

GGC History News

A Journal of the GGC History Discipline

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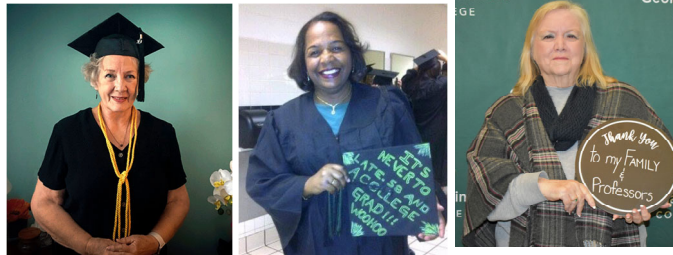
Issue

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Nontraditional Students Succeed and Make Unique Contributions in GGC History Major

Nontraditional students are a visible campus presence. Many felt a drive, an internal motivation, to complete a degree. They are not afraid to speak up and reflect on assignments. They almost always



(L-R): Janet Lively, Alethea Webb, and Denise Norton

complete their homework. Still, nontraditional students defy easy description. Nearly everyone agrees that they may face unique challenges but also that they distinctly contribute to the classroom environment. We decided to interview three history graduates, Alethea Webb ('15), Janet Lively ('20), and Denise Norton ('21), so that they might speak in their own words.

1. What Motivated You to Start or Finish College?

Norton: I made a deal with my son that I would earn a degree at the same time he earned his. The other factor was that I started a history degree long ago, and I wanted to finish it.

Lively: I started college at age 68. I just always wanted to go, because I enjoy learning. Five of my six children are college graduates. I wanted the shared experience.

Webb: I was suddenly presented with the opportunity to leave my day job, and I was motivated by having a strong desire to finish the undergraduate degree that had eluded me for so many years.

2. What is an Advantage to Being a "Mature" Student?

Lively: I didn't mind being the only one who raised their hand or asked weird questions. I loved the fact that sometimes I was the only one who caught the joke or had rapport with the professor's sense of humor.

Norton: Most have a lot to offer in discussion about history because we have lived through so much.

Webb: The certainty and confidence that this is something you definitely want to do at this point in your life.

3. What are the Challenges?

Norton: Some might have health issues and others may have family issues [that make

unique demands on us].

Lively: Challenges exist through being 'a lone wolf' without a friendship base (We needed a 'Silver Seniors' club!). But I was pleased that students accepted me when I put forth the effort to be sociable.

4. What do you wish that students and faculty understood about older students?

Webb: Because of our life experiences we may have a different perspective on the subject matter at hand that could actually add value. In addition, something that I wished some of my professors understood is that when giving out assignments or projects, assign something that might not always produce your usual text book answers but something where a non-traditionally aged student might be able to integrate their life experiences into their response.

5. What was the best part of your experience?

Norton: All the faculty and staff members have been in my corner.

Lively: I loved going to GGC! I loved 98% of my professors (100% of the history profs!). I know the mental exercise has been great for the brain!

Webb: Being a part of such a diverse student body that represented different ethnicities, cultures, generations, and backgrounds. At GGC I met one of my best friends, who is Brazilian.

By Richard Rawls

Ex Libris: Historian Reflecting Upon Remembrance



Remembrance is something that comes naturally to historians. However, sometimes it becomes personal. We forget this fact when we read historians from the past who were reflecting on their own times. Dr. Mazin Tadros produced this thought piece on remembrance as part of the enterprise of thinking and writing about history.

Remembrance

We are all historians. In our minds remembrances stir pathways to understanding or to imaginations, creatively piecing emotional and psychological historiographies of what has passed in our lives. Remembrances are represented in many ways, projecting idealized forms of ourselves and others, and at times, dispossessing the reality within that recollection and obscured in relation to our capacity for detachment. And as trained historians, as some recent and ancient scholars have suggested, we are in some measure, a priestly class – you can define the term for yourself.

For Plato remembrances come from a cognitive process that is founded on abstractions, and those abstractions lead us to the collective intellect. Augustine of Hippo saw memories as “a vast immeasurable sanctuary” and however that it is part of our existence, our natural state, we cannot understand all that we are but as an assemblage of remembrances. Freud framed recollections as methodological, a means to understanding universal truths and personal histories.

Remembrances come in many forms; we reflect publicly and privately in reinforcing the past, molding it to our present, fashioning it for future generations in the service of individual and collective ideals.

In material and psychological manifestations, the public expression of these recollections inculcates inclusion or exclusion to the formulations of that remembrance. And as important, the meaning or significance of immortalized conceptions (including material, documented sources) slip into the ether of “lost memory,” that is reenters into the collective intellect. At the personal level, memory and recollection, constitute much of our thinking.

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When we terminally lose our friends and family members, remembrance plays its most important role in the cultivation of the eternity of the individual now deceased. Augustine’s “immeasurable

sanctuary,” notionally similar to Confucian philosophy in how the past influences and informs community and family, entails the eternal existence of those lost. We have it in our capacity to create a sanctuary of thought, of recollections in the Aristotelian sense, at our disposal to sustain the energy, the “soul” of the deceased mother, father, and friend. Maurice Halbwach, nearly a century ago, in evaluating memory and religion, asserted that each remembrance in some way is a commemoration of that idea, person, place, feeling, frozen in time, eternal in our minds, “exempt from the law of change.” We store them in particular places in the mind, their eternal form sustained through remembrances, and remain at our disposal in the present and as we step into the future.

Take a Bow! Faculty Accomplishments

History Professor Receives “Outstanding Student Engagement” Award

Ellen Rafshoon received the “Outstanding Student Engagement of the Year 2020-21.” The annual honor is awarded to a GGC professor nominated by a student. Nominees were required to submit to an awards committee a number of items documenting excellence in student engagement. This is the third “Outstanding/Excellence” award earned by a historian. **Eugene Berger** earned one for “Service” in 2014-15. **Richard Rawls** won one for “Teaching” in 2019-2020.



Patrick Zander published his first novel, *Madden Falls: A Novel of America and the Devil's Music*, with Xlibris. It is about a history professor from Chicago who embarks on a journey to reconstruct the life and mysterious death of a legendary bluesman. Along the way he runs into the raging civil rights conflict and finds himself on a journey into evil.



Frank Smith published the monograph, *Race, Church, and Society*, with Presbyterian Scholars Press, 2021. He also composed the “Books in Brief” section, which included overviews of ten books, for the academic journal, *The Confessional Presbyterian* 17 (2021): 177-182, 242.



Andres Hajar published “There are no Communists Here: Workers, Elites, and Political Power in Ciudad Juarez during the 1930s,” in *Estudios Mexicanos/Mexican Studies* Vol. 37, Issue 2, Summer 2021, pages 263–289.

Richard Rawls received the award “Registered Student Organization Advisor of the Year,” for his advising the student club, the Organization of Latin American Students. OLAS received the “RSO Club of the Year” award for the fourth time in the last seven years. Rawls also presented “Cultural, Military, and Propaganda Purposes in the Use of Corpses in the Greco-Persian Wars,” at the Southern Historical Association European Section conference on 5 November 2021. He was also one of four historians selected by Oxford University Press to suggest revisions to its *The Worlds of Medieval Europe*.

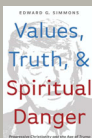


Nathan Orgill served as a moderator and commentator at two separate panels of the Southern History Association’s European Section conference, 4-6 November 2021. The first panel was titled *Bodies of Work: How the Dead Have Served the Living Throughout History*. The second was titled *Humanitarianism and Social Policy in the Era of the World Wars*.

Patrick Ludolph presented on 13 November at the North American Conference on British Studies in Atlanta. The paper was titled “Sir Thomas Clarges and the ‘Art of Being Lucky.’”



Michael Gunther presented “Southern Nationalists and the Early Smithsonian,” at the History of Science Society annual meeting in November 2021. Despite hopes of attending in person, Dr. Gunther presented virtually after the society shifted its conference to an online format.



Edward Simmons released *Values, Truth, and Spiritual Danger: Progressive Christianity and the Age of Trump*, in 2021 with Wipf and Stock Publishers. He also presented “Big History as a Philosophy of History,” at the International Big History Association in August 2021.

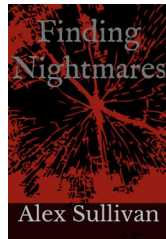


Remalian Cocar presented “Acceptance: Homophile Arguments of the 1950s and 1960s” at the Society for U.S. Intellectual History conference in November 2021.

Alumni/ae, Student, and Event News

History Graduate News

Alex Sullivan '21, published *Finding Nightmares*, a collection of short horror stories currently available on Amazon. She is currently working on *Victoria Serious*, a young adult vampire book series.



Robert Myers, '18, received the MAT degree in secondary education from Mercer University in December 2021.

Jack Harrison, '21, earned a position at Salem Middle School in DeKalb County, where he teaches 7th Grade Social Studies.

Allison Wilker, '13, received a teaching position in Buford City Schools teaching 7th grade math and 8th grade physical science.

Monica El-Amin, 17, co-presented "Sapelo Voices: Sharing Authority, Amplifying Voices," at the Southeastern Archaeology Conference in Durham, North Carolina, in October 2021.

Constitution Day: Three Days of Events

GGC complied with the federal mandate to observe "Constitution Day," and historians contributed to the events. On September 16, Drs. Michael Lewkowicz (POLS), Heidi Tauscher (Religion), Richard Cook (History), and Samuel Sprunk (POLS) presented on the "Constitution and Religion." On September 17, Lee Kurtz (Biology), Kristina Mormino (French), Richard Rawls (History), and Mahriana Rofheart (English) presented on the "Constitution and Voting Age." On September 21, Kathryn Tapp (CJCR), Carlos Llorens (campus police), Michael Brill (former public defender), and Bob Giannini (Gwinnett County Indigent Defense Committee) discussed "Police and the Constitution."

Commencement Fall 2021 Class



Left to right, Dr. Michael Gunther, Dr. Michael Gagnon, Dr. Nathan Orgill, Dr. Carey Shellman, Denise Norton, William Goode, Dr. Ellen Rafshoon, Jose Orozco, Lauren Parker, Caullan Colbert, Joshua Radermacher, Marcus O'Rear, Jonathan Bell, Dr. Richard Cook.

On December 7, Georgia Gwinnett College held the commencement ceremony for its fall 2021 graduates at the Gas South Arena in Duluth. Over 600 students received degrees. Those graduating with a B.A. degree in history included Jonathan Bell, Colleen Colbert, William Goode, Akeem Muhammad, Denise Norton, Marcus O'Rear, Jose Orozco, Lauren Parker, Matthew Powell, and Joshua Radermacher. Keynote speaker Gwinnett County State Court Judge Veronica Cope reminded students, "You will face challenges in your life and sometimes life will throw you a curve ball and knock you down flat on your back." Still, she encouraged grads to remember that perseverance pays off when things get difficult. "Get up, brush yourself off and keep running."

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Next Issue:

The GGC History News has experienced delays due to Covid-19 and the demands it placed on faculty. In the next issue we shall examine how the nature of "scholarship" in history is changing in light of technological advances. Dr. Remalian Cocar will compose the next *Ex Libris* section, and there will be expanded coverage of graduate, student, and faculty accomplishments.