

# HISTORY NOW

AN OCCASIONAL PUBLICATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA, NORMAN  
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## Historians retreat but do not surrender

(Norman, OK, 18 April 2016) With the University of Oklahoma, Norman, facing severe budget cuts because of the failure of the state legislature adequately to fund higher education, the History Department held a retreat April 16 at the Oklahoma Memorial Union to review a proposed strategic plan.

The plan, still tentative as of this writing, evaluates the future of the Department in view of upcoming likely retirements and national trends. History Departments have been losing majors all over the country, and yet the OU History Department is very strong in all its fields.

For some years the focus has been on recruiting national distinguished scholars and graduate students to study the core areas of the Department's strengths, Environmental History, the American West, Native American History, and Latin America.

The retirement this spring of the senior Latin Americanist, Professor Terry Rugeley, has led the Department to prioritize his replacement in order to maintain the momentum of graduate and undergraduate study in that key area of the world.

Professor Kathy Brosnan, the Merritt Chair of Western History, led the committee and the discussion. Suggestions and

comments can be directed to her,  
kbrosnan@ou.edu.



The non-smoke-filled room.

## New Faculty

Among the new faculty joining the Department are **Professors Ronnie Grinberg, Jennifer Holland, Anne Hyde, Matthew Kruer, Ronah Seideman, and Rachel Shelden.**



Ronnie **Grinberg**'s Ph.D. is from Northwestern, and she teaches American Jewish and women's histories.



Jennifer **Holland** teaches gender and the Native Americans in the West; her Ph.D. is from the University of Wisconsin.

Anne **Hyde** is a distinguished historian of the nineteenth century American West who comes to us as editor of the *Western History Quarterly* after a successful



career at Colorado College; her book *Empires, Nations, and Families: A New History of the North American West, 1800-1860*, won the 2011 Bancroft Prize; her Ph.D. is from the University of California, Berkeley.



Matthew **Kruer** teaches early American and Native American history; he took his Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania.



Ronah **Seidelman** teaches the history of Israel and the history of immigration and of health; she got her Ph.D. from the Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, Israel.



Rachel **Shelden**'s book *Washington Brotherhood* was an alternate

selection of the History Book Club; she teaches politics in the Early Republic and the Civil War. Her Ph.D. is from the University of Virginia.

James Hart, Jr., History Chair, commented, "This is a very distinguished group of promising scholars from whom we expect very great things. We are honored that they could join us."

### OLD VIEWS ON HISTORY

1. Why a historical novel and not a history? To me, the attraction of the historical novel is that one can be as meticulous (or as careless!) as the historian and yet reserve the right not only to rearrange events but, most important, to attribute motive—something the conscientious historian or biographer ought never do. Gore Vidal, *Burr, A Novel*.
2. An old person sitting down sees further than a young person standing up. Mandinka proverb
3. He is always imagining...that God, at the Judgment Day, will ask him to report on the books which he ought to have read but hasn't. Edmund Wilson, *Patriotic Gore* on Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.
4. Things ain't what they used to be and never were. Will Rogers, American humorist
5. The person who doesn't read lives only one life. The reader lives 5,000. Reading is immortality backwards.

Umberto Eco

#### THE SMALL PRINT:

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