Jeremy Brown congratulates Emily O'Brien on her Cormack Teaching Award.

of career paths. And productive academic careers. Second, the undergraduate approaches and welcomes non-majors into graduate training first, history is an inclusive field that rewards interdisciplinary of a non-profit organization? I can offer two parallel answers: became a community organizer and is now on the executive team end up chairing the History Department at SFU, while my wife took historiography and methods courses along with seminars focusing on China. I took zero classes about historiography or languages, and ended up taking a total of two history courses

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Jeremy Brown

W when I was an undergraduate in the late 1990s, I was not a history major. I majored in East Asian studies and foreign languages, and ended up taking a total of two history courses focusing on China. I took zero classes about historiography or historical methods. My partner Laura was a history major who took historiography and methods courses along with seminars focusing on multiple regions and time periods. How, then, did I end up chairing the History Department at SFU, while my wife became a community organizer and is now on the executive team of a non-profit organization? I can offer two parallel answers: first, history is an inclusive field that rewards interdisciplinary approaches and welcomes non-majors into graduate training and productive academic careers. Second, the undergraduate history major successfully prepares students for a wide variety of career paths.

These answers hold true at SFU. In the undergraduate history courses we offer at SFU, we see many non-majors in first- and second-year courses, while our third- and fourth-year classes mostly attract history majors. Whatever the topic, region, time period, or approach of a particular course, we engage with students—majors and non-majors alike—who will draw upon what they learn here in different and unexpected ways for the rest of their lives.

During the 2021–2022 academic year, students returned to in-person learning hungry to make connections, craft historical arguments, and discuss primary sources. Every week since SFU resumed in-person classes in September 2021, I have been struck by how engaged students have been in the classroom: I notice increased eye contact, more nods and smiles and raised eyebrows, and far more raised hands, even in the lecture hall,

from students who want to ask a question or debate a point, than I recall in 2019 or earlier. And every week a rotating group of at least five or six first- and second-year students stop by to chat at my drop-in “office hours” in Convocation Mall or the MBC food court, eager to talk to their professor—and even more eager to talk to their classmates. Many of these students experienced their first year at SFU in an entirely online environment caused by the pandemic. Emergency remote learning online worked when we needed it to, but its limitations also underscored the value of surprising, spontaneous, informal moments during, before, and after class. These moments seemed tangential or inconsequential before the pandemic but I now understand how central they are to learning.

In the pages of this newsletter you will see how we stayed afloat and supported each other during the pandemic, and you will see how we returned to campus and the community with renewed vigour. Share our pride in the descriptions of faculty and student publications, awards, research advances, and other achievements. Remember the power and insightfulness of the “Highlighting Black Histories” lecture series and History Reads panel discussion. Take a look at what our Decolonization and Indigenization Working Group, established in 2021, has sparked, including “A Brief Decolonized History of SFU” (see page 23). And after you have caught up with what we have done over the past academic year, catch up with us in person on the sixth floor of the Academic Quadrangle, send your friends and professors a note to tell us what you’ve been up to, or find a time to drop by our office hours.

The Department of History at Simon Fraser University is located on the unceded and stolen territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Tsleil-Waututh), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Teylui-Waathith), q̓ic̓əy̓ə (Katzee), k̓ʷq̓əy̓əm (Kwakwaten), Qay-qayt, Qwawdlen, Senayahmos and Tsawwassen Nations. Unceded means that these lands have never been surrendered and thus Indigenous claims of sovereignty and title continue to apply to them, as is recognized by the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and sections 25 and 35 of the Canadian Constitution. As scholars who benefit from being on this land, we believe it is our duty to amplify Indigenous voices in our department.

This territorial acknowledgment was created with consultation by SFU History’s Decolonization and Indigenization Working Group.

Front cover

Japanese signboards collected on the shores of Haida Gwaii by local historian Neil Carey. Photo credit: Lawrence Fast.

Japanese signboards collected on the shores of Haida Gwaii by local historian Neil Carey. Photo credit: Lawrence Fast.
Andrea Geiger

Converging Empires

Andrea Geiger

Converging Empires writes not only across the national and other boundaries that came to cut across what had already long been a complex and dynamic Indigenous borderlands region along the North Pacific coast of North America, but also across the fields of history that have been the focus of my research and teaching over the course of my career: border and borderlands history, the history of Meiji-era emigration to North America and the race-based legal constraints that confronted Japanese emigrants in Meiji-era emigration to North America and the race-based legal constraints that confronted Japanese emigrants in the U.S.-Canada border in shaping my understanding of the colonial borderlands explored was essential, the

Like our road trip through the B.C. interior into the Yukon, traveling north along the Pacific coast on a B.C. Ferries vessel that also served the small communities along the coast gave me a level of appreciation for the landscape that whose historical experiences I was tracing had traversed a century earlier that I would not otherwise have had, as well as the way in which both distance and the myriad waterways and islands that comprise the archipelagos that line the North Pacific coast came to be re-imagined as the Second World War loomed. As archivists all around the Pacific Rim have been, those at the Prince Rupert City and Regional Archives and at the Haida Gwaii Museum at Kay Lingaay on Graham Island in Haida Gwaii were unfailingly generous in sharing their knowledge about the northern B.C. coast. The same was true of local historian Neil Carey, then well into his nineties, who had sailed the waters around Haida Gwaii for over half a century and shared his large collection of ocean-tossed wooden boards into which Japanese characters had been carved that had washed ashore on its outer shores over the years. Among my fondest memories, as well, were the many hours spent pouring through the diaries of the German-American mining engineer hired by Japanese entrepreneur Archika Ikeda in 1907 to oversee operations at the copper mine he established on Moresby Island as the ferry made its way back to Vancouver Island on its return trip, stopping along the way at some of the same Indigenous communities where other early Japanese immigrants had worked or settled.2 But for a stop at a small local history museum deep in the forest on Graham Island that featured old logging machinery and early twentieth century household items, I would never have known these diaries existed.

On a later trip, we travelled on the smaller and older Alaska ferries from Prince Rupert to Juneau, Alaska, where the archivists at the Alaska State Archives, the Alaska State Library, and Sealaska Heritage Institute pointed out promising sources related both to Indigenous people and to early Japanese immigrants in Alaska. Still further north, the ferry stopped at the small town of Skagway at the base of one of the passes that prospectors had climbed on foot on their way to the Yukon gold fields. The short distance between the coast and the U.S.-Canada border near the top of the pass, decided upon only in 1903, made clear the absurdity of requiring Japanese migrants who sought to transit this narrow strip of U.S. territory to pay a $500 bond to ensure that they did not remain behind.3 Although the Alaska ferries go all the way to Anchorage, I chose instead to travel there by plane the next year, having learned that the Anchorage branch of U.S. National Archives was about to be shut down. During those last two weeks before it closed, I spent every minute I could reading through files while it was still open, stopping only long enough to eat a quick bite at midday by the front door. Researchers had been assured that the archival records housed there would be scanned and made available online but as the thoughtful archivists who had worked with these records for decades also observed, this does not tell one as much as paging through the files themselves about who wrote and organized them.

Like our road trip through the B.C. interior into the Yukon, during the 2004-2005 UBC archives research semester to Alaska or to northern B.C. and the Yukon, as well as to Japan, at times when key archives were open, but because of its broad-minded vision of world history in all its guises and the colleagues with whom I had the good fortune to work. Among those whose work continues to challenge and inspire me are Janice Matsumura, Luke Clossey, Jay Taylor, Ilya Vinkovetsky, and Mary-Ellen Kelm. Seminars on border and borderlands history in North America, Nikkei history in Canada and the United States, and the bodies of federal law imposed on Indigenous peoples on both sides of the U.S.-Canada border allowed me to share the new work in each of these fields that shaped my own thinking about the North Pacific borderlands with groups of smart and engaged students from one year to the next and, in that process, to know these materials better still. The same was true of the lecture courses I taught on Meiji-era Japanese history and the prewar period in Japan, as well as on Atlantic and Pacific migration.

When formalizing origins of the Nikkei National Museum and Archives just down the road from SFU, UBC’s Asian Library, and at the Japanese National Archives in Tokyo, Japan. Like other records produced by first generation immigrant groups, whatever their country of origin, those written in their first language often reflect issues and concerns far less clearly visible in sources written in the language of the destination country.

I could not have asked for a better place to do this work than the History Department at SFU, not only because its trimester system allowed me to travel during my research semester to Alaska or to northern B.C. and the Yukon, as well as to Japan, at times when key archives were open, but because of its broad-minded vision of world history in all its guises and the colleagues with whom I had the good fortune to work. Among those whose work continues to challenge and inspire me are Janice Matsumura, Luke Clossey, Jay Taylor, Ilya Vinkovetsky, and Mary-Ellen Kelm. Seminars on border and borderlands history in North America, Nikkei history in Canada and the United States, and the bodies of federal law imposed on Indigenous peoples on both sides of the U.S.-Canada border allowed me to share the new work in each of these fields that shaped my own thinking about the North Pacific borderlands with groups of smart and engaged students from one year to the next and, in that process, to know these materials better still. The same was true of the lecture courses I taught on Meiji-era Japanese history and the prewar period in Japan, as well as on Atlantic and Pacific migration.

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As is the case for many of us, the work we do as historians also reflects the influences that shaped the contours of our own lives at one point or another. In my case, these range from the years I spent in Japan as a child where my elderly neighbours included many who had been born or raised during the Meiji era; to the school law professors who introduced me to some of the ways in which racialized barriers were written into law over time and, like the judges for whom I would go on to work, demanded careful thought and precision in writing about it; to the friends and colleagues with whom I was fortunate enough to be able to work in the Reservation Attorney’s Office on the Colville Reservation in northeastern Washington state, including some whose ancestral territories span the U.S.-Canada border. Taken together, all of these influences, along with the interplay between teaching and research and the support and encouragement of members of the communities about which I came to write, enabled me to craft a narrative that explores some of the ways in which Indigenous people on either side of the Canada-U.S. border. The sky was my limit at SFU, and the support I received from my colleagues was endless. A colleague at the University of Toronto, having followed my career at SFU, once commented on my role as the Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. It was not an easy decision to leave SFU, my colleagues, my students and Vancouver. At SFU, I was a faculty member in the History Department, as well as the Director of the Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies (CCMS), a role to which most of my time was dedicated. Through this former role, I had the opportunity to work with faculty and students across all departments, and to engage with Vancouver’s various communities. We translated SFU’s motto “Engaging the World” into conversations between the academic community and the non-academic ones, both locally and globally, channelling knowledge and experience back and forth and creating new and rich learning experiences. One particular outcome I am very proud of was an unprecedented dialogue and co-operation between the Muslim and the Indigenous communities of British Columbia, sponsored and fostered by SFU and CCMS. In addition to all the above, and often in co-operation with the History Department, CCMS brought to campus a long slate of speakers, a number of them budding scholars with cutting edge scholarship.

The sky was my limit at SFU, and the support I received from my colleagues was endless. A colleague at the University of Toronto, having followed my career at SFU, once commented that I look like a bird who has just spread its wings wide and far. I also felt in love with Vancouver. Ironically, after my arrival, and having had lived in 5 different Canadian cities, I had decided that I would no longer move anywhere else and that I would spend the rest of my academic career in Vancouver and at SFU. But apparently fate had a different opinion.

What brought me to and kept me in Doha is a long story but in short, I was recruited, and I was intrigued by the opportunity: to take on a new challenge in a new setting, meet new colleagues and students, and live in an Arab capital with heavy political weight and taking many promising initiatives in the Education sector. It is also closer to where I grew up (Lebanon), and closer to my research sites. I get to live in an Arab country, not just write about Arab history.

I have always appreciated and cherished my experience at Canadian Universities (University of Alberta, University of Toronto, Dalhousie University, and Simon Fraser University). Each institution nourished me in its own way but they all taught me the value of good governance, collegiality, and high quality performance. I can go on and on about the positive and impactful experiences I have had as an Arab Muslim woman in Canadian academia, whether in terms of moral or academic support, and from mentors and supervisors, administrators and colleagues. Moving to a relatively new institution that is still developing and already having a regional impact but with much more potential, has made me realize how appreciative I am of my academic journey in Canada. The experience gained from that journey has been shaping my vision as a Dean at the Doha Institute. And by bit bit, I have also been able to spread my wings in that capacity, and thanks also to much support from administrators, faculty and students at the Doha Institute.

If I were to pinpoint a unique experience at SFU I would say it was community engagement. SFU is indeed a pioneer on that front and the institutional and individual support I received to connect the university with the broader society, and reciprocate the learning experience, was photo-real. My consolation in leaving SFU and Vancouver is that I brought much with me to Doha to build upon and have a positive impact. My other consolation is that I still visit every summer, spend time with SFU friends and colleagues, and vacation in one of the most beautiful spots in the world. 

Amal Ghazal

Amal Ghazal is Professor of History and Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies.
The exciting pace of scholarly activities and collaboration with scholars on the SFU campus was kickstarted with an interdisciplinary archival workshop that Dr. Betty Schellenberg (from the English Department) and I staged on February 18, 2022. Titled "Archival Research: A Best-Practices Workshop," the all-day workshop involved students and scholars from various disciplines and departments (including Dr. John Craig from the History Department), not only from Simon Fraser University, but also from the University of British Columbia, Concordia University, and the University of Toronto. The workshop addressed the fundamentals of conducting archival research, which even some of the more experienced among us were happy to revisit.

This was followed by the public lecture, “From Trash to Treasure,” which Dr. Jason Carinlot of Concordia University and I presented conjointly. Emerging from a book we co-edited (with Dr. Martha Langford), titled Collection Thinking (Routledge 2022), the talk addressed the communities and institutions involved in collecting practices in their various forms. During our lecture, we also explored specific examples to discuss the relationship between collection(s) and those who make them, use them, and keep them, and to address the valences of care involved therein.

Then, in conjunction with my graduate students who took the course I taught in the winter term, titled “Books, Bodies, and Borders: Women Writers’ (Trans)national Archives & Practices”, we developed an exhibit jointly with Simon Fraser University’s Special Collections and Rare Books. Students were invited to consult its extensive holdings related to women writers in Canada and choose one author for their project. For a period that extended from March to April of 2022, we presented some of our findings in the exhibit, called Writing Canadian Women [Write] Out of the Archive. From this project, we have worked on and are set to release a peer-reviewed issue of an e-journal, Women Writers’ Archives, which is the culmination of their research. So, while my term as the Jack and Nancy Farley Visiting Scholar has concluded, I continue to enjoy the rewards of the research in the archives, and the connections and collaborative efforts made while there.

Linda Morra is Professor of English at Bishop’s University, where she teaches Canadian and Indigenous Literatures. She was the 2021-2022 Jack & Nancy Farley Distinguished Visiting Scholar at Simon Fraser University.
Chelsea Brown

In recent years ‘curation’ has become a buzzword; everything, from pop-up markets to advertisements, has been curated for us. But what does a museum curator do? Curatorial work is wonderfully varied. I’ve slept in Emily Carr’s childhood home, worked with Acheulean hand axes, and researched objects and histories that I had never come across before. But it is more than that. This work gives me the opportunity to research difficult and challenging topics, to be creative, to engage with people, and, when energy wanes, there is always data entry to do. I thrive in being able to juggle different projects and in plodding away at something immense, knowing that the work I do is making a difference.

Getting here was a combination of good timing, hard work, and privilege. When I came to SFU I already knew I wanted to become a museum curator. A love of antiques and my own small business helped me pay for the first years of my higher education. Majoring in history, I also enrolled in related archaeology courses in collections management and started volunteering at the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (MAE). Around that time, I was told that the job market for museum professionals was the best it had been in thirty years. It still is.

Over the course of my undergrad, I did work studies at the MAE and enrolled in the History Honours program. It was a winning combination. My honours thesis focused on imperial collecting and the intersections of knowledge production and power. Directed readings allowed me to further interrogate these themes in different eras and contexts. The honours program radically changed the way I conducted research and wrote, while the hands-on work at the MAE gave me the everyday tools needed to tackle the wide-ranging challenges of curatorial work.

My practical experience set me ahead in the professional world. I started working at the Kilby Historic Site as a summer interpreter and kept going back on various projects and grants throughout my undergraduate career. My honours thesis laid the foundations for my application to the University of Oxford where I received a Master of Studies in Global and Imperial History. I probably would not have applied without the encouragement of my professors and honours cohort. When I returned to Canada, I made my way yet again to the Kilby Historic Site as a collections manager, later becoming curator.

I have the job that curators before me dreamt of. Museums are chronically underfunded. While there was always a curator at the Kilby Historic Site, their day-to-day work was consumed with essential operations, budgeting, writing grant applications, and all the weird and wonderful (and not-so-wonderful) jobs that come with working on a living history site. I help with these tasks, but much of my time is spent improving our records, poking around old boxes, and tackling the mammoth project of documenting our extensive holdings. The database I work with has over 15,000 artifacts and there are at least another 15,000 more to document. When funds permit, I also get to curate exhibits.

My job is especially unique in that I occasionally get to go to other provincial historic sites to help with collections projects. Collections vary in size and scope, but often face the same challenges. Museum professionals are always working to do the best they can to engage the public and care for over abundant collections with limited resources. Collections rooms are filled with items that exist in multiples (do we really need seven of the same tin?) or that have been broken since the day they arrived. In consolidating the collections, we navigate a fine line between present sustainability, future possibility, and honouring the legacies of those who came before.

With the job title, curators inherit many legacies. The collection is comprised of donations from countless individuals who believed it was important to understand and preserve the past. These physical embodiments of legacy were preserved for us. But what does a museum curator do? The colonial legacy supersedes another layer of legacy. Beyond that, the collection is wholly steeped in colonialism. The colonial legacy supersedes the others in importance. We are still wrestling with it and working to decentre cisgender white narratives. Progress is slow due to restrictive budgets, but we are taking definite steps—always looking for new staff and the next grant that will facilitate this work. We are still learning, striving against existing structures, and striving to stretch and change. Here’s to working toward a brighter future of diversity, belonging, and understanding.

Chelsea Brown graduated from SFU in June 2019 with a BA (Hons.) in History, and was awarded an MSt from the University of Oxford in June 2021. She is currently a curator at Kilby Historic Site in the Fraser Valley, where the thriving community of Harrison Mills once stood.
My relationship with Edward goes back 56 years, to 1966. By the time I signed up to be the first Honours student that he undertook to supervise, he was already a legend among History undergraduates at the newly-opened Simon Fraser University. Within a year of his arrival, Edward Roger Ingram Ellis (E.R.I.E.) had become known as ‘The Beast with Four Names’. To say that he did not suffer fools gladly would be a laughable understatement: his withering looks and cutting comments made all of us tremble in our shoes whenever we dared to speak up in class. After all these years I can still see those terrifying arched eyebrows when one made a grammatical error, and hear that sniff of dismissal when one was guilty of sloppy thinking.

Nevertheless, as I wished to pursue diplomatic history, and as my would-be supervisor had somehow wangled a year away, Edward was assigned to be my supervisor. This consisted of taking two additional courses (on historiography and the philosophy of history), a directed readings course and writing an honours thesis. The directed readings meant that I was assigned a book per week to read and then discuss one-on-one with E.R.I.E. for 1-2 hours. To be grilled by Edward for what seemed like an eternity was the experience of a lifetime.

His standards were very high. And, if one showed flashes of talent, his demands would climb even higher. I remember vividly the seminar on ‘Dynastic Diplomacy’ that he gave to four of us (two graduate students, myself and Judy Sheffield - now Day - who would also go on to a Ph.D.). In the course of 12 weeks we each gave four 20-minute presentations; offered critiques on four presentations; submitted four 5-6 page essays; took a midterm exam and a final exam and submitted a 20-25 page final essay. Those were the days! When I went on to do my graduate degrees the courses I took were much less demanding than those I had taken with Edward. My Masters’ supervisor wanted me to publish my thesis. I showed it to Edward after returning to Vancouver for the summer and he said ‘definitely not’!

He proclaimed that as I would never be a ‘B’ student, I should be aware that if I did not submit work worthy of an ‘A’, I would receive a ‘C’ from him. I know this because I have it in writing. I still have every essay that he marked. They remind me of just how much effort he was prepared to make on behalf of his students, and how thoughtful and insightful his comments and suggestions were.

When, some years later, I was asked to provide a reference on his teaching when he was up for promotion to Full Professor, I remember concluding that ‘No student who has taken a course with Dr Ingram Ellis will ever forget the experience’. This was certainly true: my own sessions with him are indelibly etched in my memory and I still sense him peering over my shoulder whenever I sit down to write.

We also became good friends - although there was never any danger that friendship might mean favouritism or pulling punches when it came to assessing one’s work. As I progressed through graduate school he began mooting the idea that there should be a journal devoted to diplomatic history, and that we should collaborate on it. And thus, a few years later, The International History Review was born. It was a labour of love for both of us and Edward again brought a critical eye to the work of our contributors, most of whom were grateful for the advice and suggestions that he made. His relentless insistence on applying the highest standards elevated our journal to first-class status.

I have missed his companionship since he relocated to New Zealand but I savour the many memories of dinners, classes, conferences and correspondence that we shared over the years. I owe him a tremendous debt for his support, encouragement and advice. He was one of a kind.

IN MEMORIAM:

Edward Ingram

Gordon Martel

Born in Calcutta in 1941, Edward Ingram studied at Balliol College, Oxford and at the London School of Economics. He joined the Department of History at Simon Fraser University in 1966 and, with Ian Mugridge and Gordon Martel, founded The International History Review which first appeared in 1979 and which he edited for more than 30 years. He passed away in Carterton, New Zealand on 15 March 2022. We have asked his student, Gordon Martel, for a reflection.

WELCOME REBECCA ARMSTRONG

Rebecca Armstrong joined us in September 2021, stepping into the role of Finance and Administration Clerk. Rebecca has a BA degree, English and History, from Cardiff University in the UK and has acquired considerable financial and events experience in various positions over the last decade as she and her family found themselves moving to Canada and the US and back to the UK before settling down in the Lower Mainland in 2020.

With little fanfare, Rebecca has seamlessly become part of the team, contributing willingly and effectively to the success of the department. Her energy, resourcefulness, and quiet assurance have made our return to campus from the pandemic stay-at-home orders – and our work lives in general – much easier, and in particular her work in shepherding our guest lecturers and examiners through travel disruptions, cancellations, and constant rescheduling has been nothing short of remarkable.

At home, Rebecca and her partner James are parents to two delightful little ones, Hazel FI and Oliver III, who have both visited the department and been spotted at our social events. They enjoy travelling as a family and recently took a much-anticipated trip back to the United Kingdom to visit family.

Welcome to the team, Rebecca!

STAFF AWARDS

2022 FASS Employee Achievement Team Award
Judi Fraser (FASS Managers Team)

2021 FASS Employee Achievement Team Award
Tessa Wright (FASS Advisors Team)

WEBCAST REPORT

Bidisha Ray & Jonathan Gudlaugson

The 2021-2022 academic year was a busy and successful year for the Working Environment and Outreach Advisory Committee (WEOAC) and our members: Bidisha Ray (Chair), Esther Souman (HOSA Rep), Lauren Faulkner Rossi, Thomas Kuehn, Judi Fraser and Jonathan Gudlaugson.

In 2021, we returned to offering in-person events, while incorporating options for our audience to attend virtually as well. We started the year with a special colloquium from Sarah Diamond, President Emerita of OCAD University, SFU History Alumni (BA Hons. ’89), and a 2020 SFU honorary doctoral degree recipient. Her talk “Revisiting the Women’s Labour History Project 1978 – 1995” discussed her time at SFU History in the 1980’s and her work recording oral histories for the Women’s Labour History Project, a not-for-profit founded by Diamond to uncover and preserve the history of women workers and working class communities in BC.

Diamond’s colloquium served as a dry-run rehearsal for the return of our annual public lecture series in a hybrid format. SFU History led the University by offering the first in-person lecture that was open to the general public since the March 2020 pandemic restrictions were put in place. The 2021-2022 lecture series “Highlighting Black Histories” brought three exciting, up-and-coming, Black Canadian historians to speak at SFU. In October, we welcomed Funké Adelabuji from the University of Toronto to hear “Black Radical Traditions and Educational Encounters in Canada” where she educated us on the historical roots and ongoing legacies of Black political and radical action through education. To end the Fall term and 2021, WEOAC supported the Graduate Student Society’s Holiday Hamper Program, raising $720 to support SFU graduate student families in need.

In February, “Highlighting Black Histories” resumed with “Homegoing: Blackness and Belonging Across the Canada/US Border” from Debra Thompson (McGill). Thompson revelled in the resilience of freedom dreams that link and inspire Black people across national borders when she gave us her response to the loaded question “But, where are you really from?” And finally to cap the series off, in April Caroline Shenaz Hossein (University of Toronto – Scarborough) brought us “Canada’s hidden figures: The story of Black women cooperators”, which featured the story of the Banker Ladies - Black diaspora women who participate in informal financial cooperatives through a form of mutual aid called Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs). Theses lectures will be available on the SFU History YouTube channel in the near future.

In the summer months, WEOAC engaged in planning for the upcoming school year and supported outreach and social events, including celebrating our first in-person convocation ceremony since 2019, and supporting the BC Heritage Fairs Society’s Heritage Fairs Program for students in Grades 4 to 10 by creating the Simon Fraser University Department of History Community Heritage Award. Awarded for the best project that explores an aspect of a community’s unique history or heritage (with special consideration given for projects that consider and explore the history, contribution, impact, and importance of a region’s Indigenous inhabitants and/or minority communities), WEOAC intends this award to be an early introduction to the department for young historians across the Province.

Many of the Department’s past lectures are available on the SFU History YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/sfuhistory

Bidisha Ray is Senior Lecturer in the Department of History at SFU and Chair of the Working Environment and Outreach Advisory Committee. Jonathan Gudlaugson is Communications and Events Coordinator for the Department of History and a member of the WEOAC.

Prizes ready to go out to Grades 4 to 10 Social Studies students for the SFU Department of History Community Heritage Award.

In 2022 we had a significantly higher number of applications and we accepted seven MA and two PhD students (one of whom deferred for next year). I was luckier than my predecessor Dr. Thomas Kuehn to have assumed the role as restrictions were easing regarding in-person events and thus we were able to hold an in-person orientation for our graduate students in September 2022, to which a couple of students from earlier cohorts also participated. Our new MA students are Gabriella McKenzie, Slade Brown, Nathaniel Laybourne, Alina Loo, Xuesong Bai, Aya Abdel-Bayem and Daniel Hogan studying aspects of Canadian, Chinese, British, and Egyptian histories. We also have Sadreddin Melin joining the PhD program to study the Ottoman World.

Going forward the History department has begun to institute some changes to its graduate program including the creation of a course-based MA to supplement our existing thesis-based MA. This option should be available to students applying to our MA program next year. It will give more options to those wishing to study history at a graduate level and hopefully boost our enrolments while offering more opportunities to students who want to study history at the graduate level.

Joseph Burton

The 2021-2022 academic year posed severe challenges for the Association and its ability to fulfill its duties to the membership. Although Simon Fraser University began its transition back to in-person teaching during the fall of 2021, the HGSA executive determined in the interest of safety to continue meeting remotely. This allowed members living and working outside of Vancouver, and those who were not yet comfortable meeting in person, to attend. However, much like the previous academic year, the lack of regular and direct interpersonal contact made it difficult for members to get to know one another and encourage newcomer graduate students and other folks who were less active with the Association to attend meetings. Several vital positions in the executive were thus left unfilled and the HGSA was only able to reach quorum every few months.

However, this did not mean the Association did not meet at all. Meetings remained a vital space for folks to catch up, discuss their work, and to socialize even when quorum was not met. During Summer Term, the Association held its first in-person meeting in over two years at the Biercraft restaurant on campus. Justin Devries and Suki Xu were the eventual winners, on account of their expert knowledge of song lyrics, and members were pleased to welcome back fellow SFU graduate student Esther Souman, who was visiting from Halifax, and Aali Mirjat, former SFU graduate student [MA 2018] and current Graduate Program Assistant for the History Department.

In September, in what was my last meeting as HGSA Chair and the first in-person meeting for over two years, members successfully amended the HGSA Constitution. Last amended in 2015, the constitution no longer represented or sufficiently outlined the duties for the HGSA executive committee, which has over the past seven years introduced new positions such as the Communications Officer and elected members to departmental committees formally unacknowledged in the document, like the Working Environment and Outreach Advisory Committee. The changes were thus much needed and will make the operation of the Association smoother and clearer. During the September meeting, members also elected a new slate of officers, this time filling every position in the executive. The HGSA will therefore have a much greater voice in all relevant committees and governing bodies in the Department and the University this academic year.

I would like to congratulate Bekh Morin on his successful election as HGSA Chair and I look forward to working with him in the coming months as the Association continues its important work.
STUDENT AWARDS 2021–2022

GRADUATE

SSHRc Doctoral Fellowship
Stevan Bozanich

SSHRc Canada Graduate Scholarship – Doctoral Program
Kaitlyn MacInnis

SSHRc Canada Graduate Scholarship – Master’s Program
Justin Devries

Michael Felmian Graduate Prize for Best Thesis
Sitiing Tao

Dr. J. V. Christensen Graduate Scholarship
Ismail Noyan

Leon J. Ladner Graduate Scholarship in BC History
Keith Donaldson

Kirstie Goodfellows
Kaitlyn MacInnis

Esther Souman

Alan David Aberbach Scholarship in United States History
Joseph Burton

William F. & Ruth Baldwin Graduate Scholarship in History

Shehroze Shaikh

Cook Conference Scholarship
Le Tao

Douglas Cole Memorial Graduate Entrance Scholarship in Cultural History
Zoe Guo

Gene Bridwell Graduate Scholarship in Special Collections Annual Award

Kirstie Goodfellows

British Columbia Graduate Scholarship

Justin Devries

Graduate Dean’s Entrance Scholarship

Kaitlyn MacInnis

Mete Oguz

Nadz Vardar

Special Graduate Entrance Scholarship

Zoe Guo

Travel and Research Awards

Jovana Andelkovic

Zoe Guo

Ismail Noyan

Meze Oguz

Shehroze Shaikh

Esther Souman

Nadz Vardar

UNDERGRADUATE

Richard Morgan Award Memorial Award for the best essay or project in Indigenous History in Canada
Michael Lomanski

“The Lack of Sovereignty Sucks”
Margaret Ormsby Award for the best project or essay in Canadian History

Makaela Prentice

“A Dog is a Lesbian’s Best Friend: the 2006 Wedding of Honey Prentice and Kathy Thomas”

William L. Cleveland Essay Prize for the best essay in African / Middle-Eastern / Asian History
Polanski

Julian Polanski

“Writing Against the Decentralization Thesis: Historiography of the Ottoman Long Eighteenth Century”

Elise Winnie McLaren Award for the best final essay or project which reflects upon the legacies of Indigenous histories in Canada and connects them to current issues and ideas

Liam Foster

“untitled”

European History Award

Bella McKenzie

“’Foodless Creatures’; Martha Taylor, Fasting, and Female Piety in Seventeenth Century England”

Stephen McIntyre Memorial Book Prize for the top graduating student in History

Purchiresha Rahmati

Burnaby Historical Society Scholarship in Canadian History for the highest combined GPA in any three completed Canadian history courses

Nadia Navarro (2021)

Nicole Fors (2022)

Welcome to SFU History and the pages of Primary Source, baby Abigail!

Tina Adock

In March 2022, two significant projects culminated in quick succession. I submitted my book manuscript, provisionally entitled A Thoroughly Modern Enterprise: Exploration and Northern Canada, to UBC Press. It has now been approved for publication, and I look forward to seeing it out in the world. Five days after submitting this manuscript, I gave birth to a daughter, Abigail. It’s no exaggeration to say that that was, and probably will remain, the most productive week of my life. What I wrote in last year’s Primary Source update is now even more true: our family has never been so happy, or so tired.

Jeremy Brown

Returning to the classroom in September 2021 was a true joy. After a tentative first two weeks getting used to seeing each other in person instead of on Zoom, students got loud in group discussions and the magical energy of a seminar reminded me why I love this job. Teaching in person was by far the biggest highlight of the past academic year. Mentoring the graduate students I co-supervise alongside Dr. Timothy Cheek of UBC was another major highlight. Suki Xu defended her MA thesis at SFU and Dr. Xian Wang defended her dissertation at UBC. Xinyi Wang also completed her MA at UBC. Alongside political scientist Juan Wang of McGill University, I received a SSHRC Insight Grant to pursue research on “Everyday Policing and Coercion in Maoist China.” I went to two conferences—both while sitting at home staring at a gallery of webcam images on my computer screen—first to Peking University in Beijing, where I delivered a paper about the Cultural Revolution, and later to National Chengchi University in Taipei, where I gave a paper about what Xi Jinping learned from June Fourth. As much as I would have preferred attending the conferences in person, both provided moments when I felt as if I were actually in Beijing and Taipei, and allowed for continued collaboration with colleagues in both places.

Luke Clossey

In the last year I finished a “final enough to show to a publisher” draft of my Jesus manuscript 228,000 words, excluding footnotes and epistles, Karen Ferguson and I have been working on a chapter on monasticism for the Oxford Handbook of Buddhism in North America. I gave talks on Jesus at UBC and on Buddhism and world history at Yonse University in Seoul. I’ve enjoyed time with students collectively learning about the histories of southeast Asia, pedagogy, Vancouver Island, media, and interspecies communication.

FACULTY UPDATES

John Craig

My research term was still constrained by the rules invoked by the pandemic. And these same rules meant that I taught remotely in Spring 2022 but returned, with relief, to face to face instruction on the Burnaby campus in the fall of 2022. The highlight of the past year was participating in Ms. Jackie Friesen’s spirited and successful defence of her MA thesis investigating the war-time efforts of the actor, Leslie Howard. Ms. Friesen was part of the talented cohort of Social Studies teachers admitted to the graduate program in 2019. The most grievous blow was learning of the death of Edward Ingram. Edward was an outstanding scholar, editor and teacher and a wonderful colleague with whom I collaborated on a series of public lectures at Harbour! Centre and someone who showed me much kindness in my early years in the department.

Lauren Faulkner Rossi

During the past year I completed full steam ahead with two book projects, both of which are now due to be published in the early new year (2023). The first is the memoir work with Holocaust child survivor Mariette Rizen Doduck. Her book, A Childhood Unspoken, will be published by the Azrieli Foundation and will launch in January 2023. I have been extraordinarily privileged to work with her on bringing her story to the page, so that it can continue to impact students, to challenge them to be staunch witnesses to the truth, and to combat antisemitism and intolerance. The second book is a revised edition of A History of Modern Germany. 1880 to the Present, co-authored with Martin Kitchen. As a reivision project, this was different than most other work I’ve undertaken, and I’m conscious of the prestige and reputation of my co-author. It has been my earnest endeavour to ensure that his faith in my abilities as a historian and storyteller is rewarded! This textbook will be published sometime in the spring or summer of 2023. In addition to these projects, I have completed a full teaching load, with courses on the Second World War and the Holocaust. I am looking forward to potentially returning to Europe for the first time in many years to pursue archival research for my next book project, about the experiences of Holocaust child survivors and their paths to emigration.

Nicolas Kenny

In 2022 I had the delight to make not one but two trips to the beautiful and historically fascinating city of Antwerp. In the Spring, I had the enormous honour of spending two weeks at the University of Antwerp’s Centre for Urban History as the inaugural Raymond Van Uytn academic scholar in residence for a series of presentations and workshops. I then returned to the end of the summer for the European Association for Urban History’s conference. After two postponements, there was a happy atmosphere as colleagues and friends were finally reunited to talk about research and to catch up with one another. On both occasions, I had the opportunity to share various aspects of ongoing research on the influence of railways on urban life and imaginaries in nineteenth and early twentieth century Montreal.
After a two-year delay caused by COVID, I was finally able to spend all of May 2022 at the Research University of Vienna, and the University of Neuchâtel (Switzerland). During the pandemic, I became increasingly adept at finding electronic sources, while travelling less. Arrivederci Roma! Eternal City briefly in May of this year to remind myself that I could still do old-fashioned archival research and to find material for a future project. Existing narratives of Iranian migration to BC are data-driven and use state-controlled technologies such as legibility, census, population density, index of segregation, etc., which I felt did not fully capture the history. I used oral history data to capture individual motivation points and – without giving away the secret before publication – came up with an alternative explanation for this factor of desirability. I presented my findings in a summary report to the museum and have been asked to publicly present my research in February 2023.

Paul Sedra
I served once again as colloquium coordinator during the past year. Graduate students were prominent among the speakers featured, as when the department heard from PhD student Naz Vardar about emotions and collective memory in the songs of Turkish-speaking POWs in First World War Germany. Esther Souman and Luke Clossey made a pedagogical contribution to the colloquium with a talk about their use of specifications grading in the COVID-era classroom. Particularly memorable was Lauren Faulkner-Ross’s March 2022 talk entitled “The Historian and the Survivor: Notes on a Collaborative Writing Project,” during which Lauren recounts her experience helping Holocaust survivor Marie (Mani) Doduck write her memoirs.

Since May 2022 I have used my sabbatical research leave to catch up on a variety of writing commitments. Fortunately I have found a wonderful temporary perch in Victoria, where I have made fair progress on a book project examining the cinema of the Nasser era. At the moment, I am looking at how Egypt’s state feminism under Nasser generated unique opportunities for women to dominate the Egyptian star system in the 1950s and 1960s.

Ardalan (AR) Rezamand
In addition to teaching, I’ve been working with MONODA (Museum and Archives of North Vancouver) on an exhibition on Iranian immigration and settlement in Canada, BC, Vancouver and then the North Shore, respectively. The historic question, from our academic PDO, is why is the North Shore a favorite destination for Iranians immigrating to Canada? Existing narratives of Iranian migration to BC are data-driven and use state-controlled technologies such as legibility, census, population density, index of segregation, etc., which I felt did not fully capture the history. I used oral history data to capture individual motivation points and – without giving away the secret before publication – came up with an alternative explanation for this factor of desirability. I presented my findings in a summary report to the museum and have been asked to publicly present my research in February 2023.

Paul Sedra at the Oak Bay Marina, Victoria, BC (seaside).

Nicholas May
My first year at SFU was a busy one, with a teaching load of six courses, half of them new. With this kind of plunge into a new institution I must say it has been both a relief and delight to discover the dynamism and collegiality of this department, and to experience the vibrancy of its front of the laptop doing activities like meetings, writing essays/articles, recording podcasts, and other not-playing-with-her-doggo things. Next year, Rudy hopes for more long walks in the forest and treats. There should definitely be more treats.

Rudy Panchasi would like to report that his hermanus professor has had a good, but exhausting, year. She has spent many too many hours in front of the laptop doing activities like meetings, writing essays/articles, recording podcasts, and other not-playing-with-her-doggo things. Next year, Rudy hopes for more long walks in the forest and treats. There should definitely be more treats.

Rudy would like you to know that he’s a very good boi, and deserves more treats!

Roxanne Panchasi
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Hilmar Pabel
During the pandemic, I became increasingly adept at finding electronic resources for teaching and research. It was a delight to return to older ways of research by visiting again ARSI—the Archivum Romanum Societatis Jesu, or the Jesuit Archives in Rome. The staff were more interested in my vaccination record than a letter of introduction. I was grateful for the research assistance that I received. The pandemic cut short my research stay in Rome in 2020. I was happy to be back in the Eternal City briefly in May of this year to remind myself that I could still do old-fashioned archival research and to find material for a future project.

Arrivederci Roma!

Mark Leier
I am fortunate to be working with colleagues on three different projects with Aaron Wendel team-teaching History 135 (Capitalism and the Making of the Modern World, on the history of capitalism, John-Henry Harter on “Rules of Resistance,” a collection of role-plays and exercises to teach labour history and political economy, now out to external reviewers; and Levi Green, who is putting together a website for a collaboration of international scholars on labour history and commemoration. I’m enjoying teaching face to face, and look forward to a new course in the spring on Canada, war, and propaganda. Work continues on a history of post-confederation Canada for a general readership, though the more I learn and write about capitalism and the nation-state, the more I grind my teeth. Luckily graduate and undergraduate students are inspiring and fun.

Janice Matsuruma
Although difficult, given my love of complaining, I will focus on the happy developments of the past 12 months. Regarding research, in October 2022, Japan relaxed its border restrictions, which means travel once again to various libraries, which still do not make digitalized documents accessible to overseas researchers. Barring a resumed shutdown, I should now be able to collect some final sources for two articles, whose progress owes much to the very kind people of InterLibrary Loans. Regarding teaching, another most welcome development – the return to the classrooms. As I recall the first day of face-to-face instruction, I find myself replaying the last scene from the Wizard of Oz land, yes, of course, I cast myself in the role of Dorothy, and so I will just include an abbreviated version of the scene below as a lazy way to describe my contentment at being back in the familiar environment of the classroom:

AUNT EM: There, there, lie quiet now. You just had a bad dream....

DOROTHY: No, Aunt Em – this was a real, truly live place. And I

remember that some of it wasn’t very nice....

DOROTHY: Doesn’t anybody believe me?

UNCLE HENRY: Of course we believe you, Dorothy.

DOROTHY: Oh, but anyway, Tooz, we’re home...

DOROTHY: Home! And this is my room – and you’re all here! And I’m not going to leave here ever, ever again, because I love you all! And – Oh, Auntie Em – there’s no place like home!

FACTOR UPDATES

Joseph E. Taylor III

Joseph E. Taylor III spent the last year writing chapters for his next book on American conservation and conservation historiography. On related fronts, he continues to update the transfer payment data for the Follow the Money project, publish book reviews, speak to reporters about museums, fishing, and conservation history, and meeting other history nerds at the random conference.

Politics, Social Change, and Identity in Global Contexts, and was inter-

Portland State University History Department’s colloquium-workshop a paper at a history conference in Oregon, delivered another paper at the

The Russian Review

Russian-American Company as a Corporation” for the summer issue of

about Russia, Ukraine, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia. Where this will

The war in Ukraine has compelled me to revise my repertoire of courses

Ilya Vinkovetsky

The war in Ukraine has compelled me to revise my repertoire of courses and also offer a new seminar during the fall semester. This ongoing war is bound to produce a paradigm shift for people who study and teach about Russia, Ukraine, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia. Where this will lead only time will tell. I was fortunate to publish the lead article “The Russian-American Company as a Corporation” for the summer issue of The Russian Review, which was still before the war started. I also presented a paper at a history conference in Oregon, delivered another paper at the Portland State University History Department’s colloquium-workshop Politics, Social Change, and Identity in Global Contexts, and was inter-

Sarah in one of her favourite environments: mangrove forest, Jambiani, Zanzibar. I recently celebrated a big birthday at Pompeii!

A BRIEF DECOLONIZED HISTORY OF SFU

Sarah Walshaw

I continued to serve as Associate Chair this year, and taught courses in African History, Food History, and special directed readings in Yoruba Art History (with Soji-George) and Ugandan Agricultural History (with Mushere). I was honoured to receive an Excellence in Teaching Award! I completed a teaching and learning grant program targeting student contributions to benefit well-being in learning environments. I travelled to New York in May to work with collaborator Zoi Crossland (Columbia University) on the “Sacred Rice” project (Madagascar) and went to Tanzania to work with students and colleagues at the University of Dar es Salaam and present at the PanAfrican Archaeology meetings in Zanzibar. I recently celebrated a big birthday at Pompeii!

Zaina Khan and Nicholas May

B eing the Department of History, we in particular believe it is important to acknowledge SFU’s own history on these lands and the role of the institution in their colonization, beginning with its namesake.

Simon Fraser was a fur trader and “explorer” who, as a partner in the Montreal-based North West Company at the turn of the nineteenth century, was given the mandate to build trading posts and take possession of the lands west of the Rocky Mountains. The goal of this westward expansion was twofold: to increase profits by finding new areas rich in furs, and to find a workable travel route to the Pacific coast to facilitate this trade. Beginning in the far northeastern interior, in 1808 Fraser and his party descended the river that would later bear his name by canoe and on foot.

When Fraser reached the mouth of the river he was unable to enter the Strait of Georgia. The Coast Salish people at the river’s end—likely the Musqueam—greeted Fraser and his party with suspicion and then hostility, forcing them to hastily begin their retreat back up the river as they pursued them in their canoes to the eastern end of the valley. Despite the brevity of Fraser’s visit to the valley and his disappointment in an expedition he deemed a failure—the river proved to be neither the Columbia as he had hoped nor navigable—the acts of possession he made began a colonial process of dispossession and resettlement in what is today the main-

land of British Columbia. If, as the Dictionary of Canadian Biography asserts, Fraser deserves to rank as the pioneer of this process, today we understand it to have negatively transformed the relationships that First Peoples had had with the land, air, water, non-human beings, and Spirit of this place.

Yet in the early 1960s naming a new public university in honour of such a pioneer was a natural choice for the prov-

ence’s minister of education, Leslie Peterson. The decision was also a tribute to another Simon Fraser, the British officer and World War II hero Lord Lovat. Although a distinguished partner in the fur trade, Lord Lovat as head of the Fraser clan was approached by Patrick McTaggart-Cowan, SFU’s first presi-

dent, for permission to use the Fraser coat of arms and the

Fraser motto for the new university, which he granted. At the

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ed the top of 390-metre Burnaby Mountain be selected for the placement of SFU because of its breathtaking views of Burrard Inlet (sal̓ilw̓aat), the North Shore Mountains, the Fraser River and more. While recognizing the power of this auspicious location, the decision to build the university here was made without proper consultation with local Indigenous peoples. When it opened in 1965, SFU welcomed 2,500 stu-
dents to begin a tradition of learning as uninvited guests.

The Squamish name for Burnaby Mountain is Lh’ukw’ihłukw’ayten which means “where the bark gets peeled in spring.” When remembering SFU’s presence on the land it occupies as a colonial institution, it is important to recognize the intimate and interconnected relationships this land shares with First Peoples and non-human beings. Today, we can see various construction projects continuing to reshape the land. As historians, we believe it is our duty to recognize SFU’s connection to the First Nations who have been and continue to steward and defend the land while highlighting the colonial presence of SFU and its namesake. We encourage everyone to research and learn about SFU’s history in order to make meaningful efforts to decolonize and Indigenize our Department and SFU as a whole.

Sources


Zaina Khan and Nicholas May

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Sources


Zaina Khan is a Decolonization and Indigenization Research Assistant and Undergraduate Student with the Department of History. Nicholas May is an anthropological historian of Indigenous cultures in Canada and Term Lectur-
er in the Department of History. He has previously taught at UBC, McGill, and the University of Toronto. Khan and May were members of the department’s Decolonization and Indigenization Working Group for 2021–2022.