Temple University College of Liberal Arts | Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy

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News from the Director

By Alan McPherson

- **Save the Date: Gettysburg Conference, April 6th, 2024**
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This fall semester, CENFAD and its community were back to post-pandemic normal, having all our activities on campus and many of our graduate students engaged in overseas research and writing. We had especially well-attended talks, and our partnerships on campus continued to thrive. Our big project was the preparation of a one-day conference in April. See below!

Save the Date: "All Roads Lead to Gettysburg" Conference, April 6

On Saturday, April 6, 2024, CENFAD will host a one-day conference on the Battle of Gettysburg at Temple's Center City campus titled "All Roads Lead to Gettysburg." With the help of my colleague, **Gregory Urwin**, we have set out several themes, from commanders to Lincoln to public history, and we are currently inviting about 15 scholars, from seasoned veterans to promising students, to present. Temple-associated faculty and students will be chairing all the panels. Thanks to our co-sponsors in the **History Department, the Political Science Department, and the Society for Military History**.

Please spread the word: all panels will be free and open to the public, and breakfast and lunch will be provided. Details to follow in early 2024!

Fall 2023 Lecture Series

CENFAD's talks are now broadcast simultaneously on Zoom, from which audiences can ask questions, and the link is on the posters advertising the talks. Videos of all the events below are now embedded in CENFAD's lecture series page.[1] This semester, our six speakers gave their presentations in person.

Our first guest was **Aaron Sullivan** of Rider University, a Temple PhD who presented on his book, *The Disaffected: Britain's Occupation of Philadelphia During the American Revolution.* On September 8, Sullivan visited a classroom and told a Weigley Room audience that the likely position of most Philadelphians, when facing war and occupation, was not to side with either belligerent. Instead, they sought to protect themselves or to benefit from whichever force held sway over the city. To this group, the revolution was "neither a glorious cause nor an unnatural rebellion but a tragic disaster, best avoided."

Our next guest, on September 21, came out of a collaboration with the **Feinstein Center for American Jewish History**. **Eric Alterman**, a historian, journalist, and CUNY distinguished professor of english and journalism at Brooklyn College, discussed his new book, *We Are Not One: A History of America's Fight over Israel.* In an interview with Feinstein Director **Lila Berman**, Alterman explained American Jews' evolution of views toward Israel, from paying little attention to it before the 1967 Six-Day War to making it a major component of their identity and even allying with conservative Christians.

Next up was **Mel Leffler**, professor emeritus of history at the University of Virginia and author of *Confronting Saddam Hussein: George W. Bush and the Invasion of Iraq.*

[1] Editor's Note: Due to ongoing technical difficulties, some of our lectures are not currently available online. Please check the website in the future for updates.

On October 9, Leffler, based on his numerous interviews with Bush administration officials, argued that "fear, power, hubris, and administrative dysfunction shaped decisions." His "fear" argument, suggesting that Bush officials sincerely considered themselves to be in a Pearl Harbor-like emergency in Iraq, caused the liveliest debate between Leffler and his audience.

On November 6, Rowan history professor **Debbie Sharnak** talked about her own new book, *Of Light and Struggle: Social Justice, Human Rights, and Accountability in Uruguay*. During their country's dictatorship from 1973 to 1985, Uruguayans suffered the highest rate of political prisoners in the world. Sharnak focused on activists, transnational movements, and policymakers who worked together—and sometimes against each other—to move the country back to democratic rule.

On November 16, **Beth Bailey**, a former Temple history professor now at the University of Kansas, discussed the U.S. Army's response to racial conflict within its ranks. Her book, *An Army Afire: How the U.S. Army Confronted Its Racial Crisis in the Vietnam Era*, recounts Army concerns that such conflict would undermine war aims, especially in Vietnam. She found military leaders "surprisingly creative in confronting demands for racial justice."

Finally, on November 29, **Dina Fainberg**, professor of modern history at City, University of London, came to campus to promote *Cold War Correspondents: Soviet and American Reporters on the Ideological Frontiers*.

She reminded us that, "in an age of mutual acrimony and closed borders, journalists were among the few individuals who crossed the Iron Curtain." Both sides operated from distinctive sets of truth created by their cultures and their institutions.

Fall 2023 Prizes

The following graduate students won CENFAD research awards:

- **Ethan Cohen** won a John Votaw Endowed Research Grant of $2,200 for research in Madrid.
- **Mathias Fuelling** won a $1,000 Marvin Wachman Fellowship for travel to Prague for the 2023 Summer School in Economic History run by the Institute of History of the Czech Academy of Sciences.
- **Steps Kostes** won a Jeffrey Bower Endowed Research Fellowship of $600 for research at various Pennsylvania Archives.
- **Ryan Langton** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship of $1,300 for research at the New York Historical Society and the New York Public Library.
- **Lucas Martins** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship of $1,800 for research in Colombia and Brazil.
- **Andrew Santora** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship of $2,000 for research in Germany.
- **Samantha Sproviero** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship of $650 for German script course fees.
- **Casey VanSise** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship of $2,100 for research in Bolivia.

This is the second-highest number of students earning a research award since I took over CENFAD (the highest was Spring 2023). These numbers demonstrate the CENFAD community's continuing dedication to archival research, including in international archives, and promises a bumper crop of high-level dissertations in the years to come.

In addition, the following students received CENFAD funds to present their work at academic conferences:

- **Carrilee Bryan**, at the Urban History Association conference in Pittsburgh.
- **Amanda Summers**, at the American Historical Association conference in San Francisco.

Congratulations to all!

Emerging Scholar Award

Thanks to the generosity of **Todd Davis** (Temple History PHD), CENFAD funds a yearly Emerging Scholar Graduate Award, a scholarship for applicants to the Temple University MA Program in History. The purposes of the award are to recruit and support MA-level students interested in diplomatic and military history and to do so especially among underrepresented candidates, including women.

Each year, one awardee receives $12,000 in tuition remission over a two-year period (covering about one 3-credit course per semester at in-state rates). If the awardee's GPA is below a 3.5 after his/her first year of studies, second-year funding is subject to review.

The competition is now open for the 2024-2025 academic year, and the deadline to apply to the Temple MA Program in History is February 15, 2024. There is no application procedure. All students admitted to the MA program, including the MA Concentration in Public History, will automatically be considered.

Spring 2024 Lecture Series Schedule

Come join us for another great lineup! All lectures will be held in the Weigley Room, Gladfelter 914, at 4:30pm.

Thursday, January 25: **Michael Brenes**, author of *For Might and Right: Cold War Defense Spending and the Remaking of American Democracy*

Thursday, February 15: **Jessica Kim**, author of *Imperial Metropolis: Los Angeles, Mexico, and the Borderlands of American Empire, 1865-1941*

Wednesday, February 28: **Elisabeth Leake**, author of *Afghan Crucible: The Soviet Invasion and the Making of Modern Afghanistan*

Thursday, March 21: **Fabian Klose**, author of *In the Case of Humanity: A History of Humanitarian Intervention in the Long Nineteenth Century*

Wednesday, April 3: **Greg Daddis**, author of *Pulp Vietnam: War and Gender in Cold War Men's Adventure Magazines*

Wednesday, April 17: **Stephanie Freeman**, author of *Dreams for a Decade: International Nuclear Abolitionism and the End of the Cold War*

Note from the Davis Fellow

I have had a wonderful time during the past semester working as the Thomas J. Davis Fellow for CENFAD. Since this position provides a bit of relief from the responsibilities of teaching and grading, it has offered many new challenges to fill my days. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to work with the great scholars who continue to participate in our annual lecture series. I would like to personally offer my thanks to Dr. Aaron Sullivan, Dr. Eric Alterman, Dr. Melvyn Leffler, Dr. Debbie Sharnak, Dr. Beth Bailey, and Dr. Dina Fainberg for sharing their research with our community. It was a magnificent experience working with all of these individuals. You can read interviews with Dr. Debbie Sharnak and Dr. Beth Bailey in this edition of *Strategic Visions* where I discuss their recent lectures and books. I also have two unique conversations featuring long-time CENFAD community members, including former CENFAD director Dr. Richard Immerman, and current Temple professor Dr. Gregory Urwin available in this newsletter. Dr. Immerman spoke with me about planning and executing the Walter LaFeber Memorial Conference sponsored by Cornell University this past October, while Dr. Urwin spoke with me about our upcoming CENFAD conference, "All Roads Lead to Gettysburg," and the continued historical interest in the Battle of Gettysburg. There are also three book reviews at the end of this edition that heavily center on Latin American foreign relations, but the exemplify some of the great work and thinking completed by our graduate students. This semester provided unique opportunities to interview scholars, plan a conference, and generally assist Dr. McPherson with running CENFAD. I look forward to the opportunity to continue working in this position in the spring semester. Remember to share news with CENFAD so we can share your accomplishments in the spring edition!

Sincerely,

Joseph Johnson

A Conversation with Dr. Debbie Sharnak

In the following interview, I speak with Dr. Debbie Sharnak about her new book, Of Light and Struggle, which covers the Uruguayan human rights struggles of the 1970s and beyond, examining how transitional justice has shaped political conversations in that country. We also discuss her own work in human rights efforts and her interests in transitional justice.

Joseph Johnson: I thought that your work is a little different from what we typically see at CENFAD, especially with its focus on non-state actors and non-government organizations. I thought this would be a refreshing topic for our newsletter.

Debbie Sharnak: Well, thank you for thinking of me.

JJ: Thank you for writing such an awesome book. I just finished it the other day. I wanted to say also, I know I told you in-person that your presentation was fantastic. But, reading the book solidified that it was a great presentation. It felt like I was reading a 250 page supplementary text.

DS: That's very weird to hear you say. I know that the book is out in the world. So it's very weird still for someone to say "I actually read it." As you know, and as you will continue to know, a project like this lives in your head like its on a screen, but only three people ever see it for a long period of time.

JJ: There were time where I realized that you really covered all the content in your topic.

DS: Great. That means that it was perfect.

JJ: So, my first question is, how did you come to focus on Uruguay and its struggles with transitional justice [TJ]?

DS: Absolutely. I had a career working in human rights non-profits after my undergraduate experience, and I was lucky enough to find myself working at the International Center for Transitional Justice, or ICTJ, as one of my first full-time jobs after college. At the time it was a very new, exciting field to be in and is in many ways still. This particular moment was even more exciting because the organization was expanding. There was a lot of

interest in the potential for transitional justice and the broader field of human rights, as well as peace building. I felt like I got to be on the front lines of that.

DS: The organization as a whole dealt with cases all over the world. So thinking really, really globally. And they had offices in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. But there was a particular Latin American history to ICTJ. Some of the founders were from South Africa, and therefore heavily influenced by the truth commission experience there. By the time I arrived at ICTJ it was run by Juan Mendez, who was a survivor of political imprisonment and torture in Argentina. And of course, the case of Argentine, in respect to its own truth commission was very foundational to the field. I was in the research unit, run by Pablo de Grace, a Colombian philosopher. But he also had a lot of practical experience in the field. So, having been a Latin American studies minor at my undergrad institution, and influences at ICTJ, kept a particular focus on Latin America.

So, while I was there, there was a referendum that took place in Uruguay in 2009. Just to give a tiny bit of background on this, the military dictatorship officially lasted from 1973 to 1985. In December 1986, there was an amnesty law that passed. This basically gave anybody that was in the police or military immunity for any crimes that had been committed during the dictatorship. In many ways this was not uncommon during transitions. With these kind of blanket amnesty laws, particularly with the Southern Cone transitions back to democratic rule in the late Cold War, some held out better than others.

There was a procedure in place that basically said you could challenge any law as long as 25% of the population signed a petition asking for it, which is a pretty incredible, direct democratic procedure. It was used in 1989 to attempt to overturn the amnesty law, but it failed. And again, when I was at ICTJ in 2009 a second attempt failed. This is actually interesting to think about, right? In 1989, when I felt that in some way it might have made a bit more sense, but in 2009 there were 2 fundamental components that really shifted people's hopes about it being able to succeed and overturn the amnesty law. One of them being that Uruguay was under a liberal government which was a leftist coalition for the first time. The second kind of support is international. Thinking about the changing norms that Kathryn Sikkink write about in the Justice Cascade, and the rise of holding people accountable for massive crimes that had been committed. So there's real hope that it would succeed. Yet, in 2009, it also failed. I was at ICTJ when it happened and there was a lot of shock. Soon thereafter, I went to graduate school. But it stuck in my mind, this question about why do societies, especially in a context of a seemingly progressive society in the context of human rights accountability, when it goes before

democratic vote, people don't vote for that.

I was going to graduate school for history to study the history of human rights at an international level. When I was finally looking for a dissertation topic and trying to figure out where I wanted to focus on for that project, this came back to me. But when you're a historian, you don't look at 2009 to figure out the answer to what was happening in 2009. You have to go back to look at what happened during the 1989 referendum, and if you look at the '89 referendum, you have to look more broadly at how discourses in human rights and accountability shifted. It's a long explanation, but it was really my work in the field that I wanted to come back to, to answer some of those questions about human rights and accountability.

> But it stuck in my mind, this question about why do societies, especially in a context of a seemingly progressive society in the context of human rights accountability, when it goes before democratic vote, people don't vote for that.

JJ: I can only imagine that being on the ground and working with a human rights organization is a very different mode of interacting with human rights than academia. Is this something you're still involved with in any way?

DS: Yeah, yeah. First of all, I was in a very specific unit at ICTJ, which probably informed my opinion because I wasn't looking at graduate school after undergrad. I was definitely not convince that I was going to get a PhD. I was looking at a master's in public policy because I was in a really specific unit where, because it was in many ways an activist organization, we were supposed to work with governments and non-profit actors. It was organized both regionally and thematically for the bulk of the organization. So there were not all these regional offices. But there was a unit on all these different TJ mechanisms. There was one on trials, one on reparations, and one on moralization. There was one on the truth commissions. So it was organized thematically in the New York office where I worked.

And then there was the research unit, which was not only supposed to produce research to inform our units within ICTJ, but they also did a lot of UN policy because the UN for the first time was taking up transitional justice and writing handbooks for it. So, I was able to see how informed scholarship could have an impact on policy on the ground. That was a really exciting place to be. I looked at what the lawyers at the organization were doing, and the PhDs, and I realized I wanted to do that. So that's how I decided to go that route.

Obviously, I'm less involved. Throughout my PhD, I did quite a bit of different consultancy work. The pulls of a full-time tenure track job, which I'm wildly fortunate to have, also means I have a lot less time for outside opportunities. But the main non-profit work I do now is as an analyst for Freedom House's "Freedom in the World Report." I've been doing that since 2014, so I'm getting close to my tenth year on that. I also do some volunteer work for Amnesty International as co-chair for their South America group.

JJ: I can imagine that a tenure track job pulls most of your attention. But, continuing on the topic of transitional justice, what do you think are the lessons we can learn from these pursuits in an era of increasing authoritarianism in global politics?

DS: There are lots of lessons. I'll just put two on the table for now. One is what I end my book with, which I think has a lot of resonance. There's increasingly scholarship about this in other contexts and disciplines, but it's how we think about the ordering of transitional justice as a field, and the fundamental phrase 'transitional.' The term came out of the transition in South America and Eastern Europe, and fundamentally, South Africa as well. It was all about the immediate aftermath of either state violence or genocide. And what the case of Uruguay tells us is that how we implement various transitional justice mechanisms. Mechanisms need to be thought of in a broader sense, and not just an immediate aftermath because when societies are most capable of addressing specific human rights concerns doesn't need to be confined to that immediate aftermath.

What I'm trying to bring to the table is that there needs to actually be more studies of this from a historical vantage point because I think that there is increased need. There's a ton of scholarship about this from sociology and political science, but the field of history has not really gone very deep looking at histories of transitional justice. And so more histories that look at this trend, specifically transitional justice, or individual mechanisms is a great topic for many future dissertations and books. We get a lot from looking at the coding and ordering of transitional mechanisms through amazing political scientists like Tricia Olson and Kathryn Sikkink. They're working on this. But, we haven't seen it in depth from a historian's perspective because it is so recent. I think there is a lot to be gained from the field of history addressing transitional justice broadly. I'm going to stop there because I can go on for a long time about lessons, but looking at the ordering of and implementation of accountability mechanisms, and adding the historian's perspective a very important.

JJ: Transitional justice is something I have been interested in with my own historical research, and I think your usage of Uruguay is very useful for demonstrating the breadth of TJ. It makes me think of the capacious definitions of human rights rhetoric

in Uruguay and how you show that it is constantly expanding and contracting according to different political realities. It just shows that these concepts, TJ and human rights, need to be interpreted more broadly.

DS: That's absolutely rights. How we look at this as a political tool, versus just a technical one, is important. Thinking about the very end of *The Justice Cascade* after I left the ICTJ. One of the major terms of the field, from a practitioner perspective was how "transitional justice" was starting to take on the work of all of these other fields, like the failures of peace building and the failures of development because of international involvement. If peace building isn't working, how do we use transitional justice to build peace? There was a big criticism of the field becoming too capacious and trying to do too much. I think there was a turn back to say that we need to look at it more narrowly in context, which is true, right? We don't want TJ to be a substitute for failed development policies, because they are not using accountability mechanisms.

If peace building isn't working, how do we use transitional justice to build peace?

But I think you're right in terms of us thinking broadly about the term. Also, being able to realize when it's important to think narrowly, and to also think about the very real political context in which accountability mechanisms are used and how they interact with basic needs and human security. It's not that they don't mean anything, and not that they shouldn't be done eventually. But how we think about the political context in which they are going to be utilized to prevent backlash.

That's one of the things that we've seen is a huge backlash to accountability activities. In some ways, the last 10 years tell us that because there's been the greatest advances in accountability over the last 10 years. You'll also see the rise right now of these far right regimes that are trying to roll back those advances.

JJ: I really want to know what it was like working with such a broad international archival base. You use interviews, state archives, NGO records, and religious organizations to name a few. It seems that your collection is almost as chaotic as their attempt to form a political coalition in Uruguay.

DS: Yes. Well, it definitely proves challenging when trying to put it into a narrative. I was trying to look at some of the debates and arguments, and also points of convergence about human rights. I felt like it was really important to have a broad base of archival support. I had done a bit of training both in Latin American history as well as international history, so I was able to look at a lot of different

NGOs across the United States, even in Wisconsin, New York, and DC. And Duke University has a great human rights collection. This all provided a robust archive for starting in the US part of the research.

And then, of course, in Latin America I also wanted to make sure that I was looking at a lot of different organizations there. As you might imagine, it's harder to find stuff during the dictatorship, because people didn't keep very good records out of fear. They could be a cause to be thrown in jail. But, especially in the post-dictatorship period, there were really good records to follow.

I tell this story sometimes when people ask about one of the organizations where I spent a lot of time looking at their records. They have somewhat of an archive. But for the most part, they said "Here's our filing cabinet. Feel free to go through it." It was just kind of a mess. Labeling and figuring out where it went was a really formative experience in terms of being able to see all of the diverse efforts, particularly around the referendum.

The best stuff I found was actually at the Rockefeller Archives Center in Sleepy Hollow, New York. Because that is where the foundation archives are because that's where the Ford Foundation archives are. I was able to cross-reference those materials with some of the lawyers at the time, which made a great base.

I'm hoping what I did is, without diving into any one group in too much detail, is provide a flavor for the type of debates and different types of advocacy, and how they transformed over time; but also, how they fundamentally interacted with one another because so many of these groups were working with each other and diverging at key points.

JJ: I thought it came across effectively. Trying to capture the dynamics of this muddled human rights effort that was operating on so many levels. One of the things I found interesting throughout your book is the focus on the absence of women in your source material. I found it interesting that you constantly called our attention back to that reality in your book.

DS: Thank you. That's one of my big points that I try to talk about with my students, and that I feel is really important in the scholarship. Silences and what the silences tell us as well. I'm not the first historian, as Trouillot is the most well-known, but that resonated with me in terms of trying to think about silence. Not only the absence of voices, which is very prominent among women, but also other actors from underrepresented groups at key moments during the dictatorship. Also thinking about when people are or are not invoking human rights as part of their strategic objective.

JJ: Thank you! I found it refreshing to acknowledge the silences in that way. Now to shift gears a bit. I heard

that you have a bit of a history and connection with CENFAD. Could you explain how you ended up involved with CENFAD?

DS: Absolutely! I am a long admirer of CENFAD. I first heard about it because when I was a senior in undergrad. One of my advisors at Vassar College was Katherine Hite, who worked on issues of memory and human rights. The other was Bob Brigham, who is a scholar of Vietnamese history and US Vietnamese relations. He was a big admirer of CENFAD, and very close with Richard Immerman. So in my senior year he encouraged me to apply for the Sherman prize, which I was really grateful to do. That was my first communication with Richard.

At the time, I was still at the ICTJ, but I was becoming curious about doing a PhD. Richard was really gracious and invited me down to the conference that Will Hitchcock and Petra Goedde were organizing, which resulted in an edited edition called *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History*. They workshopped the papers with scholars like Mark Bradley, Kelly Shannon, and Sarah Snyder was there, if I'm not mistaken. There were a lot that were amazing. I was working in the field, but now working with people that were looking at the origins of transnational human rights movements. It was incredibly impactful. They invited me down to participate as a commentator that spring at the Barnes Conference, too.

So, when I moved back to South Jersey in 2019, Alan and I connected and he gave a book talk at Rowan University. He talked about *The Ghosts of Sheridan Circle* at the Holly Bush Institute. I've stayed in touch with Richard Immerman, and I've been on the CENFAD mailing list for fifteen years now!

When I started teaching a senior seminar and having students write really great papers, I have always encouraged my students to send them in for the Sherman Prize. I don't know how many have and did not get it, but one of the stars in our program applied and was awarded the Sherman Prize last year! Kaitlyn Ley, on her paper about Reagan's policies in Guatemala. I don't know how many second generation awardees there are in the history of the Sherman prize, but it was very special and our department was extremely proud of her.

JJ: That's fantastic. I'm so glad that you've been able to have such a full circle, and longstanding relationship with CENFAD. We greatly appreciated you spending time with us, and several people complimented your presentation afterwards. My colleagues who do not study Latin America came up to me afterwards saying how they loved the lecture. So thank you continuing to share your academic achievements with us.

DS: I feel very grateful to have had that opportunity. It was a very full circle moment. Since that conference was in 2008, and a few

years after college, to come back and talk my book was a surreal experience, but also very special. And now, being able to connect with graduate students and rope you guys into Rowan stuff is special. We'll make this happen. We'll create a bridge between the two places.

JJ: Thank you so much for doing this interview with me. I really appreciate your time to meet with me so I can share this conversation with our community.

A Conversation with Dr. Gregory Urwin

I speak with Dr. Gregory Urwin about CENFAD's upcoming "All Roads Lead to Gettysburg" Conference, which will be hosted April 6th, 2024 at the Temple Center City Campus. Dr. Urwin shares his experience in the field, how the conference came to be, and why Gettysburg remains a popular topic.

Joseph Johnson: Thank you for joining me this afternoon to discuss the upcoming conference. For starters, what inspired you to do this conference now?

Gregory Urwin: Well, Dr. McPherson offered me the opportunity about a year ago. He had not topic in mind, but I thought that this would be a natural fit. I've been helping to lead the ROTC annual staff ride, which most of its iterations goes to Gettysburg. So, this is a subject that I focus on annually.

And it's a place that is the Mecca for all Civil War buffs. That's why I thought the title of the conference, "All Roads Lead to Gettysburg," would be apt. If you're interested in the Civil War, and you have the means, you will get there sooner or later. Being a crossroads, of course, is what makes it part of a battlefield. Where the two armies were maneuvering in South Central Pennsylvania, late June and early July of 1863, all roads, indeed, led to Gettysburg. That's what brought them into contact and allowed them to concentrate against each other fairly quickly.

Gettysburg was the biggest battle of the American Civil War, the biggest battle ever fought on North American soil. Because of its size and some of its dramatic elements, many view it as the war's turning point. The so-called high watermark of the Confederacy, even though the Civil went on for nearly two more years and the Union came close to succumbing to war weariness during the following year, due to the record breaking casualties that occurred; especially in Northern Virginia, where Grant and Lee squared off against each other. But still, Gettysburg has this appeal – for a lot of white southerners, especially those descended from Confederate bears. There's this

"What if?" factor, this penalizing question that we have Faulkner to thank for when he wrote "Absalom, my Absalom, for every Southern boy it's the afternoon of July the 3rd, 1863."

The guns were roaring, pounding Federal Troops on the cemetery. Rage and pickets. Thirteen thousand are about to step off, and if you're there, you're thinking "Maybe this time we'll be able to go all the way. Open road to Washington."

Gettysburg was the biggest battle of the American Civil War, the biggest battle ever fought on North American soil. Because of its size and some of its dramatic elements, many view it as the war's turning point.

It's like the many ways the theme of the movie Gettysburg. So even though you know Gettysburg was not a decisive battle, it's imbued with that kind of mystique. But the fact that it was so big and so bloody makes it important enough. It was the Union Army of the Potomac, which were beaten so regularly by Robert E. Lee, which probably did its best fighting at Gettysburg. That reorientation took away some of the inferiority complex acquired at places like Second Bull Run, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville.

But, I should also that it's important as are all these other history and memory project. There's been an awful lot of scholarship done on Gettysburg. It's the most written about battle in American history. For instance, micro-histories focus on certain phases and certain units. Little Round Top gets a lot of coverage; Pickett's Charge gets all that coverage. There are people interested in what a young brigadier general named George A. Custard is doing on the Union right flank late on July third.

In recent decades, though, the scholarship has moved in directions other than conventional military history. You know there are books on Gettysburg in history and memory, books on the meaning of Gettysburg, books on memorialization, especially now Confederate memorialization, and books on Gettysburg after the war and what happened to that town. Books looking at the various factors that combine to make it a tourist trap for the history-minded. Some people have looked at the free blacks of Gettysburg, and other have looked at the role that women played, or the roles that women had imposed on them by the invading armies.

So I just thought that it's popular. Hopefully it will draw people. What would you do if you threw a conference and nobody came? There's also interesting work to be done on it. You could put together a conference that would please the traditionalists, including the legions of buffs, but also one that would get into a lot of freshly broken ground, causing people to contemplate questions they had never contemplated before.

JJ: This might beleaguer your point, but I wonder. One hundred and sixty years later, you've point to all of the reasons that Gettysburg is still so popular and so present in the American mind. But considering there has also been one-hundred and sixty years of scholarship on the battle, what kind of opportunities does Gettysburg specifically offer to widen our perspectives? Do you see a bottom to the mine of Gettysburg sources?

GU: No, I don't because there are some aspects of Gettysburg that have been done to death, and there are others that have been lightly touched on, or not at all. I mean, there are any number of books about the iron per day, or on the same five regiments from the northwest, with those who dressed a little different than the rest of their comrades, and were considered part of a fighting elite of the Union of the August Potomac. And there are other units that gave the last full measure of devotion that haven't gotten much coverage. There are all kinds of different ways now to attack the regimental history, which has been a standard, and Civil War studies going back to the 1880s. Veterans, once they started retiring, began writing up the histories of their units, trying to make sure they got all the credit that they deserve for their various feats of valor.

It is possible to do demographic studies. Take a Confederate unit and try and get a grip on how many of its members actually own slaves, or were related to slave owners. The connection between slavery and the Lost Cause could take a unit, like the First Minnesota, which suffered close to 80% casualties at Gettysburg. You could these regiments which were recruited on a local basis with all the members in a population pool from the same county, or two or three counties. Some from a single town, or a single ward in New York City. You could take one of these units that gained all this glory by emulating themselves, and then look at the community whence it sprang in the years following the Civil War and try to gauge the impact of that. With the shortage of males of a certain, how that impacted the female population. Would there have been more localities open to bringing in immigrants to remedy labor shortages? Stuff like that. So Gettysburg could be used as a springboard for all kinds of studies.

JJ: I think you present a litany of options that could be pursued. But I also think you highlight something interesting in your comment about how some aspects have been 'done to death.' With that in mind, are there other significant battles from the Civil War that you think demand attention similar to what Gettysburg receives?

GU: Well, some weren't as big. Gettysburg was important because it repulsed the second invasion. In and of itself, that's significant. You could say Fredericksburg where they repulsed attacks by the army of the Potomac, but the army wasn't crushed. It was able to be defeated in December and come back in May. I guess the taking of Richmond.

All of these things are intrinsically interesting to me, being a military historian. And again, people have done books on the German troops, who were the biggest immigrant group to supply troops to the Union army. They were the biggest group to enter the United States in the two decades before the Civil War, they outnumbered the Irish by about two-to-one, and a lot of them were in the part of the Potomac called the Eleventh Corps. They were routed at Chancellorsville and then they were routed again at Gettysburg, which led to all kinds of ethnic slurs, like being called 'The Flying Dutchmen.' It had an impact on the German-American community. They went to war because they came over thinking the United States is the last, best hope for liberty, and they weren't going to let the fire be snuffed out by a slaveholders rebellion. They also thought that this would gain them more acceptance with the WASP population, but instead they had some rough time and end up being mocked and ridiculed.

> One of the neat things about working with the Civil War is the high level of literacy, which was up to ninety percent among Northern soldiers. There is no lack of documentation, new stuff keeps surfacing when people pull a trunk out of their attic.

So a lot of German American withdrew within their ethnic communities, and that remained the case down to World War One. It's one reason why German-Americans faced so much suspicion and persecution during WWI, not only because the hatred that the administration generated through propaganda for all thing German, but they had strong cultural connections within their communities.

So, there is one way you can use the Civil War battles to try to understand broader social and political developments in the post-Civil War years. People have done imaginative things. A book on the Battle of Wilson's Creek, early in the Civil War, and the different regiments made from different towns, and different localities. These authors dissected these regiments into their local components and wrote the battle from that perspective, which told us thing about the nature of antibiotics and what happened at Wilson's Creek.

You get tens of thousands of people and together and thousands of documents are being generated.

Reports from the army level, all the way down to the regiment or the battery level. And then a lot of these guys are writing letters, or keeping diaries. Some of them write memoirs afterwards. One of the neat things about working with the Civil War is the high level of literacy, which was up to ninety percent among Northern soldiers. There is no lack of documentation, new stuff keeps surfacing when people pull a trunk out of their attic.

I think it will remain a field of fruitful research. I had a student defend an interesting dissertation last spring, and I've got another Civil War dissertation in the works. People are interested, not just scholars. Regular folks will read something they're interested in. They will devour it.

JJ: Why do you think the Civil War maintains that very broad public appeal? Is it just because it involves United States citizens in a particular way? Or the mythologizing of events?

GU: Oh, there are a lot of things. The fact that it was fought here. People live near these battlefields, or live near places where other things happened. And the fact that the generation that fought it left such a record. The generation that fought it became the first interpreters of the way, and weren't just putting out publications. What we today call Memorial Day was Decoration Day back then. Those ceremonies honoring the Union and Confederates. Civil War veterans were happy to tell their stories. For instance, my wife, her father used to tell her that back in the 1920s, in Brooklyn, Civil War vets would come to class and talk about their experiences. He's telling this to his daughter, who liked history in the 1960s, so these Civil War veterans were alive for some time. When she was in college, one day an envelope arrived from her father. It had a clipping saying that the last Civil War veteran died in 1959, or something like that, all that was in there from his was a note saying 'You were alive when Civil War veterans were alive.'

Even if you don't live near the battlefield, you know the squares of so many towns, both North and South, have these granite or bronze boys in blue or gray standing eternal vigil. Not so many Confederate ones now, but they serve as a kind of daily reminder.

And then, the Centennial. I was born in 1955, so I became aware of the world around me when the Centennial hit – that was really a big deal. A lot of white Americans latched onto that as a counterpoint to the stuff that was happening with the Civil Rights movements. It attracted an awful lot of attention, with various publications, television shows, and toy manufacturers put out blue and gray Civil War soldier toy sets, and Civil War soldier guns, sabers, caps, and things like that. It kind of took the place of the Walt Disney Davy Crockett raccoon skin cap craze of the 1950s. But these children grew into adults and their interest remained keen.

They made a big market for the Civil War. Historical art arose, especially in the 1980s, the Ken Burns series reaffirms the Central importance of the Civil War in their minds. The people already felt that way drew in news fans. The movie *Glory* comes out, reminding people about the African American role in the war. This perfect storm starts swirling in the late 80s and then the movie *Gettysburg*. The re-enacting community increases in size at this time, and hits its apex. It has subsided in recent years as a result of COVID, along with the hit on battlefield visitation at Gettysburg and elsewhere.

JJ: Public history initiatives are struggling across the country. It's interesting to see how these battlefields are able to maintain an audience.

GU: Each one has a dramatic arc. There's a winner, there's a loser, there's courage and sacrifice. A lot of people find that kind of story irresistible. It's funny, too. People get really zealous about promoting their closest battlefield. When I lived in Arkansas, people often referred to Pea Ridge as the 'Gettysburg of the West.' Further west you have Arizona, which also has a 'Gettysburg of the West.' I often wonder if people who live around Gettysburg think of it as the 'Pea Ridge of the East.' But that's part of the allure of all this.

JJ: Thank you for that explanation about the rise of the popularity of the Civil War. It is easy to take for granted these days, as it is so present in our culture.

GU: We have basic meme that we went out and freed the world, we saved the world from the Nazis, and Japanese tyranny, and that was certainly the message that was cultivated during the Cold War. That's what America does. We go out, we fight tyranny, that kind of thing. We're the saviors of the world. And we still feel that way. Some of our leaders are trying to arm Ukraine, and using this position as motivation for arming Israel. We may not be as keen to go and fight their battles for them. But, still, we'll be the leading democracy as we once were.

JJ: To step away from all this content for a second, you mentioned at the beginning of this interview that Dr. McPherson reached out to you about doing this without a subject in mind. Was this a conference you had been planning on beforehand?

GU: Not until he broke the subject last year. I had no idea, I wasn't lobbying for anything like that. It's very generous. So I wondered what to do. There are so many things to do, but I wanted it to be something that had a chance of drawing a number of presenters and an audience. I thought, 'why not?' We're in Pennsylvania. The book that just came out, *The Road to Gettysburg*, and I thought we could use that. The author even proposed a paper.

JJ: Yes! Troy Hardin will be at the conference. With him in mind, what

kind of research should attendees to the conference expect to see?

GU: When we put out the call for papers, we expressed that we're open to anything. Conventional military history, command and control phases of the battle, but we're also interested in cultural studies. Gettysburg as a symbol. We're open to studies on Lincoln as he related to Gettysburg, studies that touch on race, memorialization, the impact of the battle on the civilian population, anything like that.

We cast a wide net, and we got a wide array of responses. We have people dealing with Gettysburg in a global context, which certainly goes beyond conventional wisdom. This includes a topic on German and Polish participants, and a paper on a French officer. Someone is looking at Lincoln in a philosophical view and what he thought of Gettysburg, how he used it to advance the Union. Gettysburg and civil rights, so we're looking at Gettysburg in the 1960s rather than the 1860s.

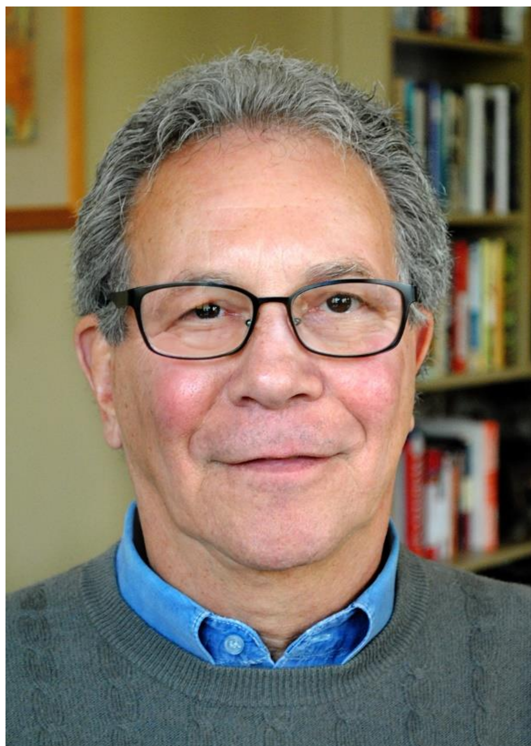
I'm delighted. We've got people from all over the US, including a presenter from the Army War College, a ranger and historian at the National Park, one presenter from as far away as England.

JJ: One final question. Does this conference relate to any research you're currently conducting?

GU: Aside from keeping abreast of Gettysburg literature for the staff ride, I published an article in Gettysburg Magazine, which is a journal put out by the University of Nebraska press twice a year. Right now, I'm working on about the British invasions of Virginia in 1781. And, I suppose, what led me to this project was being a recovering Civil War historian, because it deals with military history and race, which is something that interested me in my own Civil War work.

JJ: Well, I look forward to continuing to work with you on this project. Thank you for your time!

A Conversation with Dr. Richard Immerman



In this interview, I speak with former CENFAD director Dr. Richard Immerman about his former mentor, Dr. Walter LaFeber. We focus on Dr. Immerman's efforts to organize a memorial conference, the impact of LaFeber on the history of foreign policy, and changes in the historical discipline.

Joseph Johnson: Good morning! Thank you for joining me this morning to talk about the Walter LaFeber conference that you organized.

Richard Immerman: I'm happy to do so.

JJ: I guess my big question is: how did you pull this off?

RI: Well, it was a somewhat convoluted process. The origin dates back to about two years ago, not long after Walt died. Several of us had been asked to put together, or serve on, a roundtable discussion at the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) conference, which at that point was totally virtual. So we did that, and subsequently discussed various ways that we might be able to pay tribute to Walt; keeping in mind that while he was alive he wanted nothing remotely resembling a tribute to himself. That's sort of the person he was. He thought we had better things to do than to figure out how to pay tribute to our mentor.

So, within that vein, about a dozen of got together at Frank Costigliola's farm in Connecticut that fall. I was actually at Williams at the time, so it was for me to drive over, and the family came down. Lloyd Gardner and his wife Nancy. For those who don't know, Lloyd was Walt's closest, long-standing friend, going back to graduate days at Wisconsin together. We sat around all day just reminiscing and talking, and out of that we decided that we would put together a volume, a *festschrift.* We structured it and it would be built around this as the core, but we would invite his other students.

At that point, I mentioned that I had ideas how we could fundraise for this. We thought of having a workshop in Ithaca, and that then grew into the idea of having both a

workshop and a conference. One of the primary donors to it, Andrew Tisch, who had also funded Walt's last chair at Cornell, and organized a farewell talk that Lecture gave. That was so in-demand that they moved it to the Beacon Theatre in New York where three thousand former students attended, which is quite a testimony to who he was. He [Tisch] said, 'if you want to have this thing, who's going to go to Ithaca?" The Williams had offered to let us do it there for free, but who's going to go to one at Williams? And Jeff Engel, one of the people said we could it at Dallas, where SMU has a campus. While that was quite exciting, who was going to go to Dallas? We decided to do it in New York at the new tech campus, which none had seen.

I ended up involved primarily with the fundraiser. And because I'm a pretty good organizer and have a lot of experience, I ended up doing ninety-nine percent of the organizing. This took an awful lot of time. I would say a concentrated time for close to six months, and certainly the last couple of months was very intense. I was working with Cornell's Alumni Affairs office, the caterers, and the graduate hotel on campus. Then there's the campus itself. They had different people, and there were lots of moving parts. In any case, it happened, and it was very successful. The LaFeber family presented me with a wonderful bottle of cognac.

JJ: You talked about organizing experience. Have you ever organized anything on this scale before? I mean, you said you had the support of Cornell, but you didn't necessarily have the institutional support of something like SHAFR.

RI: No, I haven't. I did some conferences and symposium workshops in which I worked with the Davis Fellow, but it was nothing of this scale. Not even close to it.

Way back when I was asked to organize a conference on John Foster Dulles at Princeton University, in the late 1980s, it was close to this scale. It was huge. But I was basically the brains behind the outfit. I didn't do any of the work that was complicated. Princeton had an infrastructure that was fabulous and involved from the beginning. So while I did things like test the menu, most of my contribution was to conceptualize the conference, to invite contacts and to cajole participants into coming. It was a little tricky, because I came up with this idea of having people give papers, and then having former Dulles associates comment on them. They were still alive at that point.

It was a cavalcade of stars who I got to give papers. I was not quite forty at that point, so it was a pretty heady experience for me. So I did then, and I knew it. Then there was the CENFAD stuff. But in this case, the Cornell alumni affairs was not involved until the last six weeks of planning. Up until then, I did it all myself. That included, making reservations for everybody. I had never done anything like this. I don't think many people in the academic world have done this type of thing. Most of it was actually a joy.

Those of us that were involved in the project called ourselves, The Posse. I knew about half the people to begin with, and got to know the others because of our relationship to Walt. He attracted a certain type of student. We all got along really well. We were putting together the volume at the same time. That was almost an afterthought, but for us that was the primary goal. That was the product we wanted, not the conference. The conference was to support the volume. There was really a synergy between them which became so great that they were inseparable. I was working on my chapter of the volume, as well as being editor of the volume at the same time. I'm reading all of the essays, even as I was organizing things.

It's good I was retired. There's no way in hell I could have done anything if I had to spend this amount of time. I would have to teach, or all my students would have been very aware that they did not Immerman's full attention during this time. Goodness, it's really something you could only do at this time.

JJ: Wow! It seems like such a testament to LaFeber's personality and his influence. I'm assuming The Posse was made up of all formal students.

RI: It was really. As I said, it began with this sort of informal core that developed out of this roundtable. But also, there were a couple of people on the roundtable who I didn't know. But the SHAFR president at the time knew, and he suggested we invited others. We were all students split evenly by serendipity between his undergraduate and graduate students. That was really important because he was a legendary undergraduate educator. That was what we all talked about. Whether a graduate student, or an undergraduate student, our most vivid memories and formative experiences were in this lecture course that he taught in two semesters on the history of US foreign policy. When I was there it met on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday morning with five hundred students and their families. On a Saturdays families would visit, girlfriends would visit, and they say 'you have to go to this lecture.' It took place in Bailey Hall, which was this auditorium, and there were articles about what it was like to take this course.

One of the things that was in common is we all talked about how much we tried, and failed, to model ourselves after Walt, in terms of this lecture. It is one of the reasons that people like myself will never, ever abandon the lecture format in our teaching.

One of the things that was in common is we all talked about how much we tried, and failed, to model

ourselves after Walt, in terms of this lecture. It is one of the reasons that people like myself will never, ever abandon the lecture format in our teaching. It was so important, and we believe in it and that it can be equally, if not more effective, than interactive learning. There was just an article that said the pendulum has to no lectures, and all small classes. If you ever took a walk through LaFeber's lecture course, there's no way you're going to accept that hierarchy in pedagogy. Graduate students were the TAs, and Frank Costigliola was my TA. We didn't know each other, though I never went to class. I was too involved in anti-war stuff.

But we became close friends afterwards. This was one of the things we all reminisced about. And then, at the conference, we had policy makers. Steven Hadley, George W. Bush's National Security Advisor, and Eric Edelman, Dick Cheney's Chief of Staff. At these roundtables we had policymakers talking about his influence on them, and we had others, law professors, and business professionals, who talked about his influence. The conference was great.

On Friday night there was a reception, and we played a video what I'll call a 'farewell address' as an Eisenhower person. It was a time for reminisces and recollections. On Saturday, all of us presented our papers. And on Sunday, we had these two roundtables: one of former policymakers, and others of what we call sculptors of modern America, where people are from business, law, and higher education.

The last one was sort of neat, because during the Q&A session, I asked them 'As a former chair of a history department, I had many conversation with students and their parents would come in and talk to me because they wanted to be history majors and their parents disagreed. But you are were history majors who went on to be movers and shakers in the world. How would you talk to those parents?' And it was fabulous. I mean, it was terrific. In fact, we're thinking of maybe having some sort of follow-up institute in which we would invite prospective students to learn about the value of studying history in terms of the contemporary world.

That was the type of thing we talked in addition to going over the papers of the volume, which has not come out yet. But I was called by one of the reviewers who said it should be a template for all future tribute volumes. The volume will be coming out with Cornell University Press.

JJ: That sound like such a fulfilling opportunity to really discuss history, especially with people who have this connection through LaFeber.

RI: Of all these people, we have generations. One of the things about The Posse is we're basically three to four generations of his students. We believe we have his first PhD student, named David Green, who got his PhD in the early 1960s. But he was also an undergraduate. So that goes back to the 1950s, and it

extends to those who got their PhD in the 1990s, or completed undergraduate work, as Walt basically stopped taking students after then.

JJ: I think we might be taking for granted whether or not our readers know who LaFeber is. You and I both know who he is, and the impact he has had. But, could you just discuss a bit about his influence on the field and his connection to the Wisconsin School?

RI: That's really the beginning of the book. That's the foundation, and it was a theme that ran all through the conference. Walt was, in a way, the second generation of the Wisconsin School. Most people will say it's first-generation, but there was Fred Harvey Harrington, who was a historian of US foreign policy at University of Wisconsin-Madison in the 1950s. At that point, Wisconsin arguably had the best American history program in the United States. Actually, a number of Temple faculty did work at one point or another at the University of Wisconsin. Alan Davis worked with Merle Curti. It was an embarrassment of riches there.

One of Harrington's students was William Appleman Williams. I hope that every Temple graduate student, whether they do foreign policy or not, know who William Appleman Williams is. I mean, one of the things I bemoan is that when I was a graduate student we paid a lot more attention to historiography than today. I understand, because there's so much new stuff coming out. We are all built on the shoulders of giants, and all of that. What's not know much is that Williams was also a product of the University of Wisconsin, that's where he got his PhD. Fred Harrington then became President of the University of Wisconsin and Williams was elevated to take his position.

A number of students come at that time, the late 1950s. And the three most renowned are Walter LaFeber, Lloyd Gardner, who I mentioned before, and Thomas McCormick. Gardner and McCormick opted to work with Williams, while LaFeber stayed with Harrington. So, they actually didn't all have the same advisor, which people don't know, although they were often in the same seminars together. The three of them became like the Three Musketeers. They write a textbook together and other things. This becomes the Wisconsin School, and it challenges the primary historiographic frameworks, and interpretations, which are twofold. One is the more conventional, orthodox nationalist school of foreign policy, like Samuel Flagg Bemis. Then there's the realists, which is at that point Hans Morgenthau and George Kennan. Then there's also Arthur Schlesinger floating around, going back and forth between the two camps. But the revisionist US interpretation associated with Williams challenges that, and he wrote a book called *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*.

It is his challenge. And he basically argues that, not that he's an

economic determinist, but that American framework, or ideology, its world view, which is based on capitalism and economics and believes what's good for America is good for the world, has led to tragic consequences in the developing world. It becomes known as revisionism. So the Wisconsin School is associated with revisionism. That's the term. It's not one size fits all, it's more inclusive than that. So, when I was a graduate student in the sixties and early seventies, we were exposed to these three different schools: nationalist, realist, and revisionist. Those of us who became associated with LaFeber, Gardner, and McCormick, we evolved in this revisionist tradition, which gained ascendancy during Vietnam.

It's a big part of my life and a part of my scholarship. With the end of the Cold War, I think we move into more realist type stuff. There's not many people who still cling to the orthodox interpretations. So LaFeber is very instrumental and the evolution of the field is why his book are so important. He wrote a book called *The New Empire*. That's a famous book, and it is his first book. The use of the word 'empire' to describe American foreign policy was heresy compared to British or French efforts – but those were the Old World. People argued that the United States did not pursue empire. We were more altruistic, more idealistic. We don't do those sort of things. Along comes LaFeber, and he writes *The New Empire*, which showed that you can have an empire without formal colonies. It leads to tremendous debates, conversations and dialogues within the field. Even those who think that LaFeber is the devil admit that it has been incredibly constructive.

The title of our volume is *Thinking Otherwise*. We go out of the box to challenge conventional wisdom. That's what he taught us. That quote, by the way, comes from another Cornell Historian named Carl Becker in his presidential address to the American Historical Association. Those who were at the conference were treated to this amazing conversation about the evolution of the field of American history, not just foreign policy.

The title of our volume is *Thinking Otherwise*. We go out of the box to challenge conventional wisdom. That's what he taught us.

JJ: I keep thinking about what you said about the focus on historiography, and the importance of these authors who wrote such paradigm changing texts. Why do you think that has changed in the discipline? Is it because of the volume of things coming out, as you mentioned? Or just because there are so many perspectives being offered outside of a narrow interpretational framework like the three schools of foreign policy? Why have we become more removed from

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that? Is it the number of PhDs out there?

RI: I don't know. I've asked myself that question a lot, and I tried to address it in my classes. I taught a basic historiography course on foreign policy every year. I hardly ever the research seminar. This is what I did. The students loved it, but I knew they read a ton, but often people didn't read at all. Today they don't read *Tragedy*, they learn about it by reading what other people wrote about it. My students read *The New Empire*, and new about the Wisconsin School, and how it fit into this stuff. But, I think it's just the amount of reading we have to do. There's so much new stuff coming, and they're grand narratives. So many are specialized monographs which we have to know. You don't have the type of major synthesis because we criticize the synthesis. We don't read them. We're not giving tenure if we write syntheses.

You talked about these texts being paradigm shifts, but it's changed more than that. US foreign policy has become US in the World. Military history is different, it's not operational military history it's War and Society. Those sort of changes are happening. How do you keep up with that? If you do US in the World, it means you have to read everything. And in our field we have to work in a foreign language. That was pretty much required, but it didn't used to be. Walt wrote stuff, but did not have command of another language. Williams never had command of another language. So the students develop area expertise on different countries and it's not just Washington-centered. It's much more being brought in, like culture. One of our students, Kate O'Connell, ended up doing food studies in her work. There's so much you can do. The problem is that you're scrambling to keep up with the fabulous and original work that's being done. But, can you go back to read George Bancroft, like I did? I'm not sure people read Arthur Schlesinger anymore. Not that I'm a fan, but God, he was important. Or what about his father, who in many ways was more important? He was the father of urban history. What about Frederick Jackson Turner? We just don't have time to do that. So, at least I'm aware of it, but I don't know how many other people may. We talk about the Turner thesis, and people sit around and talk about what that influences and challenges.

There's so much you can do. The problem is that you're scrambling to keep up with the fabulous and original work that's being done.

Now we have international history, and transnational history. It makes things that much more difficult. And I'm only talking about my field! At Temple, we had the advantage of having multiple faulty members working in international history. Petra Goedde and I worked very closely together, but we

complemented each other. We did this handbook on the Cold War for Oxford that we were able to bring to many universities. And now you have Alan who replaced me, so we still have that. But at many universities you have one person in a field, and that's becoming more and more common as faculty sizes shrinking. Department faculty is shrinking all over the place.

JJ: There's a real paradox at play, isn't there? The volume and scope of the content that we're getting is greater than ever, as tenure track faculty lines are shrinking across the board.

RI: As I said, I don't have the solution to it. But yeah. What I will say is every one of those people who participated in the conference roundtable would argue to the end of time how vital their study of history was to developing their skill sets. That they brought that to whatever career they pursued. Also, that historiography and methods are important because of debates that were integral to the subjects, as opposed to learning what happened. What were the causes of the Spanish-American War, or the War of 1898? There's a synergy, a complement, you cannot have one without the other. But I think that's the case, and that was the certainly the case with those us who studied with LaFeber and his concept of thinking otherwise.

JJ: Let's talk more about your work with CENFAD. You were the first director here at CENFAD. Did you think that you would go on to lead a center and pursue your own programs?

RI: No, never, not even close. I think I've mentioned it before. I know I have. For example, I discuss this think I had to write for H-Diplo. They asked a bunch of us senior people to do it, but I always tell this story. When I came to Temple, I was recruited as a senior historian. That was the idea of Russ Weigley and Waldo Heinrichs. They wanted to build on what they had done, which was somewhat serendipitous, to have two very prominent historians – one doing diplomatic, and one doing military, which allowed Temple to become quite distinguished in that area.

They brought in three finalists for the position. They didn't go over well, and I got asked to apply. And you know, that was history. I did not know until I came for an interview that they had discussed this idea of building a center. I thought it was a great idea because the other person who was here was David Rosenberg. At that point David Rosenberg was an expert in naval history, but also nuclear history. He was a MacArthur genius! You put together Weigley, Heinrich, and Rosenberg and you have quite a core. So my moving into that situation was very attractive. And the idea of institutionalizing that strength also was quite attractive. So it was eventually part of the appeal. But I had no idea that the expectation was that I would lead this thing.

I didn't volunteer, but I didn't protest. It was just something I could do. So I did it. We struggled initially. I actually tried to get Temple to hire an executive director, a friend of mine who appears in a number of documents, named Paul Miles. Miles was a Rhodes Scholar who had developed the international history track at West Point. He was a retired colonel, and he was absolutely brilliant. He got his degree at Princeton, and would have been very interested. He helped me write the mission statement. Russ was also on board. But Miles would only do it if Temple allowed him to teach as well as be executive director. The administration didn't want to do that, and so I became executive director.

So that's how it came. We struggled a little bit to begin with, but it was the student who wanted it to be more than it was. They wanted to be more involved.

It was actually my student Drew McKevitt, a Davis Fellow, who helped me launch the Colloquium series. That was really terrific. That was one way for us to reach out to more people in the field. I remember several people saying that speaking Temple was part of the tour. If you didn't get invited to speak, you knew you weren't anybody.

JJ: This is all fascinating as someone currently working as the Davis Fellow. I've had the good fortune of speaking with multiple people who have long connection with CENFAD. I conducted interviews with Debbie Sharnak, and Beth Bailey. It's amazing to see the impact CENFAD has had on the community.

RI: The Davis fundraiser was another one of my students. His idea was to use this as a way to attract the best and brightest of the students who were interested in anything to do with CENFAD. We defined it very broadly, and it has worked. If you go through the list of Davis Fellows, they have had very successful careers despite the fact that the job market just imploded. They got jobs, they publish their books, and I think the experience really helped.

JJ: Well, I have seen you at lots of events this year, and it is always nice to see you around. It's been exciting to learn more about the Temple history department, the university, and CENFAD. Thank you for sharing all your knowledge, and experience with me. Is there anything else that you'd like to add for the community?

RI: Just to keep it up. It's a great thing. I think Temple punches above its weight. We don't have the resources of the Ivies, but we do have the reputation. We do have the faculty. And we do have the students. That's what really makes for a great university and a great university experience. I've always taken a great deal of pride and pleasure knowing that CENFAD contributed in a very way. And that will continue, I am sure, under Alan's directorship. And as long he continues to attract students like

yourself, and others that I have met through CENFAD, I don't worry.

The only other thing I'll say is that the LaFeber volume, which I think is valuable for historiography, is that the chapters are based around Walt's books. There are six major books and those are the six core chapters of the book. We use his books as foundations to write our chapters. So there's a lot of historiography in there. The book won't be out until next year, but when it does release it will also be open access.

JJ: Oh, excellent! Once again that's *Thinking Otherwise*, out from Cornell University Press next year. Thank you very much for your time, Dr. Immerman. I appreciate it.

A Conversation with Dr. Beth Bailey

In the following interview, I sat down with Dr. Bailey to discuss her new work An Army Afire. We also talk about completing research on the US military and its inherent challenges.

Joseph Johnson: Thank you for taking the time to meet with me!

Beth Bailey: Of course!

JJ: Could you just tell us a little bit about *An Army Afire* and how you became interested in the problem of race in the US Army during Vietnam.

BB: The questions that led to *An Army Afire* have been generating for a good long time. When I went back and looked at *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force*, which I published while at Temple in 2009, I found some of the material that I thought I had discovered anew when researching this book. As I was thinking about the crisis of the US Army during that period, and writing about it in a previous book, I just kept stumbling over racial conflict and racial crisis.

When I was thinking about what to write next, which is always a hard thing to do as you get further in your career. First of all, you realize how much commitment it takes to a book to bring it to fruition, and, secondly, that you may not have endless numbers of books left in your lifetime or career. I have been thinking really hard about what I want to put that kind of energy into and questions around race just kept coming up. It's something that historians are talking about a lot today: the legacy of slavery, and the impact and significance of race. So, I began investigating the possibility of writing about race in the US military during this era.

As I was doing exploratory research in the National Archives to see what I could find, I could only find one file classified as 'Race' in the army during this period. It was an extremely thin file with only a single Xerox sheet in it. It was a newspaper article about Maj. Lavell Merritt, who had called the US military a 'citadel of racism' and 'one of the most racist institutions in the world.' It was just sitting there by itself and I got intrigued. Eventually I got thousands and thousands of pages investigating his charges and investigating him. At that moment I felt like I had the thread that I was going to follow for this book.

It was a very hard, calculated question of what I was going to spend my time on and what is significant. But that thread caught my imagination and I wanted to see where it leads me.

JJ: One of the things you refer to often in the book is the institutional hierarchy of the military and how these structures tried to accommodate the racial crisis. This really challenged the traditions and expectations of the military institution. Why wasn't the paper trail more visible when it caused such disruptions?

BB: There was an enormous paper trail, actually. It just becomes a question of what keywords you use when you're going through the National Archive and trying to figure things out. The keyword I used was my concern, but it wasn't the way that it was catalogued and published. The fact that I found something that intrigued me gave me enough of the sense that I would spend the time figuring out how to trace this down.

That's one of the reasons that writing about the US military up through the Vietnam War is such a great thing to do. They document everything. There is so much paper. Then you run into things not being documented and when it becomes digital there is a crisis. I chair the Department of the Army Historical Advisory Subcommittee, which is in some sense a parallel to the State Department committee which Richard Immerman, who is a former CENFAD director, chaired for years. They've done great work in trying to get material declassified. We're confronting baby steps at that point with the military. That's what our committee is really focused on, and it's a daunting task.

What I was looking at, in the end, was how the institutional logic of the US Army shaped how they saw the problems, how they defined the problems, and how they tried to solve the problems.

Up through the Vietnam War, though, every time somebody turns around it is written down and analyzed. So it's a great thing to study and we've got so much material.

JJ: So what keywords, other than the specific investigations you uncovered were helpful? Or were these incidents and cases central to finding the documents?

BB: Bryant Simon, who teaches at Temple, always advises graduate students, and I copy him shamelessly, to find a newspaper of record and create a timeline with incidents and key personnel. Then you use that as a basis for research. I had to figure out what offices within the military were responsible for the different decisions, the positions that made them, and the people who filled them.

What I was looking at, in the end, was how the institutional logic of the US Army shaped how they saw the problems, how they defined the

problems, and how they tried to solve the problems. That extends to where they are going to keep records about them. There is a huge amount of material in the Director of Personnel papers. They have a big set of files on 'discrimination.' But that is not immediately obvious if you say that you are interested in the problem of race and the US military and struggles over racial violence. That doesn't necessarily tell you where you are going to find documents. The Office of the Inspector General is more obvious because if there is a crisis then they will open an investigation.

The Army logic about where things happen, and how they're handled, determines where those papers are and not the historical question that I bring to bear. And that led me even further when considering that this was handled according to the logic of the US Army. Who is going to be taking responsibility for certain actions? Who is going to be assigned to study different problems? Who is in a position of authority? This is determined by Army logic, not by a set of a historical questions in 2023. And that logic is not the same logic that a university would bring to bear, or the Department of Education would bring to bear. It's the Army's own logic.

JJ: It's fascinating because there is an internal logic behind the military that's inconceivable to the public. There is a rigid hierarchy and operational structure that people must have a hard time grasping.

BB: Right. When I was starting to think about this in terms of the logic of the institution there were two main things that played a role. One, was that I was writing, not just researching, during the pandemic. Not just writing, but really getting into it around the Black Lives Matter protests in the summer of 2020. Looking at people call for institutional change kept this on my mind. The other element here is that I had a very close friend who had been in Vietnam, and then worked as a recruiter. He understood the Army very well. I came from nowhere, I knew nothing about how the Army worked. I spent years trying to understand how the Army works, even taking the "How the Army Runs" course at Fort Belvoir.

I kept asking him questions and finally he got exasperated, saying, 'You keep trying to understand the Army like it's a university, and it's not.' It's like a lightbulb went off in my head. Obviously, I knew that, but it made me think about how different institutions function. And to understand this I had to think about how the Army as an institution functions, and how Army leaders saw this as such a pressing problem that they were willing to violate, in some senses, the normal institutional functions of the US Army in service of the larger goal of maintaining the machine of the US Army.

JJ: Just thinking about the flexibility of the Army during this time is interesting, and their willingness to accommodate their cadets. Were there any moments

that surprised you in terms of this willingness to be flexible? One of the chapters that stands out to me regards hair regulations and how the US Army was willing to forego hair standards for cultural representation, though they reclaim that authority later.

BB: Yeah. That shows how concerned some senior leaders were. The complication is that they were willing to give lenience in terms of allowing people to claim identities beyond that of soldier. Even to display those identities in uniform in ways that left people serving in positions of authority very unhappy. So it was not a generally agreed upon policy.

But, at the same time, creating regulations that allow that to happen become universal regulations. So, if they are going to allow Black enlisted men and soldiers to display symbols of Black identity and Black pride, then they have to allow other people from other ethnic groups to display parallel symbols. This of course led to some white Southerners saying they had the right to fly the Confederate flag. A lot of junior officers and NCOs were proudly bragging that they allowed their soldiers to display symbols of cultural identity like the Black Power symbol and the Confederate flag, not quite getting the way that flying a Confederate flag undermines Black soldiers displaying symbols of Black pride as the universality of regulations is a fundamental piece of Army practice.

> Struggling with these issues made at least some senior Army leaders recognize that the regulations defaulted to white.

Everything is pushing and in tension with one another, as they are trying to figure out how to do this. Even as they are being flexible, they are still thinking in terms of Army logic. So they decided to allow things, but by regulation. That was one of my favorite chapters to write.

JJ: That chapter has really stayed with me for many reasons.

BB: Yeah, it must be hard for anyone to understand how important hair was in the 1970s.

JJ: It's interesting, there is just much broader acceptance of hairstyles today.

BB: The way people wear their hair matters. I just read an article in the night about mullets in Australia. It claims a wide variety of things, and for young male soldiers to have short hair in the 1970s it marked them as military in a time when the military was not well-regarded in American society. It also separated them from claiming youth culture, it made them not cool – something else. The afro mattered a lot as a symbol of Black pride, but long hair on young white men also made a big difference.

I've told this story in public, but I'll tell it again. In eighth grade, my boyfriend's mother made him get a haircut right before the school dance and I told my mother that I

could not go with him because I was so embarrassed. It was a huge deal at that time.

JJ: What makes the chapter still resonate is the current conversation that still goes on about hair, especially if we consider discussions about wearing hair naturally for Black individuals in the workplace. This makes professionalism and appearance central for minorities who need to conform.

BB: Struggling with these issues made at least some senior Army leaders recognize that the regulations defaulted to white. Their definitions of a proper professional haircut was based on the assumption of a white soldier. They weren't taking into account those factors. It's not just a question of displaying ethnic pride or identities, it was even hair type. The regulations about shaving were based on an assumption of white soldiers. The assumptions about how hair worked weren't taking into account hair that was profoundly curly. Some of what happened is the notion that colorblindness doesn't work because that defaulted to white. So they had to pay attention to the diversity of people who were serving in order to establish regulations that took everyone into account. It's perfectly fine to have a regulation that says everybody has to look professional, but you have to take into account the variety of people who are serving.

Even beyond the question of people displaying pride, there are a variety of hair types. There are a variety of ways that people can wear their hair that is very functional in the field. Take for instance the questions around Black women's hairstyles. They created a committee with people who were specialists in physiology to psychology to come up with answers about what was practical. But the point was that they were still defaulting white because they weren't recognizing highly practical hairstyles that many African American soldiers had adopted.

JJ: I think that's one of the real strengths of this chapter. You get to see the institutional changes on a commercial level. The PX has to offer different products to the soldiers, and this disrupts that defaulting process.

BB: And the PX at this point was, depending on your source, the third- or fourth- largest retail institution in the world. They did all sorts of studies about what Black preferences were. But for them to decide that they would stock products preferred by members of different racial and ethnic communities did not only serve the soldiers and their families, but it was a huge boost to the companies that manufactured these products. Being an in-stock record for the PX during this era could propel your music sales.

Committing to keeping magazines like *Ebony* in stock was a huge boost to the readership and sales of that publication. This institutional change reverberated into civilian life as well in ways that acknowledged

the centrality of the purchasing power of African Americans. By saying that one out of every four dolls in the window at Christmas would now be a Black doll acknowledged those soldiers and their families, while boosting the sales of these companies and their dolls.

JJ: I also want to talk about sensitivity training in the Army. You're a cultural historian, focused on the military. There is an intense internal culture in the Army. What was it like unpacking what sensitivity training looked like in the military?

BB: It was an uneasy fit in many ways. It was adopted, in part, because the institutional Army was trying to look at best practices wherever it could find them. There was a major trend in corporations in the United States, and culture, towards sensitivity training and these techniques. It often didn't work very well, and it bears a lot of resemblance to the ways that we consider encountering questions of race and racial violence today. It emphasized making people confront the level of white privilege they experienced, it emphasized making people confront their unacknowledged racial biases. Those techniques are difficult and problematic when used by people who are not trained in managing the results that they elicit. They are difficult when used on people who are not there fully willingly, such is the case in the Army.

What happened too often is people with the best of intentions took a unit that was functioning pretty well, and got people to say things that was probably beyond what they actually felt that totally disrupted that unity by saying nasty things about members of other races and ethnicities. In the end they could not pull them back together. It turned out to not be the best way to confront institutional or individual racism.

I would also like to point out that the Army used that term 'institutional racism.' There was a lot of talk about institutional racism in the 1970s, it is not a discovery of the 21st century.

I would also like to point out that the Army used that term 'institutional racism.' There was a lot of talk about institutional racism in the 1970s, it is not a discovery of the 21st century.

One of the things I hope that I accomplished in this book is that the refrain that 'nothing ever changes' is wrong. An enormous amount changed. It certainly doesn't mean that things are where they should be left. The Army 'solved' the problem, but the problem was how to stabilize the US Army against a highly disruptive force of racial violence within. In the process of doing that, it definitely improved the circumstances of people of color who were serving. But its goal was not to address racial justice as a whole, but to do what was necessary to stabilize the army. That process

involved acting in ways that did improve racial justice and equity within the service.

There are two ways to evaluate how they came out. They did what they meant to do. They made significant progress in the other category, but that wasn't the goal of leaders in the US Army, though plenty of individuals supported goals of racial justice. But that wasn't the purpose of this effort.

I'm always amazed at the amount of creativity and flexibility I find in these records. And also by the resistance, recalcitrance, and stubbornness of some. I'm not suggesting that the Army is full of super enlightened people and that if we followed their path all would be well. But, when confronted with a problem they understand to be existential, there is a fair amount of creativity there.

JJ: It just goes against the conventional wisdom that the military is an eternal, unchanging institution. But talking about institutions, let's change our focus to CENFAD. I know that you previously taught here, and now you got to lecture to us. How was that experience?

BB: Well, I taught at Temple for eleven really great years. I came in with a group of other senior historians. There was this amazing hiring flurry led by Richard Immerman, who was the head of CENFAD. I think there were thirteen of us hired in a year and a half. It was a really good department already, but I'd never had a cohort before. Back in the 80s when I was on the job market people were just hired alone. There were never others who came in with you.

CENFAD was a highlight of my time at Temple. The programs you do now go back a long way. There was a regular rotation of fascinating scholars coming through with the chance to talk to them and learn about their work. Some became people I have collaborated with since, who I had not known before. It is a wonderful institution, and it has been a big part of my professional life. I was interim director for a brief period, I led a small workshop, and co-organized a few others with Richard. CENFAD is a remarkable institution that has built its reputation over decades, and it continues to be central.

I've got a lot of friends in the department. It was weird to be standing up there because I felt like I walked into a room that I just left. We are all a bit older, but it still felt so much the same. It was so nice. And there were really smart questions from the graduate students, which makes me very happy.

JJ: Do you have any future projects in the pipeline, now that you are done with *An Army Afire*.

BB: I'm working on getting a collaborated book about the US war and environment in the Pacific world with Drew Eisenberg, who is a former Temple faculty member. I'm also going to follow up on the Army education material because I found some fabulous new sources that

were closed during the pandemic, and now they are open again. I want to write an article about the ways that the Department of Defense created this Defense Race Relations Institute, which became the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute. They took a group of military officers and dumped them in the middle of a challenging neighborhood in Miami. I found some recordings of their debriefings.

The big project I'm probably going to work on is how the defense and military-industrial complex affected local communities, looking at Lockheed and its relationship to Smyrna. It's funny because I grew up there, and so some of this is what I remember from childhood. Realizing how those events were shaped around the federal policy of defense. They said when Lockheed sneezed, Smyrna caught a cold. But it also meant that the person I sat next to in high school was from Saudi Arabia. It was not a cosmopolitan town, but Lockheed changed that. I want to try and figure out how that worked, and how it changed a formerly tiny town, turned early Atlanta suburb.

JJ: I look forward to that. My last apartment in Atlanta was in Smyrna and we saw military planes and heard sonic booms all the time.

BB: Yes, you have that Atlanta connection!

JJ: I also wanted to ask you about your new position. I've heard that you have been awarded the Pitt Professorship at the University of Cambridge. Could you tell us more about that?

BB: I'm really excited about this. Cambridge has a nomination committee. It was nothing I applied for, but I got an email as I was getting on a plane to go to the SHAFR conference last year. It said that they nominated me for this professorship. The nomination meant it had to be approved, but I have been named the Pitt Professor of US History and Institutions. Every other year they have a historian, and the list of people that I'm joining is incredible. It definitely makes me feel humbled to be asked. I will spend the academic year of 2025-26 in Cambridge, I'll teach a graduate seminar, and participate in their ongoing history seminars – just being part of their intellectual life. It's an amazing opportunity and I'm very excited.

I also wanted to brag on one of the former Temple graduate students who moved to KU with me. His name is Bryan Trump, and he has a long connection with CENFAD. He is now working at the Digital Kentucky Civil War Governors project, which is a really interesting project. He won the prize for all non-hard sciences dissertation at the University of Kansas last year. His dissertation was judged the best out of a two year sequence of all non-science dissertations at KU.

JJ: Well congratulations to Bryan! I really appreciate you taking this time to speak with me.

Book Reviews

Benjamin A. Cowan, *Moral Majorities Across the Americas: Brazil, the United States, and the Creation of the Religious Right*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021. Photographs, 304 pp.; hardcover $46.82, ebook $24.99.

Benjamin A. Cowan's new book comes at a critical moment in Brazilian history. The recent 2022 presidential election in Brasília, won by Lula da Silva in a narrow margin against far-right, then-incumbent Jair Bolsonaro, demonstrated as it did in 2018 the political influence of right-wing evangelicals in the country's ideological thinking. According to official state prognostics, the Protestant population is expected to surpass the number of Catholics in Brazil by 2030. Therefore, to understand Brazilian politics and trace the origins of this social phenomenon, addressing Cowan's question is crucial: "how did we get here?" (6)

Based on multiple public and ecclesiastical archives, *Moral Majorities Across the Americas* covers the late 1950s and 1960s, followed by the years of the Brazilian military regime (1964-1985), the transnational links of Catholic and Protestant groups in Brazil, and the collaboration between governmental agents and religious leaders in the suppression of leftists inside and outside ecclesiastical organizations. The book explores the origins of the Brazilian Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family, and Property (TFP), one of the key groups that advocated for the military coup in 1964 against Brazil's sitting President João Goulart, founded by historian Plinio Correa de Olveira and Catholic traditionalists such as Bishops Geraldo Sigaud and Antônio Mayers. Beyond the activism of clergy members from the Church of Rome, these ideological initiatives also took place amid evangelical leaders like Israel Gueiros and Claudionor Andrade. Both Christian branches shared a "common platform of grievances" (19) and pursued multiple "anti" sentiments: anti-communism, anti-statism, anti-secularism, and anti-modernism. By grouping these elements, Cowan describes the central values that culminated in the ideology of the contemporary Christian right wing.

The first chapter explores how Catholics defended religious traditionalism and pushed back against the efforts of the Second Vatican Council, which aimed to call attention to poverty around the globe and worked to suppress the followers of the Liberation Theology through the use of military rule and state diplomatic structure. Chapters 2 and 3 cover the emergence of the evangelical movement and its internal tension between progressive and conservative branches. While the latter reached a prominent lobbying role at the country's

Constitutional Assembly of 1987, the former (along with Catholic progressive groups) struggled to reach prominence due to the moral alliance established between conservative religious agents (evangelicals and Catholics) and the military rule surveillance representatives. Chapter 4 has a transnational approach as it highlights the international connections of Brazilian Christian conservatives and their consumption of content and ideas from American evangelists, such as Oral Roberts and Jimmy Swaggart (p. 75). Cowan also mentions the establishment of the Confederation of Fundamentalist Evangelical Churches of Brazil (CIEF) in 1959. Backed by U.S. missionaries, this organization was dedicated to the defense of “biblical and historical Christianity” against “all the forms of theological and moral apostasy” (133). Cowan’s work also describes the participation of Brazilian protestant conservative preachers in international conferences, including the International Policy Forum, which aimed to promote “traditional family moral values” and “free enterprise” and their engagements with the International Council of Christian Churches. The fifth chapter, the book’s conclusion, reflects on the common principles that congregated global religious forces and stressed how Brazil’s government apparatus supported the rise of Christian conservative values and groups, such as governmental support for media licensing favoring right-wing preachers.

Moral Majorities Across the Americas is a crucial work to understand the roots of today’s Brazil and the global connections between current Brazilian conservative preachers and their counterparts in the United States amid the ongoing political influence of former Presidents Bolsonaro and Donald Trump. This book was written for an audience already familiar with the history of the Brazilian military regime, as its chapters have thematic focuses and lack historical contexts to connect some of the information the author presents. Furthermore, the comparisons to the United States’s context to assist readers in understanding the Brazilian case demonstrate that the book targets U.S.-based scholars. The relevance of Cowan’s themes demands a Portuguese translation of his work. For decades, academic analysis concerning the role and emergence of conservative religious activists was ignored and, therefore, not adequately investigated or understood. That could explain the surprise of members of academia and media when Bolsonaro reached - despite the prognostics of traditional and well-known polling institutes - a substantial number of votes that allowed him to push the 2022 presidential election to a runoff against Lula da Silva. Cowan is right when he pushes scholarship to reconsider its neglect of studying and historicizing right-wing actors and movements - a neglect that, as the author quotes Gilberto Calil, “leads to the false conclusion that

the Right is fragile, poorly organized, and merely reactive” (233).

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St. John, Ronald Bruce. *Peruvian Foreign Policy in the Modern Era*. New York: Anthem Press, 2023. 126 pp. $24.95 US paperback.

In the acknowledgments section of his latest book *Peruvian Foreign Policy in the Modern Era*, Ronald Bruce St. John states that “as Peru celebrates its bicentennial and I approach my 80th year, it seems the right time to conclude what has become a lifelong study of the foreign policy of Peru” (ix). Indeed, for over fifty years beginning with the 1970 publication of *Peruvian Foreign Policy, 1919-1939: The Delimitation of Frontiers*, St. John has contributed a long series of research monographs on the post-independence history of Peruvian foreign relations. This scholarship accompanies his extensive corpus of other work on the neighboring countries of Bolivia and Ecuador, as well as Libya and Southeast Asia. Overall, *Peruvian Foreign Policy in the Modern Era* serves as a worthy capstone to a distinguished career focused on the Andean republic’s geopolitics, in which St. John fittingly concerns himself with Peruvian foreign relations in the post-Cold War era from the presidency of Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000) to the incumbent administration of Dina Boluarte (2022-present). In this way, St. John is able to address circumstances and events in a roughly thirty-year timeframe that is mostly subsequent to the publication of his most comprehensive prior history on Peruvian foreign relations, *The Foreign Policy of Peru* (1992).

Briefly going into the background of post-independence Peruvian foreign policy from 1821-1990 in his introduction, St. John notes how successive governments “diversified arms transfers, expanded trade links, encouraged a radical reorientation of the inter-American system, and promoted enhanced regional and extra-regional cooperation” as part of a “pursuit of heightened Peruvian sovereignty” (5). According to St. John, Peruvian regimes prosecuted this policy course with particular vigor from the first civilian administration of Fernando Belaúnde Terry (1963-68) through the period of military governance (1968-80), and onward into the present era of Peruvian civil governments. By exploring these trends, St. John sets the stage for examining how they were consolidated during and following the 1990s. To this end, he utilizes a variety of sources ranging from Peruvian government publications to oral history interviews with Peruvian foreign ministers to newspaper articles.

The panoply of Peruvian presidencies that have come and gone coinciding with multiple bouts of domestic political indictments, intra-governmental intrigues, and civil disorder since 2016 makes this a complicated but important period to address, and St. John admirably rises to the challenge. He examines continuities among administrations in Peru’s geopolitical outreach within Latin America, such as its latter-day regional integration efforts

via participation in multilateral fora such as the Lima Group and the Pacific Alliance trade bloc (54-56). Additionally, he assesses Peru's relations with hegemonic powers such as the United States, China, and Russia (58-60). Merging discussion of both of these subjects, St. John notes how "the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was a stabilizing force" even during Pedro Castillo's administration. However, he only fleetingly mentions how Castillo's government persisted in its coordination with the United States over the Venezuela crisis, despite being more leftist-inclined than its four predecessors (64-67). This underemphasis on exploring the Peruvian-US-Venezuelan diplomatic triangle during this period is unfortunate, given contemporaneous press coverage on the ambiguity of Peru's posture toward the Lima Group and its seeming non-recognition of either Nicolás Maduro or Juan Guaidó's competing governments in Venezuela during Castillo's administration.[2] It is also surprising in light of St. John's exploration of other interesting episodes in Peru-Venezuela relations, such as the fallout surrounding Hugo Chávez's disparaging remarks regarding Alan García's 2006 candidacy and ensuing vacillations in the Chávez-García relationship (38).

Meanwhile, in his earlier chapter concerning the administrations of Alberto Fujimori and Valentín Paniagua, St. John devotes substantial attention to the Peru-US relationship during Fujimori's presidency (8-10). Despite this, he avoids commenting on major controversies of the Fujimori and Paniagua eras. These include alleged US Agency for International Development financial support for involuntary sterilizations of indigenous women under Peru's National Population Program as part of *Plan Verde*, documented Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) ties to Peruvian intelligence chief Vladimiro Montesinos tracing back to the military government era, and the fatal April 2001 shootdown of a civilian floatplane carrying US missionary Veronica "Roni" Bowers and her infant daughter by the Peruvian Air Force as part of the CIA-sponsored Air Bridge Denial Program for narcotics interdiction.[3] Commendably, St. John also devotes space to examining how

[2] "Bellido: 'Formalmente no hemos tratado la posibilidad de salir del Grupo de Lima'," *La República* (Lima), August 14, 2021, https://larepublica.pe/politica/2021/08/14/guido-bellido-formalmente-no-hemos-tratado-la-posibilidad-de-salir-del-grupo-de-lima; "Vicecanciller afirma que Perú no reconoce autoridades legítimas en Venezuela," *Radio Programas del Perú*, September 20, 2021, https://rpp.pe/politica/gobierno/vicecanciller-afirma-que-peru-no-reconoce-autoridades-legitimas-en-venezuela-noticia-1358731.

[3] Tamara Feinstein, "'Fujimori's Rasputin': The Declassified Files on Peru's Former Intelligence Chief, Vladimiro Montesinos," *The National Security Archive at George Washington University*, November 22, 2000, https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB37/, Stephen P. Howard, "The War on Drugs: Two More Casualties," *Aerospace Power Journal* 15, no. 4 (2001): 91-95, and Ernesto Vasquez del Aguila, "Invisible Women: Forced Sterilization, Reproductive Rights, and Structural Inequalities in Peru of Fujimori and Toledo," *Estudos e Pesquisas em Psicologia* 6, no. 1 (2006): 109-124.

recent Peruvian governments have addressed intermestic concerns such as water rights, transnational crime, and migration through bilateral coordination with foreign governments in their Bolivian, Colombian, and Ecuadorian borderlands (56-58), following from earlier initiatives pursued by the Peruvian government (12-16). However, he notably omits any consideration of Peru's coordination with Brazil over these same issues, despite the shared border between the two and previous multilingual scholarship that has examined intermestic issues in areas such as the *Tres Fronteras* region.[4] In general, though, St. John's *Peruvian Foreign Policy in the Modern Era* should be regarded as a valuable addition to the existing historiography on Peruvian foreign relations contributed by scholars such as Norberto Barreto Velázquez, Hal Brands, Lawrence A. Clayton, and Richard J. Walter.

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[4] For example, see David S. Salisbury, et. al., "Transboundary Political Ecology in the Peru-Brazil Borderlands: Mapping Workshops, Geographic Information, and Socio-Environmental Impacts," *Revista Geográfica* 152 (2012): 105-115, and Luiz Felipe de Vasconcelos Dias Balieiro and Izaura Rodrigues Nascimento, "Tríplice fronteira Brasil, Peru e Colômbia e as implicações com o narcotráfico," *Textos e Debates* 26 (2014): 85-98.

Freedom's Captives: Slavery and Gradual Emancipation on the Colombian Black Pacific. By Yesenia Barragan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. 344 p. $29.99, paperback.

In *Freedom's Captives: Slavery and Gradual Emancipation on the Colombian Black Pacific,* Yesenia Barragán explores how the passage of the Free Womb Law of 1821 generated new forms of captivity and social domination in Colombia. Focusing on the department of Chocó, located along Colombia's northwestern Pacific Coast, Barragán highlights the "competing struggles over disparate modes of freedom, unfreedom, and bondage" that were unique to this region during the period of gradual emancipation between 1821 and final abolition in 1852 (3). Passed immediately after Colombia's independence from Spain, the Free Womb Law banned the importation of enslaved people to Gran Colombia, established *juntas de manumisión* to build support for the new republican government through ceremonially freeing a select number of enslaved people, and declared the children of enslaved women who were born after the law legally free but bound to their mothers' masters until the age of eighteen. Despite its design to destroy slavery in Colombia, Barragán contends that this law created new forms of captivity that left the children born after 1821 in a "tenuous space of transitory bondage," as they were not legally enslaved but could still be bought and sold (10). Through her analysis of the formation and impact of this law, Barragán argues that "gradual emancipation rule expanded opportunities for diverse stakeholders to partake in the owning and exploitation of young black people at cheaper prices and established new political rituals that reinforced the disciplining logic of the slaveholding order," even after final abolition (6).

Drawing on the methods of Marisa Fuentes, Barragán reads the social, political, and legal archival fragments of this period "along the bias grain" to reconstruct the lives of the freed, enslaved, and Free Womb captives of the Colombian Pacific.[5] Barragán also incorporates methods of historical ethnography to emphasize the unique geographic and social world of the Chocó region, a frontier made up of mixed status families and characterized by its gold mines and rivers, which she argues created a "paradoxical culture marked by both relentless captivity and extraordinary independence" (8). Moving chronologically from the passage of the Free Womb Law, *Freedom's Captives* is divided into three parts that trace the formation and challenges to gradual emancipation and final abolition. Part I reconstructs the world of nineteenth-century Chocó to highlight the control that Afro-

[5] Marisa Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 7.

Colombians had over its rivers and gold mines in contrast to the region's capitals of Novita and Quibdo, where the majority of white slaveholders and mine owners resided. Focusing on life in Chocó, Barragán traces the increased use of Free Womb captives who replaced enslaved miners after 1821 and the trade of Free Womb children in cities until the 1840s. Part II examines the formation, application, and debates surrounding the Free Womb Law with a focus on the compensation and trafficking of Free Womb captives. In this section, Barragán emphasizes how lawmakers extended Free Womb bondage and legislated the intraregional trade of Free Womb children at any age and allowed the interregional trade of those past puberty. Barragán also highlights the ties between gradual emancipation policy and political movements in Colombia by demonstrating the ways that officials associated with the republican government used the promise of eventual freedom to maintain enslaved peoples' loyalty to the new national government. Finally, Barragán uses the reversal of Free Womb Law in 1842 to argue against the notion that abolition was guaranteed. Part Three examines the process and legacies of final abolition in Chocó and Colombia with a focus on the process of compensation and its place in the post-slavery economy. In the book's concluding epilogue, Barragán borrows from the methods of Sadia Hartman to consider the "afterlife of gradual emancipation" by connecting the continued attempts of social, political, and economic control of Afro-Colombians in this region to the continued and elevated violence that they have faced at the hands of paramilitaries during Colombia's most recent civil war (36).

Freedom's Captives makes many important contributions to the growing historical field on the Black Pacific, and the historiography of slavery and abolition in both Colombia and the larger Atlantic World. Barragán's focus on Chocó highlights the importance of geographic space on the experience of slavery and abolition, moving the field beyond the categorization of urban and plantation slavery to examine the institution in frontier cities and small-scale gold mines. Furthermore, Barragán shifts historical understandings of gradual emancipation away from Cuba and Brazil, which have long characterized the field despite being the final two nations in the hemisphere to adopt these policies.[6] Through her investigation of the formation and legacy of the Free Womb Law in Colombia, Barragán reveals a much longer history of gradual emancipation policy in the Americas that was emulated and altered across different nations throughout the nineteenth century, while also adding to the growing

[6] Rebecca Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985).

number of historians who have emphasized the impact of specific regional and national politics on these laws.[7] Most importantly, Barragán shifts the view of the Free Womb Law itself away from one that was designed only to bring abolition to Colombia and instead reveals the ways that it prolonged the use and trade of Free Womb children who continued to exist in a state of captivity, despite their status as legally free.

Overall, *Freedom's Captives* is an impressive and well-written book that uses new interpretations of old archives to shift understandings of the chronology and impact of gradual emancipation laws in Colombia and the Americas. Barragán's writing brings Chocó to life, providing new insights about slavery, abolition, and the shape of the most recent violence and dispossession in the region that will be important for scholars of Colombian history and politics, the Black Pacific, and slavery and abolition more generally.

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[7] Marcela Echeverri Muñoz, "Slave Exports and the Politics of Slave Punishment during Colombia's Abolition Process (1820s-1840s)," *Journal of Global Slavery 7* (2022), 73-102.