

HISTORY HOUSE HERALD

Message from the Chair

By Prof. Anthony Daly



Welcome back from the break. I hope the semester is off to a good start for you and that you are excited about your classes. With so much uncertainty around the world in areas such as Congo, the Middle East and Ukraine, and with the United States facing so many complex issues that will shape the next decade, it is so important to be studying history, political science and public policy. On behalf of all faculty in the department, let me state that we are proud of the hard work and accomplishments of our students and we are committed to helping you work through challenges on

your way to success. Don't hesitate to contact us to ask for advice or assistance – drop us an email or look up our office hours on the department web site, (mcla.edu/hist or mcla.edu/pspp) and drop by 72 Porter Street.

As you read through the newsletter you will see some of the events and opportunities coming up in the semester. I would particularly like to mention that on May 2nd we'll be celebrating our seniors and the inductees into the national history and political science honor societies. You will find more details on this night, which marks the 30th

VOL. 1, #2

Section 1



Travel courses are coming back next year. In the meantime, check out the great offerings from the HIST/PSPP Department for fall 2015.

2



The Creating Equality Series is back and better than ever! We've got a great line up of performances and speakers to highlight equality in the U.S.

2

Section 2



Prof. Ely Janis has a new book coming out this month. Read about it in this newsletter, and discover how his teaching is informed by research.

3



The URC is around the corner! Don't miss your opportunity to present your own research to your peers and faculty at MCLA.

4

*"Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country."
--Pres. John F. Kennedy*

anniversary of Phi Alpha Theta at MCLA, later in this newsletter.

On a personal note, I am excited to be back after a sabbatical semester. It was a wonderful opportunity to work full-time on research on British history, but I love teaching at MCLA and it is great to be back in the classroom.

Spring 2015 is full of 'Creating Equality' Events

MCLA's 'Creating Equality' series brings notable speakers, performers, and films to campus. The spring 2015 semester is no different as we have a full slate of activities and events planned for the MCLA and greater-Berkshire community.

The events got started with a screening of 'Selma' on Sunday, January 25 at the Movieplex in North Adams.

Some events the HIST/PSPP Department would like to highlight are:

- Friday and Saturday, Feb. 6 & 7, 10th Annual Blues and Funk Festival @ 7:30pm in Amsler Campus Center Gym.

- Sunday, Feb. 8, Slam Poetry Festival Featuring Special Guest Henry Paige @ 7pm in Sullivan Lounge.
- Tuesday, Feb. 10, 'Campus Conversations on Race' @ 6:30pm place TBD.
- Thursday, Feb. 12, 'An Evening with Rutha Harris' @ 6:30pm in the Church Street Center.
- Tuesday, March 3, Public Policy Lecture Series with Cheryl Jacques @ 7pm in Murdock Hall 218.

Continued on page 4



'Creating Equality' is MCLA's series of events marking the history of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. For more information, check the [website](#).

Highlights from fall 2014; Looking Forward to fall 2015



MCLA students at the Great Wall of China with Prof. Huang

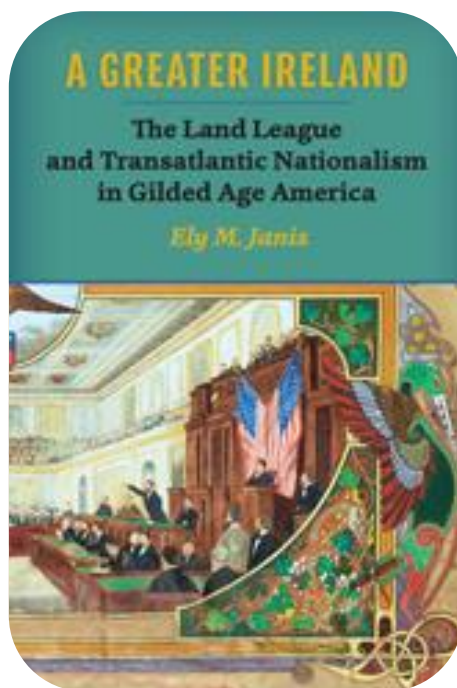
Highlights from fall 2015

This past fall we had a great Michael S. and Kitty Dukakis Lecture with Jose Antonio Vargas. The Ruth Proud Charitable Trust generously supports the Public Policy Speakers Lecture Series.

Prof. Bence oversaw a community discussion on international affairs with guest speaker Adam Hinds. The purpose of the lecture, which will become a yearly occurrence, is to discuss the ways international cooperation can generate peace. The Boschen Fund generously funds this talk.

There are lots of things to look forward to in the

Continued on page 5



Professor Ely Janis Has a New Book on Irish Immigrants in America

At a school like MCLA, it's easy to see what the first love of the faculty is: teaching. However, the faculty at MCLA is also engaged in scholarship, working to publish and make contributions through conference presentations. The highest achievement in academia is having a book published. Prof. Ely Janis has done exactly that with his forthcoming book, *A Greater Ireland: The Land League and Transatlantic Nationalism in Gilded Age America*.

Here's a description of the book, which looks like an excellent read: "During the early 1880s a continual interaction of events, ideas, and people in Ireland and the United States created a "Greater Ireland" spanning the Atlantic that profoundly impacted both Irish and American society. In *A Greater Ireland: The Land League and Transatlantic Nationalism in Gilded Age America*, Ely M. Janis closely examines the Irish National Land League, a transatlantic

organization with strong support in Ireland and the United States. Founded in Ireland in 1879 against the backdrop of crop failure and agrarian unrest, the Land League pressured the British government to reform the Irish landholding system and allow Irish political self-rule. The League quickly spread to the United States, with hundreds of thousands of Irish Americans participating in branches in their local communities.

As this "Greater Ireland" flourished, new opportunities arose for women and working-class men to contribute within Irish-American society. Exploring the complex interplay of ethnicity, class, and gender, Janis demonstrates the broad range of ideological, social, and political opinion held by Irish Americans in the 1880s. Participation in the Land League deeply influenced a generation that

Continued...

Janis Book (con't.)

replaced their old county and class allegiances with a common cause, shaping the future of Irish-American nationalism.

Some of you may have had Prof. Janis's courses on immigration or Gilded Age American history. This work is the combination of those to aspects of American history. While the book is not yet widely available, it has received excellent reviews.

According to the book jacket and the reviews posted to Amazon.com, David Brundage says, "Impressively researched, *A Greater Ireland* makes a major contribution to Irish-American, immigration, and nineteenth-century U.S. social and political history."

David Eammons states, "A very significant contribution to understanding the confusing and constantly shifting positions taken by Irish Americans – and, to a lesser extent, the Irish – on the questions of Irish nationalism, labor reform, and the means to secure one or both."

We in the History House would like to congratulate Prof. Janis on this great accomplishment. It is available for purchase on 2/18/2015.

Creating Equality Events (con't)

- Wednesday, March 25, Kate Bornstein, "On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us," @ 7pm in Church Street Center.

The Creating Equality series is an important one for students. It is often the case that we discuss issues of rights, liberties, and what equality means in the classroom, but there is little reflection outside of class. These events are purposefully designed for you to see other modes and ideas of equality that may not reflect your own understanding. The hope is that good conversations, new experiences, and new ideas will help everyone more fully understand what equality means and why the struggle for equality is not over.

To close, we would like to highlight Miss Rutha Harris who was one of the original Freedom Singers, a group formed in Albany, Georgia in 1962 to educate about civil rights issues through songs. Their concerts and performances linked the civil rights movement to the traditional hymns and spirituals performed in black churches as well as labor songs and folk songs that became anthems of the movement. Her performance will mix history and memory together with singing and promises to be a special event.

DON'T FORGET THESE ITEMS!**URC**

The Undergraduate Research Conference is around the corner (4/23). It's a great opportunity to get experience presenting your own work to others.

This experience is invaluable to anyone who wants to go to graduate school or be a teacher.

**Internships**

Anyone who is looking to do an internship should contact his or her prospective faculty sponsor at least 1 semester in advance.

Internships are wonderful, but require some paperwork and planning. Don't wait until the last minute to get yours organized!

Looking forward (con't.)

coming months and into next fall. While that may seem like a lifetime – and spring 2015 just started – it's never too early to think about future courses or events within the department.

Part of those changes includes a new political science professor: David Cupery. Prof. Cupery will join the department in fall 2015 focusing on comparative politics and international relations. Among the things Prof. Cupery looks forward to, he says, "I am particularly interested in teaching classes about how politics are structured in other parts of the world as well as how the United States is connected to those other regions politically, economically, and militarily. The classes that I am especially excited to teach include Latin American politics and the politics of development, while I also look forward to getting involved with MCLA's Model UN team."

Travel Courses for 2016

Looking ahead to 2016, Professor Daly is planning a travel course to Ireland and Professor Huang is preparing for one to Japan. Both will be semester-long courses that will include a trip overseas during Spring Break. Look for more information later in the semester. These courses are great opportunities to experience life in a different country, and combining the overseas experience with an academic course helps you understand and appreciate your time abroad so much more.

Department Banquet Coming Up

On the evening of Saturday, May 2nd, we will hold our annual department banquet to celebrate our seniors, including those who completed their degrees in December and those who will graduate in May. On that night we will also formally induct our 2015 class into Phi Alpha Theta, the national History honor society, and Pi Sigma Alpha, the national honor society for Political Science. This year marks the 30th anniversary of MCLA establishing Phi Alpha Theta, all the way back in the 1980s; we will be inviting back Phi Alpha Theta alumni to join us at the banquet, celebrating their

accomplishments and providing an opportunity for our seniors to connect with alums who have put their degrees to work in many different fields. Seniors, please mark Saturday, May 2nd in your calendars to be a part of the banquet. If you are a junior or senior and would like to find out more about Phi Alpha Theta or Pi Sigma Alpha, please visit our department website.

Fall 2015 Upper-Level Class Offerings

In the fall of 2015 there are a host of excellent prospective course offerings in the HIST/PSPP department. Courses are 300-level or above unless otherwise noted (tentative courses).

Prof. Daly

- Britain from 1688

Prof. Janis

- Disease in American History
- Civil War & Reconstruction

Prof. Jones-Sneed

- Women, Race, & Class
- History of New England

Prof. Huang

- United States & China

Prof. Taylor

- 'All politics is local': State and Local Politics
- Politics and News Media
- Career & ePortfolio Workshop (1 credit)

Prof. Cupery

- POSC 205: International Relations
- Upper-Level Elective (TBD)

Prof. Bence

- Africa in Film & Literature

Prof. Pecor

- HIST 203/204: U.S. History to/from 1877

Prof. Connerton:

- HIST 104: Modern World Civilization

MCLA Public Policy Speaker Series Continues

This past fall, the Michael S. and Kitty Dukakis Public Policy Lecture featured Jose Antonio Vargas. Vargas' talk was a huge success, and his message was very timely. For more information about Vargas or his work on immigration reform, see his [website](#) or check out his [upcoming MTV documentary](#).

This spring, MCLA will welcome [Cheryl Jacques](#) on March 3. Jacques is a long-time advocate for LGBTQ issues, particularly marriage equality. Jacques was a Massachusetts State Senator, an Assistant District Attorney, and

an Assistant Attorney General. Ms. Jacques also served as the Executive Director for the Human Rights Campaign.

For a detailed list of Ms. Jacques impressive accomplishments, see the MCLA Speakers Series website.

Her talk will focus on the need for continuing the struggle for equal rights and the ways we can all participate in that process. There will be numerous opportunities for students to have one-on-one time with Ms. Jacques, so stay tuned for that!



Cheryl Jacques comes to MCLA on March 3. For more information see this [website](#).

The Department of History, Political Science & Public Policy is always available to you – the students. Please do not hesitate to come see us in the History House at 72 Porter Street. Also, if you are participating in something academically or co-curricularly please let us know so we can put it in the newsletter. To see what's going on all the time, 'Like' us on [Facebook](#)!

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