WELCOME TO OUR FIRST VOLUME!

We are so excited to inaugurate this new way to share the events and ideas the Colgate History Department and History Club have been pursuing each semester. This journal is available online via the Department website and by mail. Please contact Erin Conway to subscribe (contact information on last page). A special thank you to Professors Cooper, Barrera, and Khan for their support in assisting the History Club’s first volume as well. Enjoy! —

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

By Professor Antonio Barrera

The 2016-2017 year was a fantastic and productive year as well as a year of changes for the History Department. Let me start with the changes. In July 2016 our Administrative Assistant Diane English retired after 22 years of working in the department; her presence and laugh made the department a kind and welcoming place for faculty and students. Under her administrative leadership, the department met its obligations and duties as one of the largest departments in the university. Our new Administrative Assistant, Erin Conway, is taking the department further along a path of online and computer-based administrative opportunities. She is doing a fantastic job. Also in July, a new colleague, Monica Mercado, joined the department. She took the position of Faye Dudden, Charles A. Dana Professor of History, who retired after 19 years of teaching and working in the department. Professor Dudden’s teaching focused on the history of the women’s rights movement in U.S. She was part of the group of scholars who, in the 1970s, helped to establish the field of women’s history, which changed the history profession. Our new colleague, Professor Mercado, studies the role of gender and sexuality in the formation of women’s religious and intellectual communities in nineteenth- and twentieth-century North America. She offers courses such as Women’s Rights in U.S. History; Women in the City; and Upstate History among other courses. She complements existing faculty strengths and moves us in new directions. Finally, in Spring 2017 Norman Kutcher, from Syracuse University, joined the department as Colgate NEH Associate Professor of the Humanities in the Department of History. His presence in the department has been refreshing and rewarding. (Continued on page 2)

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Last year the department worked on four initiatives: building a sense of community among majors; strengthening the intellectual community in the department; rethinking the structure of our curriculum; and establishing a stronger social-media presence. For the first initiative, we re-institated coffee breaks for students and faculty to meet informally in the department’s lounge. As a result, our students came together to revive the History Club under the leadership of Emily Wong (in the Fall ’16), and Emily Kahn (in the Spring ’17). The History Club organizes weekly meetings, field trips, conversations with faculty, and this History Newsletter. For the second initiative, strengthening the intellectual community in the department, we organized a series of presentations by the faculty for the faculty. These presentations are called “History Conversations.” We discuss topics ranging from notions of empires to publication practices today and their consequences in tenure and professional decisions. For the third initiative, rethinking the structure of our curriculum, we continued discussions the department began the previous year on the curriculum. We are discussing the rationales of the curriculum. The curriculum is a source of creativity and of new and dynamic engagements with our discipline; and it shapes how the students perceive history and its opportunities. The proposal under consideration invites students to own their major in an intentional way. Last but not least, we are strengthening our social media presence. We hired two students, Brandon Gonzalez and Zhelun (Bruce) Zhou, to help us with our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts. Our social media presence is strong today.

As part of our curriculum conversations, we created two new type of class: the Hist 399 Reading Seminars: New Areas of Inquiry, and the Hist 100-level new introductory history classes. The Hist 399 seminars offer history students the opportunity to engage in intensive discussion of recent scholarship in a seminar setting. They allow faculty to explore new research areas and improve students’ skills in critical reading and discussion. The new Hist 100-level introductory classes are thematic courses (for example, Environmental History) designed to introduce students to the study of history. Both the Hist 399 Seminars and new Hist 100-level classes offer faculty the possibility of exploring teaching areas based on our research interests and to share with students our interests, practices, and ideas about history and the craft of history.

In 2016, the History Department was ranked one of the top 10 departments in the country. This ranking is the result of engaged and productive faculty as well as engaged and smart students. The History Club is a reflection of all of this, and thanks to it, this History Newsletter is now a reality. Thanks to all of you, faculty, students, and staff for your willingness to work hard and deliberately in pursuit of the department’s goals.

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OVER THE CENTURIES U.S. HISTORY

- May 18, 1917: The US Congress passes the Selective Service Act, giving the President the power to draft people into the military.¹
- Feb 17, 1817: Baltimore is the 1st U.S. city lit by gas.²
- 1717: Scots-Irish immigration begins in earnest due to higher rent rates in Ireland.³
- March 1617: Pocahontas dies from an unspecified illness in England.⁴

“All together, the department had a fantastic and productive year!”
A NOTE FROM THE HISTORY CLUB PRESIDENT
By Emily Kahn ’19

This past year marked the (revived) History Club’s second year on campus. This was a year of growth and growing pains. In the Fall 2016 semester, under the leadership of my friend and colleague Emily Wong ’18, we focused on gaining membership. The Class of 2020 has been instrumental in helping us expand as a club and has provided us with some of our most involved members. One successful event was a showing of a documentary on Hamilton the Musical in Lawrence Hall, organized by the lovely Erin Conway. About twenty students, many of whom previously had been unaware of the History Club’s presence, came to eat popcorn, watch the film, and discuss the election of 1800. In the Spring semester, we continued to gain new members as we worked on this newsletter. Upon the request of the members, we held a History Club field trip for the first time. We travelled to Auburn, New York to see the Harriet Tubman House, William H. Seward House, and Fort Hill Cemetery where Tubman and Seward are buried. This trip allowed us to engage with history outside of the classroom through conversing with docents, observing authentic artifacts, studying historic materials, and discussing the flaws and successes of the places we visited.

Throughout the entire year, we have held weekly discussions in the History Lounge on history-related articles found in recent news, including the controversy of Valentine’s Day, the ranking of U.S. presidents, censorship of history, etc. We have also encouraged our members to get to know the History Department faculty through attending Coffee Hours and History Conversations. We encourage the History Department to continue to invite students to History Conversations. It is an amazing opportunity as undergraduates to have our voices heard and valued in a discussion with professionals.

Despite these events, the History Club remains a new and relatively unknown organization at Colgate. To ensure the club’s survivance, we hope to foster partnerships and host events with other academic clubs in 2017-18. These events could encourage inter-disciplinary discourse and help us gain a more diverse member base. Although we have a core group of about thirteen students, we must continue to grow, especially in preparation for the temporary departure of many of our members on the 2018 London History Study Group. We recruited members from the Class of 2021 at the Club Fair and sent an email out to all History concentrators at the beginning of the year. (Continued on page 4)
“We will continue to hold weekly meetings and attend departmental events but also plan to implement a monthly movie night.”

Finally, we hope to use the success of the Auburn field trip to plan a weekend trip to New York City to see museums, archives, and historic sites. The beauty of the History Club is that it attracts members of many majors and minors, and we are eager to expose as many students as possible to what history has to offer.

I would like to thank my Executive Board for their efforts this year -- Vice President Matthew Kato ’19, Treasurer Faith McDonald ’19, and Secretary Zhelun (Bruce) Zhou ’20. I look forward to working with Faith and Bruce in these positions again next year and wish Matthew all the luck in his year abroad. I also would like to congratulate Anna Pluff ’20 on her election to the position of Vice President for the Fall semester. With the help of these talented students, I am confident that the club will continue to grow next year and prosper once I go abroad on the London History Study Group in the Spring.

The History Club E-Board looks forward to another exciting year! —

A GALAXY OF DIVERSITY: STAR WARS, HISTORY, AND HUMANITY’S HOPE

By Professor Banner-Haley

It seems that every month or so astronomers/scientists exploring space are postulating the possibility of life-producing planets. Most of the star systems explored are many light years beyond our capability to reach them. But the fact that these experts are now willing to seriously consider what heretofore has only existed in science fiction literature and popular culture venues is significant.

If the human species as we know it is not the only species of being in relative existence; if as Carl Sagan, back in the Eighties, posited that the universe was composed of billions and billions of stars and hundreds of galaxies, then perhaps now in the twenty-first century we must begin to re-think who we are and where stand in an ultimately diverse space arena. (Continued on page 5)
Hence the cultural, historical, and imaginative galaxy of George Lucas’ *Star Wars* becomes profoundly important. Aside from its cultural production that has fascinated almost two generations, its richly imaginative and historically-laden framework can provide a means by which to understand species natures, conflict, resolution, and a deeper meaning and understanding of diversity.

I first saw *Star Wars IV: A New Hope* in 1977. The opening sequence gripped me as it did millions. As Darth Vader’s immense Imperial Star Cruiser chased the Rebel ship in the vastness of space, you knew that you were in the presence of something sinister, dark, and very powerful. And yet as much as people loved and rooted for the “Good Characters” like Princess Leia, Han Solo, Master Yoda, and Luke Skywalker, people were also fascinated and captivated by Darth Vader. The forces of good and evil reside within us all. It is one of the deepest philosophical truths heavily documented by historical events that we know. Over the course of eight films (including the stand alone feature *Rogue One*) George Lucas’ galaxy far, far, away has mapped out worlds, cultures, and species that mine what Being, Spirit, Diversity really mean.

It is written that Coruscant, the urban planet of the Core Planets, is the birthplace of the human species. But in every episode seen thus far Coruscant, which is populated by over ten billion inhabitants, is very diversified. The Jedi Council, composed of many species from the galaxy resides there as does the Galactic Senate. It is a city planet, capital of the Galaxy and the seat of government and politics.

Yet Coruscant is also a deeply stratified world societally. Those of means and power and privilege reside in tall miles high buildings where the air is fresh, while miles below live denizens who have migrated from different worlds. It was in one of those neighborhoods that the young Obi-Wan Kenobi learned of the Far Outer Rim planet of Kamino from Dax, a diner owner. The Kaminoans, whose planet was stormy and aquatic, were experts in and responsible for creating Clones and special weaponry. The Clone Army figures greatly in the Stars saga in the battle between The Jedi and the Sith.

The rich complexity of this galaxy owes much to George Lucas’ understanding of history, conflict, spirituality, and the search for harmonious diversity. Humanoids in this galaxy are not superior or inferior to others. The Kaminoans, for example, are brilliant in their technology but neutral as to the ends or purposes of their creations. The Darthomian witches search for a sisterly spirituality that is flawed (hence Darth Maul).

But the core here is the Force, that all pervasive Being and Spirit that leads one either to the Light of Inclusion, Love and Peace or the Dark Side which bundles fear, insecurities, uncertainties, and which, if not placated, destroys any sense of self-love, worth, and inclusiveness of others as it emerges into a hateful, angry, deadly quest for power and domination. The more one looks into the Star Wars phenomenon, the more we can begin to understand the rudiments of healthy living, a strong appreciation of History, and a deeper understanding of the Force of Good and Evil in us all.—
FEATURED ALUMNI
Kate Dugdale ('16), History major and winner of the 2016 Award for Excellence in History.

1. What are you up to these days? "I am currently a graduate student in Museum Studies at the University of Washington!"

2. What do you miss most about Colgate? "I miss the campus. The University of Washington has about 45,000 students total, so I do miss how small Colgate is and how you could find someone you know everywhere on campus."

3. Favorite spot? "I miss the library a lot. I miss my senior thesis carrel most of all; it was right by the windows and I spent a lot of time there. But to be honest the whole campus was so beautiful it is hard to pick just one favorite spot."

4. Advice for current history majors? "Go to coffee hours! I promise that they are really fun and a great way to get to know your professors. Also free coffee!"

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THE RELEASE OF THE “HISTORY DEPARTMENT STATEMENT”
By Professor Xan Karn

One of the great things about Colgate’s History Department is the intellectual diversity of its faculty and students. It’s nearly impossible to come away from an in-class discussion or a department-sponsored event without being exposed to new and different perspectives on the world, its history, and the place of our community within that story. This diversity is our greatest resource.

At the same time, ours is a department based on certain shared values and core principles. We co-mingle and coalesce and share an identity because of the intellectual glue that bonds and holds us together. The key ingredient in that adhesive mixture is a shared belief in the importance and accessibility of facts and truth. We may debate the provenance and interpretation of particular facts—ours is a skeptical discipline that values and seeks to instill critical habits of mind—but, in the final analysis, we are devoted to a common enterprise of seeking and producing reliable (i.e., valid) knowledge. We see this endeavor as an important and necessary counter-praxis in a world that is frequently governed according to purely political principles.

This “praxis” (our way of making meaning from the historical record) aims at being strictly non-partisan and non-doctrinal, but it cannot always remain neutral, particularly when cultural and political forces threaten its central tenets. The History Department faculty, notwithstanding our many differences of perspective, collectively understood the result of last November’s presidential election as precisely this kind of threat.

In response to the flurry of Executive Orders signed by President Trump in the first weeks of his administration, and deeply troubled by the promotion and reliance of his spokespeople on so-called “alternative facts,” the department faculty decided to draft and circulate the following statement in February 2017. The statement was endorsed unanimously by the members of the History Department faculty, prior to its being posted on our departmental webpage (and social media outlets). The text was later re-circulated by the American Historical Association and re-posted on the website of The Chronicle of Higher Education.

We are gratified by the many supportive responses that the statement has received, and we remain absolutely committed to its tenets and principles.——
As a first-year student double majoring in History and Philosophy, I wanted to get to know my academic advisor better. So I decided to interview her. Professor Heather Roller is an Associate Professor of History and teaches History 358 Conquest and Colony-New World; Core 193C A Brazil; and History 231 Revolution and Resistance in Latin American (a class I took last semester). At the start of the interview, we discussed her research on the contact strategy practiced by two Brazilian autonomous native groups in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One group is from northern Brazil while the other group is from western Brazil. The goal of her research and subsequent book is to understand how these two groups remained autonomous from the colonial state while still engaging with it through trade and personal contacts. Thus far, she has drafted two chapters and has three more chapters, the introduction, and the conclusion to finish. She plans to continue working on the book during a Sabbatical leave next year with the aim of completing the book by August 2018.

She discussed why she started her research and how her research interweaves with her teaching:

“[My] teaching and research connect really well. That’s actually one of the things I love about my job is that I can pursue in my teaching the interests that are emerging from my research. And I can also use my teaching preparation as a way to explore new books and themes that I may, in the future, do my research on. I actually did this for this current project. I have a class, History 358, which is a comparative colonialism class. And one of the class days I planned for that several years ago was on autonomous native groups. So you know, I thought about some of the readings of the sources of this topic, and I found out that little has been written about those groups, despite their importance to the story of how colonialism failed in big parts of the hemisphere. So that really got me thinking about the theme, and how I would like to write a book on this. So yeah, I definitely feel that, for me, teaching and researching has been intertwined.”

“Her words inspired me to interweave both learning and future research together.”

This combination allows historians to get the most comprehensive understanding that can later be shared with others. Professor Roller also described her teaching plans following her return to Colgate for the Fall 2018 semester:

“When I come back from my Sabbatical, I want to teach a class on environmental history... because that is where I’m going for my next project... So I am going to teach one of those... I hope History 399 seminars which the History Department just approved... on something along the lines of communities and environmental crises... something about environmental crises in the Americas, so look at whole hemisphere, both Latin America and North America and that would be a way for me to explore a new field of my research...”

I hope to have the opportunity to take a class such as this with Professor Roller in the future. During the interview, Professor Roller kept expressing her gratitude for how lucky she has been in her life. She was fortunate to have great experiences at Yale University and Stanford University. She narrated her fondness for the Portuguese language and her fascination and passion for Brazil, its history, and working with its primary sources. She also mentioned how she feels lucky to be able to manage her homestead when she is not teaching. When I told her that I envied her experience, she humbly responded that, “No, I was very lucky.” Her words have stuck with me. It is important to take nothing for granted as students and academics. We may have what we believe to be the best experience in the world, but it is not given freely. —
January’s History Conversation focused on the Women’s March that took place on January 21, 2017. Professors Kira Stevens and Monica Mercado of the History Department and Chandra Russo of the Sociology Department led the discussion. All three professors participated in this march and shared their reflections and experiences while drawing connections to how the Women’s March connects to women’s history.

I find these conversations to be unique because they often offer moments in which professors and students can come together to debate and discuss History and its implications. I truly enjoy these History Conversations for the dialogues that they allow me to engage in, and I often walk away with a greater appreciation of the discipline of History. I find this discipline to be one that is intellectually stimulating in ways that can be both challenging and rewarding. It is often for this reason that I find myself proud to be a History major. But even for non-History majors these conversations are important ways for both professors and students alike to share ideas and engage in critical topics of discussion. The Women’s March was one such discussion that led to many questions about its implications on history and comments on the uniqueness of its unity all around the globe.

What I thought to be the most compelling aspect of the conversation was a point that Professor Stevens brought up; when looking at the organization of the march it was exceptional in the sense that so many people were able to organize themselves in an unprecedented way. We can see this organization through the signs that people crafted, the clothes they wore, the clear backpacks that so many thought to bring, and the snacks people shared. This preparedness was not because the Women’s March handed out fliers in advance as previously seen in history but rather because people sought out their own information through various social media platforms. Before going into the conversation, I really had no idea just how unusual it was to see this kind of coordination among such a vast group of people. Quite frankly, I took for granted how astonishing such a show of organization truly was. Evidently, it is crucial to examine how such a movement like this was able to emerge, for without the unique structure of organization that this march witnessed, perhaps it never would have garnered so much success. This organization and unity was a phenomenal demonstration of peace among an enormous coalition of people, which, surprisingly for some, did not erupt in violence. The implications of this, as Professor Stevens noted, remain to be seen, but the self-organization of this march was truly unparalleled with any previous march.

I think many of the implications of the Women’s March do remain to be seen.

“The question I want to raise is whether this was one movement or the start of a revolution.”

This revolution may very well be in response to the political and social implications of Trump’s presidency. Why did these people march? Was it just for women’s rights or for something broader in scope? What I fear when looking upon this movement is that it may not be enough. Will the people who participated in this overt show of resistance participate in everyday, small, but vital forms of resistance as well? The only way to prompt true change is not always to participate in the flashy forms of resistance, but in the smaller, sometimes more tedious ones as well. I hope that all the people, here and around the world, will see the Women’s March as not only one moment of resistance, but also as a moment that will spark off many more resistance movements. I hope that it becomes a symbol of inspiration and that it will only serve to mobilize people for the road ahead.

Overall, what I took away from this conversation was that it is important to be critical when looking upon moments like this. It is imperative to look at the details that brought such a mass movement together. The details are seen in the organization of such diverse groups, while the long-term effects are seen in how we as scholars, professors, historians, students, and people continue to conduct ourselves and choose to analyze the moments in time that come to define us.
In History research, as in life, there is no defined path to go down. My thesis began as broadly as any assignment ever could, “write about a topic in English history,” announced Professor Nemes in our London Colloquium during the fall semester at Colgate. This, to me, was as menacing of an assignment as any I had encountered in my academic career. It was completely up to me to choose, refine, and ensure there would not be a lack of sources or information to work from. After a certain amount of deliberation, stress, and self-doubt, I landed on the topic of the 1948 London Olympics.

For the first two months in London, I went to the National Archives about once or twice a week in order to pore through any and all primary sources that may pertain to the 1948 Olympics. This, as should be obvious to anyone who has ever conducted archival research, was a poor method that left me with far more questions than answers. With this method, I casted a wide net with the hope that the proverbial “defined path” would somehow become clear to me. I eventually landed upon the topic of postwar international relations in conjunction with the Olympics, which would eventually be formed into my final thesis, titled “Examining the Intersection of Postwar Diplomacy and the 1948 Summer Olympics in London.”

In late March, I had a thought that an avenue to go down for more advanced primary source material might be the International Olympic Museum located in the world Olympic capital, Lausanne, Switzerland. With the help of the Internet and some emailing back and forth with the museum’s archivist, I inquired about visiting. They were seemingly just as eager to receive me as I was to go. After my visit with them was all but confirmed, the hard part came putting together a proposal in order to receive funding from Colgate for this venture. With help from Professor Nemes and a painstaking attempt to price everything from airfare to hotel costs, I had a proposal that I submitted to the proper channels in the History Department. When I was approved, I booked my flight, made hotel arrangements, and anxiously awaited my first-ever solo venture. On Monday March 20th, I left my flat for the airport, and would return two days later on the night of Wednesday the 22nd. These two days in Lausanne, Switzerland would not only help define (and greatly improve) my research, but create a lasting memory for life.

I flew into Geneva on Monday night, I had to navigate the Swiss airport and get to the train station despite speaking no French at all. I had exchanged my British pounds for enough Swiss francs to get by. Despite not being able to read any of the signs posted. I was able to make my way to the train station (located in the airport) and then the hour-long ride to Lausanne. When I arrived, I hailed a cab, because despite Lausanne having a very navigable metro system, I was not about to try and decipher the maps in not only a city, but a country in which I did not know a single soul. I arrived at the hotel, got a good night’s sleep, and ensured that I knew how to get to the archives in the morning.

Hôtel du Port was located on picturesque Lake Geneva, making for a very pleasant 15-minute walk to get to Le Musée Olympique. The museum’s beautiful architecture and various outdoor sculptures created a very modern aesthetic. The archives were located in a small building behind the museum, in what looked like a tiny home refurbished to become a library. It was obvious to me that this noticeably small establishment was eager for visitors, as I was one of four people in the entire building and two people were the archivists employed there. I looked through the index of files they had at this location, selected which I thought would be helpful for my research, and began to copy down notes for what would amount to about 15 hours over the two days. This collection contained personal correspondence written to and from the heads of the International Olympic Committee, dated from before the end of World War II until after the 1948 Olympics three years later. These proved to be tremendously helpful to my research and helped give new perspectives that would have otherwise been lost had my research contained only primary source material from the UK national archives. I would not trade this experience for anything, and am extremely grateful to the History Department and the Stickles Fund who generously agreed to fund this trip.—
CONGRATS
CLASS OF 2017!

ALTERNATIVE FACTS AND HISTORIANS IN TIMES OF CRISES—
A DISCUSSION WITH PROFESSOR KARN
By Annie Wang ’19

“We are writing as scholars and educators to express our shock and concern regarding the omission of six million Jewish Holocaust victims from President Trump’s official statement on International Holocaust Remembrance Day.”

This quotation comes from an article entitled “Trump, Holocaust Remembrance, and Alternative Facts,” in the Huffington Post on 1/1/17 written by our very own Professor Xan Karn, along with Professor Michelle Kelso from the George Washington University. In this article, Professors Karn and Kelso argue that the exclusion of the Jewish people, the primary victims of the Holocaust, from any statement pertaining to Holocaust remembrance is a “soft form” of Holocaust denial. On February 28, 2017, Professor Karn was invited to come to a History Club meeting to lead a discussion about this article.

At the beginning of his talk, Professor Karn said, “Some people have asked me to write an article about the comparison between Hitler and Trump, but I never did.” He finds this comparison unpersuasive because he sees substantial differences between Trump and Hitler. Thankfully, twenty-first century America is not interwar Europe, and the measures Donald Trump takes (or intends to take) are drastically different from those of Adolf Hitler.

But Professor Karn does find Trump’s omission of the Jewish people to be very problematic. According to his and Professor Kelso’s article, the language crafted by the Trump administration broke with the tone of statements from previous administrations. Past presidents explicitly acknowledged the suffering of Jews during the Holocaust and highlighted the dangers of anti-Semitism in both its historical and contemporary forms. In response to criticism from the public, Reince Priebus suggested that Jewish victims did not require explicit mention because their suffering was obvious, and that the omission of the Jewish group was meant to make the statement inclusive. Professors Karn and Kelso, however, denounce this statement for potentially opening the door to hate groups and creating a false understanding of the Holocaust for students and the American public. In the context of President Trump’s statement on the Holocaust, Professors Karn and Kelso comment on historical scholarship: “There can be no leeway or moral flexibility when it comes to plain historical facts and broadly accepted interpretations of the past... the Holocaust cannot be a forum for ‘alternative facts’ or for strong beliefs, divorced from social scientific methodology and consensus.” (Continued on page 11)
In regards to “plain historical facts and broadly accepted interpretations,” Professor Karn asked students when we should use skepticism to contest statements of truths. At the History Club meeting, he said that a new trend among historians is to question commonly accepted facts. On one hand, he supports and encourages such questioning. On the other, he thinks there are facts that are just facts. But how do we identify what is a fact and what is up for interpretation? While listening to Professor Karn talk about the omission of certain facts within narratives, I thought about what I read about voices and silences in Professor Bouk’s History Workshop. What is not said matters just as much as what is said. One problem with Trump’s statement is that it does not say what needs to be said -- namely, the suffering of the Jews. This suffering needs to be explicitly acknowledged because it has become part of the definition of the Holocaust. We cannot look at the Holocaust without looking at the Jews who suffered. The fact that Jews were specifically targeted was integrated into the “essence” of the Holocaust. Trump’s statement is problematic because, by ignoring this aspect of the Holocaust, he altered its definition.

Lastly the public reaction to Professor Karn and Kelso’s article reveals an ant-intellectual tendency. According to Professor Karn, when he read the comments on this article online, he saw an abundance of bitterness and mockery, contrasting greatly from the overwhelming support he has received from the Colgate community. The comments he saw were very critical of professors and experts. It is almost as if the writers of these comments are saying, “Don’t question. Don’t think.” This contempt for truth and disdain for serious thinking aligns with much of the Trump’s rhetoric: “It’s just boy talk” or “It’s locker-room banter.”

So how should a historian live in these difficult times? At this meeting, Professor Karn posed some additional questions: “What should we do? What can we accomplish? What is our relationship with our environment? What is our agency?” Due to time limitations, we did not get to talk about this set of questions, but they left us with something to ponder after the meeting’s conclusion.

For more information, read Professors Karn and Kelso’s article:
HISTORY DEPARTMENT SPONSORS THE PHI BETA KAPPA VISITING SCHOLAR

By Denise Larson ’19

Sterling Professor of Spanish at Yale University, Rolena Adorno, visited Colgate University and gave a public lecture on March 22nd. Her talk, entitled “Gonzalo Guerrero: Hearsay and History in Myth-Making about Colonial Latin America,” was brief, but tore through volumes of evidence spanning from the early-mid sixteenth century to the late twentieth century in order to construct a story of who Gonzalo Guerrero was and how she traced his story. I was fortunate enough to be invited to attend a lunch with Professor Adorno the following day, and we were able to continue the conversation.

As a sophomore History major, this experience was invaluable because I was able to orient myself and the work I am doing here at Colgate within broader historical scholarship. I am grateful to be a part of a department that does so much to foster intellectual curiosity, not just in the classroom, but outside of it as well.

I am currently enrolled in HIST 358, Conquest and Colony in the New World, taught by Professor Heather Roller. In class we read and compare primary sources pertaining to conquest on the eastern seaboard of what is now the United States as well as in Latin America, especially Mexico. We practice approaching sources critically by considering them in context, and we also strive to parse out an Indian perspective on the events of conquest when possible. At some lectures I have been unable to grasp the nuances of the argument put forth, but at this one I could relate to not only her topic but to her process. I was excited to hear her mentioning names of historical figures and titles of texts that I had studied in class, and even more so to understand that she was examining sources in a way similar to what we do. To have that academic bond with a scholar of such prestige in her field reaffirmed to me that I am doing real scholarship in my History classes at Colgate.

A class I took last semester was HIST 299 (now 199), History Workshop, taught by Professor Antonio Barrera. In this class, we questioned what it is to be a historian and how to go about research and writing for History. While not every History major at Colgate will become a professional historian, it is expected that we all become historians for the duration of our time in the department. As a result of that class, I find myself paying attention to the practice of History in every reading I do or lecture I attend, and Professor Adorno’s was no exception. The practice of History is complex, but one part of it I found myself particularly considering in the presence of Professor Adorno was that of storytelling. At lunch with her, in casual parts of the conversation as well as when referring back to her lecture, I was struck by her ability to tell a riveting story. While as historians we strive to do more than tell a story, we must at least be drawn in to our research topics by the story that is present in the sources. As Professor Adorno put it, the lack of information is the source of intrigue. Listening to her talk, her passion for her research was palpable, and that was invigorating to hear as a student about to embark on some serious research papers.

Professor Barrera and Professor Adorno had an exchange at the end of the lecture debating the language of a primary source and whether the author meant painted or tattooed. A comment that Professor Adorno made at this juncture has stuck with me. She said, “in front of students we must be rigorous,” and proceeded to go back to the text and check her work in front of us. I think it’s clear that the Colgate History Department would agree that rigor is important for its students. The department’s commitment in the classroom as well as at its extracurricular lectures is a testament to that belief.—

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Colgate University was rated 10th in the nation for students majoring in History by USA Today!!

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With this poetic opening passage, the History Department welcomed Professor Timothy Mitchell, the William B. Ransford Professor of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies at Columbia University, to Colgate. On March 25th in Golden Auditorium, Professor Mitchell gave a lecture entitled “Econom mentality: A History of the Future.” I was able to attend and then ask questions on this complex yet engaging lecture.

Professor Mitchell's lecture can be outlined into two parts: the modern invention of the economy in twentieth-century America, and the process of capitalization and the way it helps earn profits in the present by measuring the future. These two concepts shape our way of thinking about and producing the future. To understand the history of future, he concluded, is to understand the history of the relationship between the economy in terms of growth and the kind of mentality behind capitalization. “Economental(ity)” is an allusion to Michel Foucault's “governmental(ity),” depicting the economy as a mode of governing. Professor Mitchell also suggested that, following the 1980s, the economy was gradually displaced by the rational market.

I had never learned about these topics before, and it was interesting to hear that this history might become less important as the role of the economy is minimized in future decades. Contrary to the opinion of many other people in attendance, I originally thought that this lecture was easy to grasp. Based on this overly simplistic understanding, I posed several questions regarding the growth of the economy to Professor Mitchell. My first question asked how we could better understand the history of the future if the economy and the measure of growth is based on the aforementioned relationship between economy and capitalization. My second question was if mentality is generated by factors other than the economy, how would he account for these additional factors? For both questions, Professor Mitchell gave me the following response: “I don’t know. I am still trying to figure them out.” At first, I felt that Professor Mitchell’s answers were inadequate. Only later when I asked Professor Bouk about this lecture did I realize that the history of the economy is a short history of the modern economy. It is constantly evolving. It needs scholars to continually examine the relationship between the growth and capitalization. The history of the future, in short, is also a history of how we govern people in different ways in the present. (Continued on page 14)
This past Spring 17 students went to London with the History Study Group. They did original, exciting research in archives and libraries across London, and also took classes on the history of London and on the theater. The study group traveled to far and wide, including destinations such as Stonehenge, Belgium, Munich, and Budapest.

Stay tuned for information sessions for Spring 2019 this semester!

After the lecture, in addition to my questions, I told Professor Mitchell that his talk reminded me of a paper I read for my Philosophy class—“The Death of God and the Death of Morality” by Brian Leiter, a philosopher and professor at the University of Chicago Law School. At the end of this paper, Leiter concluded that Marx failed to pay attention to individual morality and psychology. I feel that another major nineteenth-century philosopher, Nietzsche, also failed to pay attention to the surrounding socioeconomic circumstances. This remark was a quick afterthought, but I believe that the study of History cannot ignore other subjects such as Economics, Philosophy, the sciences, and Political Science. With a grin on his face, Professor Mitchell teased, “That’s why we should study them both!” He certainly has studied them all.

Professor Mitchell’s words resonated with me and reminded me that we should be more inclusive in our study. To understand an issue fully, we must have the ability to adopt various perspectives. Professor Mitchell’s lecture was relative to History, Philosophy, and Economics. Like Foucault, Professor Mitchell was also trying to single out a mode of governing and trying to chronicle economics within history. One could not understand Professor Mitchell’s arguments fully unless he had an understanding of Philosophy. Even then some aspects of the lecture likely would have been misunderstood. Nevertheless, History and Philosophy should not be placed in a hierarchy. They should be treated as equally important in order to produce academic discourse that is more vigorous and closer to the truth. I know after this lecture that versatility is necessary for modern-day people, as it can help individuals present problems in different ways. Finally, I recognize now that it will always be important for students and intellectuals to consult with one another in an attempt to discern the truth.—

I first heard the word “Cutten” in reference to the person rather than the residential hall during my first semester at Colgate. I was still naïve and ignorant, too blindsided by my love of Colgate to even consider the possibility that it could have a shameful past. In that moment, part of me still did not believe that Colgate allowed George Barton Cutten, a eugenic scientist and Nazi-sympathizer, to serve as the institution’s president from 1922-1942. Yet all of me did not want to believe that Colgate still memorializes Cutten’s name on a residential hall today.

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I made it my goal to convince Colgate to change the name of Cutten Hall on that day; however, my need for this change grew upon being forced to live in Cutten Hall. Everyday, I walk by a bronze plaque that praises Cutten’s expansion of the school’s endowment, curriculum, and population size. While nothing on that plaque is untrue, it fails to mention the other side of Cutten: the racist, anti-Semitic, sexist, white supremacist. There is no mention of Cutten’s implementation of some of the strongest admissions quotas in the country, permitting less than one-percent of an incoming class to respectively be Jewish or African American. Cutten actively worked against inclusionary policies and should no longer be honored on a campus that now claims to value diversity.

Luckily, through the efforts of the Senate and dedicated faculty members, the administration has recently changed the name of Cutten Hall to 113 Broad Street. While I have been a proponent of this change, I certainly cannot take credit for it. I never had to stage the protest against Cutten which I had been planning. Yet I did get the opportunity to participate in a small protest against Cutten in February.

Some people ask me why I staged a protest against Cutten after the administration agreed to change the building’s name. Firstly, I did not stage this protest. I found out about it an hour before it was scheduled to start from my roommate and frantically changed out of pajamas in order to participate. The true organizers of the protest were two members of the Illuminator, an art collective based out of New York City that projects words and images on buildings to fight against injustice, who were invited here by the Art and Art History and Film and Media Studies Departments. Upon arrival, they asked Colgate students where on campus it would be most impactful to shine the projections. Multiple people said Cutten Hall. The purpose of this protest was not to be anti-administration. It is probable that the majority of the approximately fifteen students and five faculty members present supported the administration’s decision to change the name of Cutten Hall. Rather, this protest, in my opinion at least, strove to raise awareness about Colgate’s troubled past. For me, I wanted to honor the Jewish and other minority students who did not have the privilege to feel welcomed and safe at Colgate like I do.

While the Illuminator and a handful of students were setting up in front of Cutten Hall, specifically Shepardson where I live, I was thinking about what words would be most meaningful to project. Ultimately, after careful deliberation, I decided to write and project a sign that said “We’re Still Here” with a Jewish star. As I saw this message sweeping over my bedroom window and the residential hall which has caused me so much discomfort, I had tears in my eyes. Cutten failed to prevent Jews from being a part of the Colgate community. The following projections broadened the narrative to include Cutten’s persecution of other minorities and shed light on Colgate’s continuing struggle with diversity: “I’m Cutten Racism Out” and “Colgate racism is REAL.” Two more phrases were projected, but, given their profane and graphic nature, I will not mention them here.

But was this protest enough to counter Colgate’s historic culture of discrimination? No, especially in light of the recent racial profiling of an African American student holding a glue gun. The protest was one of the most meaningful experiences I have had at Colgate thus far, but it certainly was not enough. Should the name change be seen as the end of Cutten’s presence at Colgate? Also no. Removing his name without further conversation is whitewashing history. It would be as if Cutten never existed and never fostered a campus of discrimination. The following suggestions could help ensure that changing the name of the residential hall is only the first step to raising awareness about Cutten and Colgate’s past:

1. Include one of Cutten’s texts on eugenics in Challenges of Modernity
2. Place a plaque outlining Cutten’s discriminatory actions next to the existing plaque praising Cutten outside of the Shaw Wellness Center
3. Install an exhibit on Cutten inside of the 113 Broad Street Core for the Bicentennial
4. Rename 113 Broad Street after someone who promoted diversity or worked to create a more inclusive campus

More than anything, I urge you to say Cutten’s name and to educate yourself on Cutten’s policies while at Colgate... because we are still here and we are not going anywhere.

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While it is important for our society to have an understanding of history, the process of studying history is also an excellent way to train your mind. Exposure to rigorous historical method and clear narrative style develops conceptual skills, research competence, writing fluency, and sensitivity to the uses and abuses of language and historical knowledge.

Our curriculum is truly global in reach, including courses on African, Asian, European, North American, and Latin American subjects, and on contact and interaction between these societies. If you are a History major, we will encourage you to take courses in related departments and programs, while competence in at least one foreign language is also desirable. (from the Department’s website)