studies annual conference in June. She also presented a variation of this research at this year’s Plesur Conference.

Qiong Liu was a new PhD student in the program this past year. Qiong presented “Saving the Nation Indirectly: the Collaboration of Wang Jingwei’s Regime” at this year’s Plesur Conference, and also presented her paper “The Production and Transformation of Local Homosexual Identities in Modern China, 1979-Present” at the UB Confucius Institute’s Public Symposium on Chinese Urbanism. This year, Qiong received the UB College of Arts & Sciences Dean’s Scholarship, as well as a fellowship for intensive language courses. She will be learning Japanese and visiting archives in China this summer.

Ling Ma (Ph.D. candidate) was awarded a fellowship to participate in the second annual workshop on “Chinese Cities in Comparative Perspective,” organized by the Si-mian Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at Shanghai’s East China Normal University. Ling was also awarded a UB Gender Institute Fellowship.
Elizabeth Masarik is a first year Master’s student coming to school after a few years’ break between undergrad and grad school. She got her Bachelor’s degree from the University of Texas, Austin, where she was a third generation Longhorn. She loves Buffalo enough that she recently bought a house here!

Justin Masucci completed the Master’s program this past semester. His M.A. thesis, “Unveiling Imperialism: U.S. Public Works Projects in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, 1915-1934” was advised by Dr. Dalia Muller. He presented a variation of his thesis at this year’s Plesur Conference. Justin will begin working towards his doctorate in History here at UB this coming fall.

Ph.D. student John Marsland finished his first year in the program this May. John was awarded a DAAD University Summer Course Scholarship, and will spend the month of July in Hamburg, Germany taking intensive language courses. John also plans to continue his involvement with local organizations in Buffalo and Rochester.

Richard Mikulski, Ph.D. candidate, is continuing work on his dissertation on British Academia. He presented his paper, “Professionalization of British Academia Life, 1825-1860: An Anglo-American Prospective,” at this year’s annual Midwest Conference on British Studies, hosted by the University of Toronto. Rick also served as the GHA Webmaster again this year.

Ph.D. student Jake Newsome passed his qualifying exams with distinction in May. Along with serving as the GHA President this past year, Jake was also the Graduate Assistant for UB’s Graduate Group for German & Austrian Studies. Jake was awarded one of ten spots in the German Historical Institute Summer Archival Seminar in Germany. This is a nationally competitive program for advanced graduate students in German historical studies. He will be spending two weeks in several German cities this June, learning to read old German script and maneuver German research facilities. Jake was awarded a Milton Plesur Dissertation Research Fellowship and an Anne Reilly Tiron Research Fellowship to conduct his research in the 2013-2014 academic year. He will spend this summer writing his dissertation prospectus (“Homosexuals after the Holocaust: Identity Politics & Social Activism in the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States, 1969 to 2000”) and then begin research in the fall.

Ph.D. candidate Steve Peraza was awarded a UB Humanities Institute Advanced PhD Fellowship for the 2012-2013 academic year. He was also awarded a UB College of Arts & Sciences Dissertation Fellowship for 2013-2014.

Betsy Plumb (Ph.D. candidate) was named UB’s first Public Humanities PhD Fellow given by the New York Council for the Humanities.

William “Billy” Pritchard (Ph.D. candidate) was awarded a Humanities Institute Advanced PhD Fellowship for 2012-2013. He was also awarded a Research Fellowship from the New Orleans Center for the Gulf South at Tulane University. Billy served as GHA Vice President this past year.

Marissa Rhodes completed her first year in the Ph.D. program this May. She received the College of Arts & Sciences Dean’s Scholarship this year, and also presented her paper, “Stranger’s Milk: Race-and-Class Contamination in the Transnational Practice of Wet-Nursing,” at this year’s Plesur Conference. Marissa will serve as treasurer for next year’s GHA.

Ph.D. candidate Kevin Ryan presented at a couple of conferences this past year. He presented his paper “My Children Feel Rejected by Their Church: the Conflict between Integration and Racial Justice at St. Philip Neri School in Chicago” at the 93rd Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association with the American Historical Association in New Orleans this January. In October, Kevin also presented “The Best Thing to Happen to Our Archdiocese: Parish ‘Twinning’ in the Archdiocese of Chicago, 1969-1977” at “The Cosmopolitan Metropolis: the Urban History Association Sixth Biennial Conference at Columbia University. Kevin also served as the Chief Steward of the Graduate Students Employees Union at UB.

Joshua Schroeder finished the first year of the Ph.D. program this semester. He presented his paper “The Pope’s Indians: Fears of a Catholic-Indian Alliance in Seventeenth Century Colonial America” at this year’s Plesur Conference. Josh will serve as the GHA President next year.

Katie Smysy was also a first year Ph.D. student this past year. In February, Katie attended the University of Toronto Graduate History Conference, where she presented “Interpretation and Mediation: Herbert Samuel and the Palestinian Mandate.”

Katie also presented her paper, “Unlikely Advocates? Evaluating Enthusiasm for British’s Palestine Mandate in the 1920s” at the Britain and the World Conference, held at the University of Texas at Austin in March. Katie was awarded travel grants to attend both conferences. Katie was elected GHA Secretary for next year.

Dr. Frankie Weaver completed her doctoral degree from UB’s History Department in February. Her dissertation, “Art against Apartheid: American and South African Cultural Activism and Networks of Solidarity,” is now available on ProQuest. Her husband, Michael, and their two children, Cassandra (4) and Michael (1) cheered her on at the commencement ceremony, where Frankie was hooded by her advisor, Dr. Susan Cahn.

Xiangli Ding completed his second year in the Ph.D. program. He presented his paper “A History of Mills in China during the Late Empire and Early 20th Century” at the New York Conference on Asian Studies at NYU in September. In April, he presented “Green as Civilized: Forest in South and Central Manchuria, 1860-1945” as part of UB Confucius Institute’s Public Symposium on Chinese Urbanism.

Ph.D. candidate Alexander Yarbrough has spent the past year researching in France on a Milton Plesur Dissertation Research Fellowship. He has spent his time transcribing and photographing manuscripts relating to cases of censorship in Paris. Next year, he’ll be back in Buffalo, organizing and writing his dissertation on censorship in 18th century France.

Paul Zwirecki is a fifth-year Ph.D. candidate. He presented at two conferences this year: the 2013 Roger Williams University Conference on Religion and the State (paper titled “Yankee Benevolence: Religion and the New York State Lunatic Asylum, 1838-1849”), and the 2012 Conference on New York State History (paper titled “A Spirit of Fanaticism: Antirevivalism and Religious Opposition in Antebellum New York”). Paul also won the 2012-2013 UB Graduate School Excellence in Teaching Award, Honorable Mention, and he was awarded a UB Humanities Institute Advanced Ph.D. Fellowship for 2013-2014. He has an article out for review titled, “Minister to a Mind Deranged: Religious Excitement and the New York State Lunatic Asylum, 1843-1850.” Paul got married last May.
conference presentations. We awarded $50 each to seven graduate students to help alleviate the costs of registration fees, food, or travel to conferences across the United States and Canada. (To read about our students’ research, see our grad student showcase, starting on page 10.) The GHA also helped promote student research across the Humanities and Social Sciences at UB by co-sponsoring conferences organized by a number of graduate student associations: Classics, English, Music, Linguistics, UB Society of Feminists, the Graduate Americanist Group, Comparative Literature, American Studies, Romance Languages & Literature, and Anthropology.

We had a number of projects that we began towards the end of the academic year, but we simply ran out of time and couldn’t complete them. But these plans are still on the books for next year’s GHA Executive Board. After a meeting with the Graduate Student Association Webmaster, I learned that the GSA has plans to launch a new, more user-friendly server for all GSA-sponsored websites in the fall. So, we’ll be waiting to update our own website once this new interface is implemented. The new GHA website will include an impressive list of research funding opportunities that will give our grad students an excellent starting point to find outside funding for their dissertation research. The website will also feature examples of qualifying exam reading lists so that students entering their third year can see what reading lists have looked like in the past. The GHA will also be able to integrate a Google Calendar into the new website, which will help everyone stay on top of GHA events. And of course, the New Student Guidebook and annual newsletter will be available for download on the website (the New Student Guidebook is already available online). Overall, the new website will be an excellent resource for our students, and I look forward to seeing those projects come to fruition.

I know I speak for all of the graduate students when I extend my appreciation to all of the History Department’s staff. All of our thanks go to Mary Robilotto, Gloria Paveljack, and Gloria Piotrowski for making our lives and graduate careers so much easier!

On top of coursework and life in general, many of our students have presented at conferences, conducted interesting research, and even won nationally-competitive grants, fellowships, and awards. This newsletter is a tribute to the hard work and diligence of our students. It’s been my pleasure to serve as GHA President this past year and to, hopefully, make grad life even just a little better for y’all.

– W. Jake Newsome