

NERWHA ZOOM MINUTES

20 August 2020

A prelude to the Zoom meeting:

On 19 August, David Northrup sent the following email to all Executive Council members:

I propose we consider the second book for our colloquium. I nominate Geo. Fredrickson's *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton UP). It covers a lot (beginning with Christian anti-Semitism and ending with racism in the 21C) yet runs only 170 pp. (not counting the endnotes). There is not a better historical overview. Wm. H. McNeill praised it as "learned and elegant." Fredrickson was a U.S. historian who wrote two widely read books comparing U.S and South African racism before completing this little gem. It nicely complements the view from below in *Africa's Discovery of Europe* with an intellectual and social overview of the uniquely Western curse of abiding racial prejudice. Since Gustavo first nominated it, consider this a motion to second.

On that same day, Tom Johnson sent out the following request:

I look forward to this meeting. Is an agenda available in advance, please? If so, here is one topic; an update on the revived newsletter. I've submitted a short piece (not a review) & I think Al's offering something on holy war.

In reply, the NERWHA Secretary responded, also on that day:

I have viewed a preliminary and still incomplete draft of the Newsletter, Tom. What I can say about it is that 1) it is quite handsome so far as composition is concerned; indeed, it looks professional. 2) Both items that you mention are in the Newsletter, Tom, as well as an interview with David N. in regard to *Africa's Discovery of Europe*. 3) It also has a recent published books section, highlighting Tony Penna's new book; 4) Gabriela awaits hearing from several people in order to put some final touches on the Newsletter. 5) She envisions it as a quarterly, and has a 15 September launch date for issue 1. 6) I plan to send out a general post later this week reminding folks of the book discussion and again requesting news and other submissions.

He followed with a second reply:

Oh, correction, Tom. My mini-essay is on the "Global Middle Ages," a historiographical movement that is finding traction within the arcane priesthood of medievalists. Medievalists are the illegitimate offspring of the Illuminati.

Following these prolegomena,¹ the meeting was held, as scheduled, on 20 August, beginning at 1:00 PM.

In attendance:

David Kalivas (DK), President

David Northrup (DN), Vice-President

A. J. Andrea (AA), Secretary,

Thomas Johnson (TJ)

Angela Lee (AL)

Robert Pelletier (RP)

Violetta Ravagnoli (VR)

Heather Streets-Salter (HSS)

Kerry Vieira (KV)

After initial conversation on the pedagogical headaches caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and DK's noting that we should all reread Alan Bullock's *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* in order to understand today's global rise of fascism, the meeting began discussing business at 1:09.

DK: Thanks the Secretary for the Minutes for the 28 July meeting, and assumes they are accepted. Unanimous acceptance by silence.

KV: There are 31 persons registered as of today for NERWHA's book forum on 26 September.

AL: I will be unable to participate, but I am promoting it, and hope that there will be an uptick in the registrant numbers.

¹ An archaic Greek term used only by poseurs.

DK: Thirty-one is good!

KV: To spread the word, the WHA website will soon carry an announcement of the book forum.

AA: Another reminder will also go out in a day or two on the NERWHA listserv.

DK: What are our other publicity outlets? The Northeastern world history graduate students?

HSS: I will spur the students to participate.

KV: Certainly the WHA is actively promoting it. If we can get the registration to 50, we will have a healthy group.

DK: We need to send a reminder to registrants several days in advance of the forum.

KV: Each will receive the Zoom link a day in advance of the forum, and on the morning of the forum another reminder will be sent out. Should we ask for questions from the registrants in advance?

DN: Sure.

KV: I will request questions when I send out the Zoom link. And forward them to David N.?

DN: Sure.

HSS: I like the Fredrickson book that Gustavo and David N. nominated.

DN: Yes, he was a specialist in US history who also wrote two brilliant books comparing racism in the US and South Africa.

DK: It is a great book, and we should go with it for our second book forum.

TJ: A question. Who may register to participate in the book forum?

KV: Anyone may register. Another piece of information: Luke Scalone is this year's WHA student assistant.

DK:OK, our next book. George Fredrickson's *Racism: A Short History*. All agreed?

Unanimous assent.

TJ: Be aware there are two editions, 2003 and 2015. The only difference is a new preface in the 2015 edition.

DK: Are we agreed on only two forums² for now?

Agreed!

DK: Let's set the date for the second forum but only announce it on the 26th. I will be the MC for the 26th, introducing each participant and announcing the November forum. Kerry V. will moderate everything behind the scenes. Now, a date for the November forum?

VR: It has to be the 7th or the 14th in light of Thanksgiving.

KV: Let's not have it immediately after the election.

DK: Yes! So it is November 14, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM.

TJ: I would like to hear a bit more about the Newsletter.

AA: Well, I largely said what I know in yesterday's email to the Council, but I can add a few things. First of all, Gabriela is doing quite a commendable job so far as content and format are concerned. She purchased *Office Publisher*, which she is using, and from what I have seen in a mock-up she sent me, it looks good—quite good. She tells me she reached out to several EC members for information, and awaits hearing from them. I urge all members of the EC to send her materials. I sent her a short essay, and plan to write a second one for the December issue. We must lead the way. So far, my appeals to the 200 plus on the listserv for news and other offerings have fallen on proverbial deaf ears. As noted, she is aiming for a 15 September inaugural launch.

AL: She wrote me asking for some information. Did she send that request to all EC members?

² Thankfully, DK did not use the Latinate and hopelessly pedantic *fora*.

AA: I do not think so. I certainly did not receive such an appeal. I suspect, as I noted earlier, she is asking only select persons for specific types of news.

DK: AA mentioned upcoming elections in an email. We do need new blood on the EC. Now about the format of the forum.

DN: The three discussants should start things off.

VR: Each will take 5 minutes, which means that with introductions, we are already 20 minutes into the forum. Then should we read submitted questions with David's responses?

DN: Yes.

DK: I will send notes regarding this format to Luke Scalone and Dave Burzillo.³

VR: If we plan to have breakout rooms, we must figure out how to handle them.

DN: The three discussants should confer among themselves as to how they wish to handle breakouts.

VR: I will be in touch with Dave and Luke.

AA: I suggest that well before the 26th, the five of you (DK, DN, and the 3 discussants) get together on Zoom to plot strategy and tactics.

KV: I will send them a Zoom link for a practice session. This will be a real run-through, and I will send them an email to arrange a get together.

DK: What about 16 September for the practice session?

AL: This will allow them to work out all the kinks.

KV: Discusses the technical aspects of the practice session and the forum, details that totally befuddle the Secretary. He hears sentences such as "No private chat on Zoom" and "I can create a list on mobile phones," and is totally lost as to what it all means.

³ The discussants, along with Violetta R.

DK: It is not necessary that we have breakout rooms. We will make that decision at the practice session.

VR: How did the last WHA event go with breakouts?

AL: There were breakout rooms because the workshop nature of the event mandated that we have them. Planning a breakout at the last minute is hard.

KV: We do not have to have breakouts. We will decide on the 16th.

DK: How did the WHA handle them?

AL: The facilitators offered reports.

DK: We have 1 ½ hours. Maybe at the 40-minute mark we go to breakouts and after 10-15 minutes report back.

VR: We will try it out on the 16th.

TJ: Let's wait until we see how many are registered.

DK: Agreed—on the 16th!

AA: Are we going to discuss the Spring symposium's date?

DK: Not today. OK, Thanks all!

The meeting adjourns at 1:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A. J. Andrea, Secretary