



The NERWHA Newsletter

Fall 2012

Dane Morrison, Executive Committee

Dear NERWHA members,

It is with a profound sense of sadness that I send this issue of our association's newsletter out to our extended NERWHA community. With the passing of Jerry Bentley on July 15, the world history community has lost a beloved colleague, mentor, and friend, as well as a pioneer in this most challenging of fields. In this spirit, I am dedicating the Fall NERWHA symposium in memory of Jerry.

NERWHA Elections

The fall elections brought some new faces to NERWHA's leadership. With Dane Morrison stepping down as President to take on the responsibilities of Vice President of the New England Historical Association, the membership elected Michele Louro as President and James Diskant as Vice President, and returned Mary Jane Maxwell as Secretary-Treasurer. The Executive Committee added two new faces—Chris Souza and Thomas Rushford (ex-officio), as well as Dane Morrison (ex-officio).

SUCCESSFUL SYMPOSIA

Fall 2012 Symposium

Our fall 2012 symposium was held on September 22 at the African Studies Center, Boston University. For the first time, we had to close registration early, as the facility could not accommodate everyone who wanted to attend! Al Andrea and James Diskant organized an exciting program that featured Trevor Getz of San Francisco State University as keynote speaker and workshop leader. Professor Getz offered strategies for researching and teaching from his co-authored graphic text, *Albina and the Important Men: A Graphic History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), an illustrated history based on the 1876 court transcript of an enslaved West African woman who used the court system to sue for her freedom.

This was followed by a lively afternoon of discussions and workshops. Annette Chapman-Adisho, Salem State University, moderated the plenary Roundtable, "Listening to African Voices: Integrating Early African History into World History," which included: Catherine Cymone Fourshey, Susquehanna University; Rhona Gonzales, University of Texas at San Antonio; Christine Saidi, Kutztown University; Carolyn E. Vieira-Martinez, Chapman University; and Constanze Weise, Dickinson College. Robert Hall, Northeastern University facilitated the fascinating workshop, "Africa in Transoceanic World Historical Contexts: Challenges and Opportunities in Teaching and Scholarship" among participants Adam Chill,

Castleton State College; Charlotte Miller, Macon State College; Patricia van der Spuy, Castleton State College; and Carrie Waara, Castleton State College. The workshop, *“Africa and the History of Colonialism: Teaching with Films on Africa,”* was moderated by Gerald Herman, Northeastern University, which included Barbara Brown, African Studies Center, Boston University; Sophie Kulas, Weston High School; Erica Wetterlow, Hopkinton Public Schools; and Susan Zeiger, Primary Source.

Spring 2012 Symposium

NERWHA celebrated another academic achievement in holding our spring symposium, *Braided Narratives: Integrating Research and Teaching*, last April at Salem State University. The day-long meetings featured two roundtables, “Connecting Theory and Teaching about the World to Enable Students to Think as Historical Actors” and “Teaching Contemporary History: Challenges and Strategies.” Participants heard an outstanding array of talks on topics such as “Understanding World History at a Conceptual Level for New Teachers,” “Africa in World History: Making Connections,” and “Teaching the Contemporary Drug Industry as World History.” In addition, two excellent workshops introduced participants to “Upcoming Graduate Research” featuring doctoral students from Northeastern University’s renowned world history program, and digital strategies in “Around the World History Concepts in 10 or More Clicks,” featured techno-guru Robert Maloy from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Once again, we wish to offer our appreciation to Dean Jude Nixon, College of Arts & Sciences, at Sale State University for his continued support of NERWHA events and of our NERWHA-SSU partnership.

Group Photo

Roland Higgins, Vice President-elect James Diskant, President-elect Michelle Louro, Trevor Getz, and Al Andrea at the NERWHA Fall Symposium, African Studies Center, Boston University, September 22.

NERWHA SPONSORED SESSIONS

For the past few years, NERWHA has worked to develop ongoing relationships with cognate historical associations and to explore ways in which we can share our expertise. This initiative has taken the form of sponsoring sessions at various conferences. This fall, we experienced an embarrassment of riches as we sent representatives to both the **New England History Teachers Association** and the **New England Historical Association** on October 13.

Describing the NEHTA conference, Jim Diskant writes:

On October 13th three members of NERWHA participated in the fall conference of the **New England History Teachers Association** and the American Antiquarian Society, on the War of 1812, in Worcester. Jim Diskant, Lincoln Paine, and Christoph Strobel presented a workshop there. Christoph chaired the session, “The War of 1812 in World History” and commented afterwards. The audience, consisted of 30 secondary school teachers, were active participants,

and gave both Lincoln and Jim helpful feedback. For all three of us it was a great experience to be part of a welcoming group and to work with other history teachers and historians, as well as to learn from others in stimulating plenary talks and workshops.

Lincoln started with his paper, “Globalizing the War of 1812: Americans abroad in ‘Mr. Madison’s War’” in which he argued that it is crucial to understand the global ramifications of the war and shared with the audience both national and international developments and concluded: “While the outcome of the War of 1812 is in many respects ambiguous, there is no question that the United States had managed to work its way onto the world stage, and from a world historical perspective it is perhaps most instructive to view the conflict in terms of the United States’ fledgling enterprise in commercial, military and diplomatic affairs.”

Jim then shared a possible role play, entitled “Political and Economic Manoeuvring of the United States and the United Kingdom in the Americas, Asia, and Europe, 1812 – 1815” in which various key players tried to influence their respective governments to meet their needs: “Imagine that it is the spring of 1815. As a result of the Treaty of Ghent the United States has enhanced its status in North America, as well as its determination to maintain a republic based both on commercial trading and slave labor. Meanwhile the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland has momentarily lost status at home, in Europe, and in its major colony: India, and yet its leaders are quite aware that it needs to regain its imperial role due to the changing industrial economy and the growth of the cotton industry. Your task will be either to a government official in the United States or Great Britain or an influential man (only men in this period had these roles!) who wanted his government to meet his needs in this new era.”

The NEHA conference was equally successful:

A second session on the War of 1812 in world history was part of the program at the NEHA gathering at Merrimack College in North Andover. Dane A. Morrison of Salem State University organized and chaired the session, which featured excellent papers and lively discussion.

Patrick R. Jennings of the National Park Service in Boston discussed “The Naval War of 1812: A Global Perspective.” Jennings challenged the conventional emphasis in global military histories to focus on the Napoleonic struggle and Bonaparte’s “impressive body of land warfare work.” Instead, he asserted, “on a global scale it is not Bonaparte that dominates the narrative rather it is Britain’s remarkable capacity to secure their place in global domination and the jarring ability of the relatively young United States to brush aside attempts to reign in their global impulses.”

In “The War from the British Perspective,” Kevin D. McCranie, Associate Professor of Strategy and Policy at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island offered a perspective from his new book, *Utmost Gallantry: The U.S. and Royal Navies at Sea in the War of 1812* (Naval Institute Press, 2011). McCranie discussed the impulses that produced this global engagement, noting, “In terms of the war’s origins, one cannot understand the War of 1812 without recognizing that major British decisions rested two related issues – the control of maritime commerce for British interests and the war against Napoleon’s Empire.” This, he argued, was a war produced by misunderstandings on both sides.

Finally, Emily Murphy, park historian at the Salem Maritime National Historic Site in Salem, Massachusetts, presented a global view in “The War of 1812: Local Reflections of a Global Conflict.” The War of 1812 was perceived as a global war by Salem’s far-flung maritime interests. But, the war did not produce a consensus within Salem’s maritime community. Rather, the town’s merchants and mariners became deeply divided over matters of alliances and strategies.

UPCOMING NERWHA EVENTS

On March 2, 2013, NERWHA will return to Salem State University for the spring symposium and will feature a keynote address by Dr. Howard Spodek of Temple University. Spodek has been a leader in the field of world history and author of several books including *Ahmedabad: Shock City of Twentieth Century*, and the widely circulated textbook, *The World's History*, now in its fourth edition. The Call for Discussants and Save the Date will be coming soon!

NERWHA WELCOMES THOMAS RUSHFORD, OUR NEW WEBMASTER

We are delighted to announce that Thomas Rushford, George Mason University, has taken up the post of NERWHA webmaster. Tom has served as Project Editor for the digital history site *The Making of the History of 1989* and has tackled the digital history initiative in the Office of the House Historian, United States House of Representatives. Up until now, we have relied on the generous services of the WHA, which helped us to organize an excellent digital presence. Tom gives NERWHA the capacity to incorporate more materials into our website and to update our messages to members with a measure of celerity.

WHA FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The past few years have been a reminder to those outside of world history that we are all interconnected in a global economy, for better and for worse. The financial downturn has challenged all of us and the associations that we support. Due to cancellations in two planned symposia, the WHA found itself this year in some financial straits. Consequently, at its fall meeting, NERWHA's Executive Committee voted to donate 10% of its funds towards supporting the WHA and consider in the future a regular annual donation.

IN MEMORIUM

Bentley Photo

**In Memoriam
Jerry H. Bentley
1949-2012**

From Al Andrea:

One of the giants of world history studies and a moving spirit behind the World History Association, Dr. Jerry H. Bentley, Professor Emeritus of History, the University of Hawai'i at Mañoa, passed away on July 15, 2012 after a heroic battle with cancer. He is survived by his loving wife, Carol Mon Lee, stepson Michael Lee Shinn, parents Willie Carey and Billie Bentley, and brothers Murry and Larry Bentley.

Scholars, teachers, and students from around the world have expressed their sadness at his death and poured out moving tributes to his life and the impact that he had on the lives of so many. In the words of Terry Burke of the University of California, Santa Cruz: "Jerry H. Bentley... was a generous humanist, leading world historian, and inspiring mentor to scholars around the globe. A trail blazer in the field of world history, Dr. Bentley led the way by precept and example in

transforming how we see human history through the lens of cross-cultural interactions.” A better encomium is not possible.

He was a scholar and teacher whose passionate commitment to world history and dedication to history that meets the highest standards of critical scholarship were only equaled by his generosity to students and colleagues alike. His influence on the lives and careers of so many is incalculable. Equally, his influence on the practice and teaching of world history is beyond measure.

Neither the sum nor the parts of his *curriculum vitae* adequately encapsulate or describe the man, the scholar, the teacher, and the pioneer of world history, but it is fitting to consider several of his most notable achievements.

Jerry was a prime mover behind the establishment of the World History Association in 1982, and yet he preferred to remain quietly in the background, never offering his name for any high office in the association save that of editor of the *Journal of World History*, a publication that he almost single-handedly founded in 1990 and upon which he impressed his rigorous standards of excellence. He held the post of editor without interruption for twenty-two years, until ill-health forced his retirement in 2012. Upon receiving word of his retirement, the Executive Council of the WHA unanimously voted him a singular distinction, naming him Editor Emeritus. It is unlikely that anyone else will ever merit that title within the family of the WHA because Jerry’s tenure as editor was not only long and distinguished, it was momentous and even unique. More than any other single element, the high academic standards that Jerry established and uncompromisingly maintained for the *Journal of World History* brought world history studies respectability in the eyes of so many historians who were initially skeptical of and even hostile toward this new field of inquiry and study. A measure of the excellence of Jerry’s stewardship of the *JWH* was its being named in 1990 the “Best New Journal” by the Council of Editors of Learned Journals. Today world history as a field of research and teaching is rapidly spreading not only across the schools, colleges, and universities of the United States but around the world. The *Journal of World History* has played a major role in that success story.

Beyond editing the *Journal of World History*, Jerry served the WHA and world history in general in a wide variety of meaningful ways. He was responsible more than any other individual for bringing the WHA to the University of Hawai’i at Mañoa, where it was able, after almost two decades of being run totally by volunteers, to establish a professional Secretariat. With that move, the WHA was ready to claim its place among the historical profession’s leading learned associations. Although Jerry was instrumental in securing favorable terms and generous support from the University of Hawai’i, the creation of a Secretariat, with a paid executive director and her assistant, was largely an act of faith and hope on the part of two successive WHA presidents, Carter Findley (2000-2002) and Ralph Croizier (2002-2004) because of the precarious state of the WHA’s treasury. Known only to a few, and never mentioned by him, Jerry took an active role in raising sufficient funds to underwrite the new executive director’s first year of salary. Along with four other WHA members who were also authors of successful world history textbooks, he donated a substantial sum of money without any publicity whatsoever. Such was his dedication to the WHA and all that it represented and all that it promised to be. His dream is today a reality.

As editor of the *Journal of World History*, Jerry held *ex officio* status on the WHA’s Executive Council, and he took that role seriously. He regularly attended its semi-annual meetings, no

matter where they were held, and he also participated in its two retreats in Los Angeles and Seattle. His attendance at these events was never ceremonial or pro forma. Rather, he never shrank from his duty of expressing articulately his thoughtful position on numerous issues, and always with the best interests of the WHA as his guiding principle. The same was true when the WHA entered the world of cyber space and established a Council listserv. Jerry could always be counted on for well-thought-out positions that forced both those who agreed and disagreed with him to see the issue under consideration in a fuller light. More often than not, he was able to put complex problems into a historical perspective by calling up his memory of previous WHA actions and experiences. If one virtue could be said to characterize the essence of his seemingly endless stream of counsel it is *prudence*. Above all else, he was an advocate of the prudent and the possible and abhorred anything that might put the WHA at serious risk or compromise all that had been achieved. His mind, heart, and voice were an important WHA asset that will never be replaced.

Beyond being a leading academic in the field of world history, as his learned monographs and articles as well as his editorship of both the *Journal of World History* and eight significant books and encyclopedias in world history bear witness, Jerry Bentley was an exemplary teacher. Every teacher in the field knows the widely adopted textbook, *Traditions and Encounters: A Global Perspective on the Past*, now in its fifth edition, which he co-authored with Herbert F. Ziegler. That book, its unquestioned merits notwithstanding, constitutes only a small part of a résumé that marks him as a master teacher. At the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa he inspired, challenged, and mentored students at all levels for more than three and a half decades. As one current Ph.D. candidate, Lance Nolde, put it, Jerry Bentley “influenced countless students and scholars, many of whom are now professors themselves, undoubtedly passing on the Bentley perspective of world history.” In recognition of his teaching, in 1997 he received the Presidential Citation for Excellence in Teaching at the University of Hawai'i. Beyond the university, he co-directed five summer seminars on various aspects of world history, and he served on the World History Task Force for College Board. He subsequently became a reader for the AP World History examination whose curriculum he had helped fashion. In 2006 he was named Distinguished Visiting Professor at Capital Normal University in Beijing, where on frequent and regular visits he directed the work of advanced Chinese students, instructing them in the most recent developments in world history. He held this post until illness forced his recent retirement. It is no exaggeration to state that Jerry helped advance world history studies in the People's Republic of China in a meaningful way. It was also due to his connections with Capital Normal University that the WHA was able to hold its 2011 conference there—a conference at which he was recognized as an honored Pioneer of World History. Closer to home, Jerry played a key role in fashioning Hawai'i's high school social studies standards and curriculum.

Jerry began his career as a student of European humanism in the age of the Renaissance. A humanist of wide-ranging ability and accomplishment was often termed “*un uomo universale*”—a universal man, or a man for all seasons. Jerry H. Bentley was such a *uomo universale*. He is sorely missed.

Jerry's family has established the JERRY H. BENTLEY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN WORLD HISTORY. This endowed scholarship supports graduate students studying world history. For purposes of this scholarship, world history refers to explicit comparative analysis of different societies and cultural regions, or to cross-cultural analysis that explores relations between different societies and cultural regions, or that otherwise analyzes historical

developments in a global context. Recipients must be full-time graduate students majoring in World History in the Department of History at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa College of Arts and Humanities with preference given to doctoral students. Through their research projects, recipients shall demonstrate potential to contribute to scholarship in world history.

From Mary Jane Maxwell:

I can't imagine the WHA without Jerry. In fact, I can't even imagine *world history* without Jerry. Jerry was our leader, mentor, colleague and friend. He was so good to so many of us, especially when we were just starting out. Jerry published my first article in the *Journal of World History*, and he worked hard to get it to the right reviewers in order to get it into publishable shape. I know that he took this kind of time and care with so many WHA members, and I know that he will be terribly missed by us all. Cheers Jerry.