

## In Memoriam



### Thomas N. Sizgorich (1970-2011)

FRIENDS, COLLEAGUES AND classmates of Prof. Thomas Sizgorich (PhD 2005, Drake) gathered in the UCSB Faculty Club on Feb. 26 to celebrate his remarkable career and mourn his untimely death.

Only recently tenured in the UC Irvine History department, Tom suffered a massive stroke and died on Jan. 27 without regaining consciousness. He was 40 years old.

His 2009 book, *Violence and Belief in Late Antiquity* "catapulted him into the first ranks of a new generation of scholars of early Islam," Prof. Drake said.

Prof. Stephen Humphreys, who co-chaired Tom's doctoral committee, pointed to his unique ability to combine the "two halves of Late Antiquity" — the Graeco-Roman world and Islam.

"They ought to mesh well, but almost nobody can find out how to talk about them," he said. "Tom really wove them together in an extraordinary way.

"It is an unique intellectual achievement."

Classmates celebrated his quick wit and strong sense of justice.

"I surmise that for many of us, we do remember Tom as a kind of saint," said Prof. Heidi Marx-Wolf, now at the University of Manitoba.

"I don't mean one of those benign, prettified, Polyanna types of saints. I refer to the monstrous madmen of the ancient borderlands — stylites, dendrites, desert and tree dwellers, men and women who

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## The Story of Charlie Chan And the Chinese in America

A MINOR CHARACTER in Earl Derr Bigger's '925 mystery, *The House Without a Key*, was a self-effacing, Confucius-quoting Honolulu detective who went on to become the central figure in dozens of books and movies in the 1930s and 1940s.

That character, Charlie Chan, will be the subject of the UCSB History Associates next event, a dinner and lecture at Santa Barbara's premier Chinese restaurant, The China Pavilion, on Wednesday, March 23, at 6 p.m.

Speaking will be Prof. Yunte Huang of the UCSB English department, whose book, *Charlie Chan: The Untold Story of the Honorable Detective and His Rendezvous with American History* (Norton, 2010).

Prof. Huang, who is spending the year on leave at Cornell University, says he had never heard of Charlie Chan before coming to the U.S. for his PhD in 1991.

Although many Chinese-Americans by that time had come to regard the honorable detective as an embarrassing stereotype,

Prof. Huang says he was fascinated by the Chan movies and what they taught about American culture

According to Yale's Jonathan Spense, the book that grew out of this interest "will permanently change the way we tell this troubled yet gripping story" of the Chinese experience as seen through both Chinese and Western eyes.

Prof. Huang's book was shortlisted for the 2010 National Book Critics Circle Award in Biography and the 2011 Edgar Award for Best Critical/Biographical Book.

Cost for lecture and a three-course menu that includes soup, two appetizers and four entrees is \$35 for members and \$40 for non members.

Reservations may be made by phoning (805) 617-0998.

The China Pavilion restaurant is located at 1202 Chapala St., on the corner of Chapala and Anapamus in downtown Santa Barbara.



Prof. Yunte Huang.



Sydney Toler played Chan in 11 films.

# Faculty Notes

PROF. CECILIA MENDEZ, who is currently on leave with a fellowship at the Stanford Humanities Center, has been awarded a fellowship from the National Endowment of the Humanities (NEH) to spend next year in Peru working on her new book, *The Wars Within: Civil Strife National Imaginings and the Rural Basis of the Peruvian State*.

"This is Prof. Mendez's third prestigious extramural award in two years—a truly impressive achievement," said History Chair John Majewski.

PROF. SARAH CLINE has been appointed chair of the external evaluation committee for the UCSB History Department graduate program. She is also a member of the NEH grants committee for scholarly publication.

PROF. PAUL SPICKARD was slated to deliver the Robert A. Friedman Lecture at Baruch College in New York this month. His topic is, "Farewell to the American Dream? Anti-Immigrant Sentiment and the Future of Citizenship."

Prof. Spickard then travels to Oslo for a meeting of the Nordic Association for American Studies, where he will participate in a plenary panel on "Integrating the Third and First Worlds: Policy Debates in Europe and America over Current International Migration and the Future of the Multiethnic Society."



istoria

Vol. 24, No. 4 March • 2011

Editor

Hal Drake

Published by the UCSB  
History Associates



Badash lecturer Alice Dreger is welcomed by Profs. Peter Alagona (L.) and Patrick McCray

## Internet Enables Witch Hunters, Dreger Says

GALILEO FACED persecution by the Church, but scientists today have more to fear from the internet, according to Northwestern University's Alice Domurat Dreger.

Delivering the second annual Lawrence Badash Memorial Lecture, Prof. Dreger, whose specialty is bioethics, said the proliferation of self-appointed experts on the internet, combined with the decline of solid investigative reporting in the mainstream media, has made scientists vulnerable to hate campaigns waged by identity groups more interested in advocating their cause than finding the truth.

"Anything thrown on the internet gets traction," she observed, creating a question of how to deal ethically with people who are lying.

Citing the case of UCSB Anthropology Prof. Napoleon Chagnon, who was accused of deliberately infecting the South American Yanomami with smallpox, Prof. Dreger said the American Anthropological Assn. refused to support the embattled professor even though they knew the accusation was false.

This was "an extremely disturbing case," she said, because they knowingly sacrificed a researcher to make the profes-

sion look better.

Of her own work on transgender and hermaphrodite individuals, Prof. Dreger said, "I've been tagged 'anti-medicine' and 'pro-medicine,' when what I really am is pro-evidence."

When such controversies take over scholarly discourse, Prof. Dreger said, the best thing the accused scientist can do is to reply automatically with the facts to any attack that is made. But that is a time-consuming process.

Academics, she said, should also make sure "that people who are made administrators have a fundamental commitment to freedom of inquiry.

"All we ask is to get crazy people off our backs so we can get back to work," she said.

Prof. Badash, who died in 2010, taught history of science at UCSB for 36 years.

The lecture series, which was inaugurated last year, recognizes his life-long interest in the intersection of science and technology with broader social issues.

Continued funding of the Badash lectures for the next five years has been assured by the generous support of Prof. Badash's life partner, Nancy Hofbauer, and his two children, Bruce Badash and Lisa Jones.

## Lecture Reunites Leningrad Buddies

IT'S NOT OFTEN that someone will smile about a talk on terrorism.

But that's exactly what Prof. Tsuyoshi Hasegawa did when he learned that Dr. Alexander Kubyshkin of the University of St. Petersburg will speak here Apr. 14 on the topic of "Contemporary Russia and Terrorism."

"Sasha Kubyshkin was my roommate in the graduate student/international scholar dormitory on Shevchenko Street in Leningrad back in 1977-78," a smiling Prof. Hasegawa explained.

"One of the frequent visitors who came to visit us was Francoise Longue-Marx, who was a descendant of great-grandpa Karl," he recalled. "Because of her famous ancestor, she had a standing invitation to visit the Soviet Union."

Although the roommates preferred to cook for themselves, Prof. Hasegawa recalled, they sometimes had to eat in the dormitory dining hall.

"We used to say to ourselves on these occasions, 'Davaite otravimsia,' which means 'OK, let's poison ourselves,'" he said.

Now you can understand why I am writing a book on social history of Petrograd during the Russian Revolution," he added.

Dr. Kubyshkin, who is currently at Ramapo College on a Fulbright fellowship, will speak in HSSB 4041 at 12:15 p.m.



*Historia* photo by Eileen Boris  
 Prof. Chris Tilly (UCLA) speaks on ILO in Latin America on a panel that included (l. to r.) Jill Jensen (UCSB), Andrew Schrank (University of New Mexico), and Norberto Ferreras (Eluminense Federal University, Brazil).

## UCSB Hosts International Conference on Labor

FEW PEOPLE HAVE given much thought to the 92-year-old International Labor Organization (ILO), originally part of the League of Nations, but its history may well have important lessons for hundreds of millions of workers today as East Asia and Latin America become centers of world manufacturing.

That was the theme of a major conference held at UCSB in early February.

"West Meets East: the ILO from Geneva to the Pacific Rim" brought together some 35 historians, social scientists and labor activists from nine countries to explore how the evolving ideas and past practice of the ILO, now part of the United Nations, have often played a decisive role in shaping contemporary efforts to advance workers' rights, economic development, and women's equality.

Discussion grew particularly lively when panelists debated the prospects for the growth of independent trade unionism and living standards among workers in China and Southeast Asia.

The conference was organized by Prof. Nelson Lichtenstein and graduate student Jill Jensen, who is completing

a dissertation entitled "International Labor Standards in the Building of Two Postwar Orders, 1919-1954."

The conference was co-sponsored by the Geneva-based ILO itself, which sent two academics as representatives, and the UCSB Center for the Study of Work, Labor, and Democracy. Additional financial support came from the MacArthur Foundation Chair in Sociology and Global Studies, now held by Richard Appelbaum, and the Hull Chair in Women's Studies (Eileen Boris).

## Steve Jobs in Two Words: Vision, Daring

VISION AND DARING are the keys to understanding the impact Apple's Steve Jobs has had on American culture, local author Daniel Alef told the History Associates in February.

Alef, whose *Titans of Fortune* profiles more than 300 great American entrepreneurs, said words like "audacity" and "firmness" are the best way to characterize the young college dropout who faced down a security team at Atari, refusing to leave unless he was hired.

Six months spent in India in pursuit of mysticism help explain Jobs' sureness in his

## Breezeway Mystery Solved!

IT STARTED OFF AS what appeared to be an art installation, of the kind that pop up around campus as Creative Studies students finish their projects—cardboard cutouts of three rotund men in antique bathing costumes, perched on the breezeway that divides the two sides of the HSSB building and apparently in conversation with each other.

Then vaguely familiar cups attached by string showed up next to each of the three figures, along with a free-standing cup labeled "talk here."

What gives?

*Historia's* intrepid cub reporter Luke Roberts solved the mystery.

"Dept. chair John Majewski's proposal to L&S to extend the capabilities of our new phone system (see Nov. 2010 *Historia*, p. 4) has received funding and reached implementation!" he announced.

"This 'Breezeway stage II' of the new system now connects the all-important HASC offices with three floors of History and EALC offices.

"Some of its special features include the hire of three (!) new switchboard operators stationed at the crucial links between the floors of HSSB."

The new system, he reports, features "Tin Can technology that is not only far more durable than the Stage I phones, but at 48 oz. also capacious enough to carry multiple mouthfuls of words simultaneously."

The new system, he said, also includes "Aerial Line suspension to shorten the path of the strings and improve sound quality."

As he admired Prof. Majewski's handiwork, Prof. Roberts could only wonder, "What will stage III bring?"



Daniel Alef.

vision.

"He came back thinking that Edison did more for the world than either Karl Marx or all the gurus of India," Alef said.

It was while he was working at Atari at the time that the first hit video game, "Pong," was being built, that Jobs met Steve Wozniak and the two decided to create a hobby kit for building a personal computer.

In 1976, the pair set up Apple. The Apple II, which debuted in 1980, made Jobs a millionaire at the age of 24.

Describing Jobs as a "con-

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# LETTERS

## To the editor:

IN ALL HONESTY, I didn't know it was Tom when I first met him. I was still settling into my new office at UCSB and I assumed the guy who showed up at my door in a hoodie, worn jeans, and three-day stubble was delivering the bookshelves I had requested. The bookshelves did arrive, yet served me only one year. Tom's visit turned into one of the most profoundly meaningful relationships in my life as a scholar. That day's meeting became the basis for a friendship and intellectual exchange that enriched us both for another ten years. As much as I was dazzled by Tom's mind, it was his heart, and the deeply gentle man inside that raging bull, that I loved so very much.

*Dr. James F. Brooks  
President & CEO  
School for Advanced Research  
Santa Fe, New Mexico*

## To the editor:

I FIRST MET Tom in the Spring of 2006; I was a student in his Late Antique history course. Our relationship was clearly defined: I was student and he was my professor.

During this course, Tom sparked in me an incurable curiosity for the Late Antique Near East. The next year, while tutoring me in Syriac and Arabic, he taught me what it means to be a historian. Tom's zeal for learning and questioning set aflame my desire to know everything that I could about *ibn-so-and-so* and *Mar somebody-or-other*.

Yet, more than this, I am forever grateful to Tom for believing in me. It was not his words that showed his belief in me. In fact, everyone who has known Tom knows that his words would frequently be in direct contrast to his feelings.

He had a special gift for

turning the most obscure of insults into a phrase filled with affection. This did not lead him to be easy on me. Again, anyone who knew Tom knows that he never took it easy on himself. He set a very high bar for himself. He demanded a great deal of his students, and his students either loved him or hated him for this.

*Peninah Walpo  
UCSB Graduate Student*

## To the editor:

LET ME SINGLE out three aspects of [Sizgorich's] work that I particularly esteemed, not least as something of an outsider to the fields in which he worked.

First, there is an aptness, a fit, between the stories Tom wished to tell and the explanatory frameworks he adduced and designed. The arguments that he produced were, of course, supported by enormous learning. But that learning never hampers the exposition: Tom did not argue by aggregation; one is not clubbed by lists or cowed by random collections

of facts. Instead, Tom treated his readers like grown-ups, interested in craft and in pursuit of understanding.

Second, Tom was more than an enormously insightful reader of texts, ancient and modern; he was also a humane and sympathetic one. As a result, he made others feel at home within the discursive and imaginative boundaries of the agents and authors he studied, even as he traversed and transcended them. The same is true to a remarkable degree of Tom's asides about contemporary scholarship: I know not only why Tom drew on the thinkers he did, but I was made to see their potential utility for me, as well. They were not adduced for some contingent purpose and dropped, but given respectful space and consideration in their own right.

Third, Tom's work achieves a truly rare excellence of form. There are, for example, several moments in the essays and the book in which Tom retraces his own steps -- he returns to a passage, or to an episode via a different source, or steps back in time to rehearse a narrative a second time from a quite different perspective. These

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## Friends, Colleagues Remember Thomas Sizgorich

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cut their cloaks in half to give to someone else, and who held the demons at bay for the rest of us, and who called out our hypocrisy and superficiality from the fringes, and who by doing so made a space for us to be more honest and more generous and more magnanimous."

Prof. Eric Fournier of West Chester University described a friend who "never took himself seriously. He enjoyed laughing and had a good sense of humor, was sometimes irreverent (although never disrespectful), and typically refused to compromise for the sake of political correctness or social conventions."

Prof. Elizabeth Digeser of the UCSB History department recalled his strengths as a teacher and mentor.

"Tom was the sort of teacher

who helped his students find their wings and soar, no matter what their background," she said. "Here at UCSB—and at Irvine—we have all been blessed to have these fledgling scholars among us, people of enormous talent, but also a great warmth for this community that we share.

"Perhaps that was Tom's greatest gift," she said.

Prof. David Burden of Indiana Wesleyan University referring to Tom as "our friendly neighborhood pagan" said, "By holding no truck with dogmatic puffery, Tom challenged everyone to look past the superficial to the truly important."

And Prof. Douglas Foraste of CSU Long Beach brought down the house with a story of going into a church in Rome with Tom.

"I went to cross myself with

holy water from the font," Prof. Foraste recalled, "but the font was dry. 'That always happens when I walk into a church,'" he said Tom remarked.

Tom is survived by his wife, Dr. Nancy McLoughlin (PhD 2005, Farmer) and a sister, Rachel.

Tom's family and friends have established a memorial fund to support outstanding entering grad students from economically deprived or non-traditional backgrounds in one of Tom's fields of interests: ancient Mediterranean, Late Antiquity or early Islamic.

Checks made out to UCSB History Associates/UC Regents may be sent to:

**Thomas Sizgorich Memorial Fund  
Office of Community Relations  
University of California  
Santa Barbara, CA 93106-1136**

# LET US HEAR FROM YOU

**If you are a grad trying to get in touch with an old classmate, or a community member or alum with an article or story, why not drop us a line?**

Send your letters to:

Editor, *Historia*

Department of History

University of California

Santa Barbara, CA 93106-9410

or email:

[drake@history.ucsb.edu](mailto:drake@history.ucsb.edu)

# From History to Art: A Picture of Dorian Gray?

*Ed. Note: How many times have you heard an academic say she or he was still trying to decide what to do with their life? It took Geoff Smith (PhD 1969, DeConde) almost 40 years!*

EXPLAINING WHY and how a historian—yes, a nice boy with both a BA and PhD from UCSB, no less—found himself an artist requires more than a glance in the mirror, or an attempt, after Oscar Wilde, to maintain beauty as an integral part of one’s life and being.

Granted this writer’s face shows wrinkle (and smile) lines to compete with the best of them, all of that garnered while lecturing and leading seminars at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario, the fact remains that before autumn 2008 I had not painted or drawn one picture since my elementary school art classes at Hillsborough. Yes, I sketched for my three children in the 1960s and early 1970s—but not very well as my wife pointed out on occasion. She did the family artwork, and did it quite well.

But something happened in 2008. I retired two years before, after 37 years as a utility infielder in history at Queen’s University in Kingston, Canada, where I taught courses ranging from American foreign relations and sport history to “Conspiracy and Dissent in American History from Salem to the New Right” to “Drug Wars and Drug Cultures from the Opium Wars to ‘Blow’” to “Images of Venereal Disease in American Popular and Elite Cultures since 1880”.

On many occasions art and music entered into these courses and piqued my interest—strengthening the nexus already established with themes in popular culture. Yes, I loved Presley, Dylan, and Stevie Wonder.



Geoff Smith with his watercolor, "Adirondack Birch." See Geoff's paintings at <http://www.geoffsmith.org/paintings/paintindex.shtml>

In 2007 I visited my daughter in Oakland, where she had purchased and then painted two small tables, with chairs, for her young children. She had used acrylic and demonstrated why she had always been the artist in the family. “Sing!” “Dance!” “Laugh!” “Play!” she wrote on the chairs, and when I looked at them, smiling, I said to myself, “why can’t I do something like that?” Why, indeed?

So I returned to my home in Canada and—as autumn became winter—painted our laundry room a nice robin’s-egg blue, a planter stand white, its top a mix of bright acrylic shades, and an old rickety table that my sociologist-partner Roberta used to pile research materials, mauve.

Suddenly, beauty being in the eye of the beholder, that table looked great. Roberta praised it and suggested that I might try my hand at painting something a little more esoteric—pictures—landscapes, sunsets, portraits, the like.

This culture touts retirement

as a figurative roundhouse for many people. For those who define themselves by the jobs they leave, withdrawal from routine can be painful, depressing, even worse. As a historian who loved to teach as well as write, I found that I missed the students at Queen’s, even returning to teach a first-year course in sports sociology in 2008.

But I also thought quite a bit about art, especially when visiting the MOMA in New York, the Warhol building in Pittsburgh, and the Getty Museum overlooking the blue Pacific in Los Angeles. I read about painting and other artistic endeavors in the *New York Times* as faithfully as I did the sports section, even more so in recent years. And I also remembered something that I had told my classes for 40 years—hammering at the point as hard as I did when I told them to make certain to floss or to use condoms (both in the proper venues, of course).

And that point, which now

echoed in *my* head, was to take a course—or two, or three or four—outside the major concentration.

Here I spoke from first-hand experience, as my undergraduate degree from UCSB (1963) included two art-history courses with Jacob Lindberg-Hansen and a music course with Peter Odegard. Both professors were terrific in that they and their course material opened doors heretofore unknown.

Henry Adams, who taught European history, included a huge dose of classical and romantic art, with stimulating commentary and context, while in his enthusiasm Felice Bonadio made American artists like Albert Bierstadt, Asher B. Durand, and Thomas Cole seem like neighbors.

But art appreciation does not translate into doing art unless one has the time to think and think and think again, and *then* begin to paint. At first, the fear of painting dominated—my art supplies sat unused for a

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# Ready to Join?

Another great year of UCSB History Associates' events is under way. You'll want to keep posted about events in the History Department as well. To renew your membership or join for the first time, just fill out this form and mail it with your check or money order (payable to UCSB History Associates).

Enclosed are my annual membership dues of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Membership dues are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Gifts to the scholarship fund are considered charitable donations.

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Questions? call (805) 893-2991

## From Historian to Artist in One Lesson

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half-year before the deluge began. As I soon discovered, the only way to learn to do something is to do it. Like writing history, practice made perfect—or at least acceptably imperfect. So with glad heart, sketchbook in hand and the willingness to make and learn from mistakes, I began to paint and paint and paint—watercolor and acrylic. Never tore anything up, and never doubted that something good might happen.

## How Jobs Remade Pop Culture

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summate showman," Alef said Jobs was a "visionary who understands design, one of the top experts on how to introduce a product."

His determination defines the man who revolutionized everything from the way we communicate to the movies we watch, Alef said, as he listed such Jobs-inspired innovations as the iPhone, the Apple Store for music, Pixar studios and, of course, the Apple and Macintosh computers.

"His management style has always been to demand that the people who work for him see his vision and follow it," Alef said. "Those who didn't or couldn't would be

Yes, I took one lesson along the way. The results so far? More than a hundred paintings. Three shows. Several thousand dollars in sales. And more personal satisfaction and surprise than I can measure.

Now, when I look in the mirror, I see that same face as always, a bit older for sure, but over the shoulder, not forgotten, lurks the image of my grandmother, Agnes Poirier Tuck, who began painting at 75 and completed more than 20 fine oils before her death 10 years later.

fired on the spot."

This is the reason new products are always measured against the one that Jobs has introduced, he said.

"The iPhone in 2007 set the standard for cell phones, and the iPad introduced in 2010 has done the same for tablet computers," he pointed out.

Asked how Jobs' health problems will affect Apple's future, Alef replied, "Nobody knows."

The team of executives that Jobs has assembled is capable of carrying on, he said.

"But will there be the same visionary? That's the issue on everyone's minds."

## LETTERS

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moments are all the more powerful for being understated. In consequence, not only was I instructed, but I realized in a flash of insight that I had been taken by the hand and taught. That took my breath away.

*Prof. Clifford Ando  
University of Chicago*

To the editor:

TOM TAUGHT US that we could all stand to have both a bit more love and a bit more anger in us—to have both more gentleness and more fight in us. He reminded us that wit and erudition should be coupled with humility and depth of soul. He yearned to discover the best in humanity and tried to make up the difference when it fell short. We'll miss you, Tom.

*Jason M Kelly (PhD 2004 Guerrini)  
Indiana-Purdue University*

To the editor:

TOM'S GROUNDBREAKING work often defied traditional labels. His own ability to tran-

scend conventional boundaries may help to explain his ability to blur the artificial divide between the late antique and early Islamic periods and his unique perspective on the rhetoric and practice of boundary formation within both Christianity and Islam.

Indeed, challenging convention was Tom's great talent, and, I suspect, one of his great joys.

I met Tom in my first year of graduate study at UCSB, and, like many first-year graduate students, I was young, omniscient, and invincible. Whenever the size of my ego exceeded the quality of my work, Tom was among the first to challenge me, but whenever I was plagued with doubts, Tom was also among the first to comfort me, reminding me that history, like life, is a difficult discipline.

Tom taught by example the necessity for courage and integrity in one's approach to both history and life.

*Corinne Wieben (PhD 2010, Lansing)  
University of Northern Colorado*