

News from the Director

By Alan McPherson



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Whew! I join many in the CENFAD and Temple communities in being relieved that yet another semester under COVID-19 conditions has come to an end. While many of us who teach are becoming used to doing so online and have even enjoyed it, the educational and social benefits of teaching in person are, if anything, more evident than ever!

I know that the 2020-2021 year has been particularly difficult for History graduate students because of the near-total restrictions placed on doing archival research. A few have cobbled together some research through online sources and rare appointment-only archival visits, but the progress for most has surely been halting and frustrating. It'll get better.

Please catch up on how the CENFAD community is doing [here](#).

Spring 2021 Colloquium

As in Fall 2020, the Spring 2021 lecture series took place entirely online as Zoom webinars. While it would have been a pleasure to host them in Philadelphia, we once again made a virtue

out of a necessity and hosted scholars from Europe and Asia. [Videos](#) of all the events below are now embedded in CENFAD's [lecture series page](#).

On January 25, we started the series with a discussion of an edited book, *Whistleblowing Nation: The History of National Security Disclosures and the Cult of State Secrecy*. Editors **Kaeten Mistry** from the University of East Anglia and **Hannah Gurman** from NYU-Gallatin joined us to discuss the definition and impact of whistleblowers in the U.S. government. Former CENFAD Director **Richard Immerman**, a contributor to *Whistleblowing Nation*, offered a commentary.

Power to the People: How Open Technological Innovation is Arming Tomorrow's Terrorists was the title of the book and talk on February 4 by our next guest, **Audrey Kurth Cronin** of American University. The book uses historical context to anticipate how terrorists will use new digital and other technologies.

Almost two weeks later, CENFAD “went” to Taiwan to hear from **Ming-sho Ho**, a sociologist at National Taiwan University. On February 17, Ho discussed the fieldwork he did with groups opposing China’s repression, many of whose members are now being imprisoned for their peaceful activism in favor of democracy.

Our next guest author did not produce an academic work even though he earned a PhD in divinity. On March 10, **Alexs Thompson**, a native of Philadelphia, discussed *I’ll Go: War, Religion, and Coming Home, from Cairo to Kansas City*, his memoir of joining the War on Terror for over a decade, living and working in the Middle East with self-described fundamentalists in Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Afghanistan, and numerous countries in Central and East Africa.

Two weeks later, on March 24, celebrated historian **Margaret MacMillan** joined CENFAD to discuss her new book, *War: How Conflict Shaped Us*. The event was an open Q&A rather than a talk, with many questions also coming from the CENFAD community. MacMillan, a professor of history at the University of Toronto and Oxford University, argued that war has not only drawbacks but also benefits such as medical advances and social change.

Finally, on April 8, Professor of History and Geography Studies at Queen Mary University **Simon Reid-Henry** joined us from Norway to give a talk on his new book, *Empire of Democracy: The Remaking of the West since the Cold War, 1971-2017*. His talk emphasized the unusual historical achievements of Western liberal democracy and the dangers it has faced in the last half-century.

Spring 2021 CENFAD-sponsored Lecturers

As in the Fall, CENFAD again encouraged other instructors in the College of Liberal Arts to invite CENFAD-relevant scholars to speak in their courses, sponsored by CENFAD. Five professors took us up on our offer and hosted seven Zoom sessions on topics ranging from the geopolitics of the Horn of Africa, to US military culture in World War I, to the current state of Indian democracy.

Looking forward to Fall 2021

As of early May 2021, Temple University has not given its institutes and centers official guidance as to whether they will be able to hold inside public events on campus, and so it is too early to announce a slate of Fall 2021 speakers. Moreover, I will be on sabbatical in the fall, which will make on-campus events even harder. But I will still be helming CENFAD, and the lecture series will take place, though it is likely to again be largely online in the fall and hopefully completely in person in Spring 2022. We will surely know more as summer progresses.

Spring 2021 prizes

In March, the following four graduate students won CENFAD research awards:

- **Graydon Dennison** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship in Force and Diplomacy in the amount of \$5,000 to do research in New York, Connecticut, Florida, and Washington, in support of his dissertation on early-20th century Panama.
- **Mike Fischer** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship in Force and Diplomacy in the amount of \$1,400 to research in archives in New York and Washington, D.C., in support of his dissertation on the US military intervention in Russia.
- **Mathias Fuelling** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship in Force and Diplomacy in the amount of \$1,500 for research in archives in Utah and the East Coast for his dissertation, “The Historical Romance of Czechoslovak Communism.”
- **Ryan Langton** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship in Force and Diplomacy in the amount of \$1,200 for research in archives in South Carolina for his dissertation on the trans-Appalachian frontier in the 18th century.

Some of the planned research may be delayed due to the pandemic.

...and Our First Immerman Fellow!

In addition to the winners above, CENFAD anointed in Spring 2021 its first ever Immerman Fellow, PhD student **Ethan Cohen!**

The Immerman Fellowship Fund, named for the former Director of CENFAD, Richard Immerman, is an endowed fund that still needs funding for future students. Please consider making a contribution in support of our students and in honor of Dr. Immerman.

Gifts can be made online at www.giving.temple.edu. When selecting a funding option, scroll down to “Other” as an open box and type “Immerman Research Award – 511097.” Gifts can also be mailed to Temple University, Institutional Advancement, P.O. Box 827651, Philadelphia, PA 19182-7651. Please write “Immerman Research Award - 511097” in the memo.

Congratulations to all our prize-winners!

CENFAD Workshop on Latin America

On May 14, 2021, CENFAD will hold its first workshop under my directorship. “Latin America and the World: Globalization and Its Discontents” is the theme. Its purpose is to advance the research projects of PhD students working on dissertations on inter-American relations or Latin American foreign policy by pairing them with their dream mentors.

The workshop will take place from 8:15 to 4pm EST online and will be open to the public. You can join by [following this link](#). A few days before the workshop, the CENFAD web page will also feature the students’ papers.

The workshop will feature the following students and mentors:

Fionntan O’Hara, London School of Econ., History, mentored by Dr. **Jussi Hanhimaki**

(Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva)

Jamie Shenk, Oxford University, Sociology, mentored by Dr. **Alisha Holland**

(HarvardUniversity)

Maxime Minne, George Washington University, History, mentored by Dr. **Mark Lawrence**

(UT-Austin/LBJ Library)

William Schwaller, Temple University, Art History, mentored by Dr. **Camila Maroja** (CSU-

Fullerton)

John Kennedy, Cornell University, Romance Studies, mentored by Dr. **Hillel Soifer** (Temple

University)

Fernando Miramontes, PUC-São Paulo, History, mentored by Dr. **Robert Karl**

(Temple/Minerva Schools)

Alexandre Quieroz, University of São Paulo, Social History, mentored by Dr. **Petra Goedde**

(Temple University)

Thanks to the Davis Fellow

Finally, I want to heartily thank Davis Fellow Josh Stern, who administered CENFAD during an academic year when everything changed. He showed aplomb in quickly figuring out how to transform our lecture series into Zoom webinars, and he further brought *Strategic Visions* into the digital age.

Next year’s Davis Fellow will be Casey VanSise, whose interests center on U.S.-Latin American relations and especially Panama, Peru, and Bolivia in the 1970s. Welcome to CENFAD, Casey!