The Institute for Historical Study Newsletter

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CONFERENCE REPORT

Teaching Women's History in the Core Curriculum

One hundred and fourteen historians and educators attended the conference, "Teaching Women's History in the Core Curriculum," at San Francisco State University on March 18-19, co-sponsored by the Institute for Historical Study and the History Department of San Francisco State University. Funded by the Organization of American Historians, the Lilly Foundation and the Title IX Assistance Office of the California State Department of Education, the conference was designed to introduce teachers on all levels to new curriculum materials for women's history, and to discuss methods of teaching women's history in the elementary and secondary history program and in college and university survey courses.

In her keynote address, "Refocussing the Past: Teaching Women's History in the Core Curriculum," Linda Kerber of the University of Iowa pointed to the growth of the "new women's history" since 1968, expressing concern that this important work may be scuttled in favor of a new trend, as was much of the women's history written in the late '20's and early '30's. The purpose of our conference, she asserted, is to see that this does not happen.

Kerber cited many ways in which the study of women's distinctive experience has contributed to a clearer understanding of major historical developments. Integrating women's history into the core curriculum becomes a process of asking the right questions. And it is, she concluded, "a task congruent with the traditional aims of liberal education—to stretch our students' perceptions."

Specific issues related to this task were addressed by members of the panel, "Integrating Women's History: Perspectives from Different Levels." To Carl Degler of Stanford the treatment of women's history as an integral part of human history not only serves to validate the importance of women's experience, but reveals the complexity and variety of the past. He cited studies of women's experience on the frontier and the westward journey as one example of the way in which new research has changed our understanding of history.

On the high school level the task of integrating women's history has moved through several stages, according to Susan Groves, chairman of the Social Studies Department at Berkeley High School. In the '70's a women's studies curriculum had to be created; in the '80's, the core curriculum is being redesigned to include the study of women and ethnic minorities, and materials are available, but budget cutbacks and lack of widespread teacher commitment present new problems. She noted that "the core curriculum is already groaning under the weight of multiple expectations," but student response makes the effort to introduce new material worthwhile.

Time constraints are a major obstacle to the integration of women's history into the survey course on the university level. Thomas Laqueur, in his modern European history survey course at U.C. Berkeley, can devote only six class hours to each century. Rather than injecting "bits" of women's history into the standard syllabus, his approach has been to make gender a category in everything he covers, using iconographic and literary materials in order to stimulate discussion of such topics as the symbolic significance of gender in different periods, or the nineteenth century preoccupation with prostitution as *the* social evil. In so short a time some detail must be sacrificed, but he hopes his students will come away with an awareness that concepts of gender are historically determined.

An administrator at the College of Alameda, Gabriela Pisano feels that we have tended to look at the issue too narrowly, ignoring the impact of the technological revolution on education. She also stressed the importance of role models as well as changes in the curriculum. Only four percent of administrators in higher education today are women; as that percentage increases women students will have a greater incentive to pursue their own education and training.

In her lunchtime address, "The State of the Art: Women's History in 1983," Joan Hoff-Wilson, executive secretary of the Organization of American Historians, provided a concise overview of women's historiography during the last century. If,

as Degler had noted earlier, until recently most history has been written by men who served their own interests and needs, historiography by and about women has served the needs and interests of women in different periods. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the suffragist cause was uppermost in women's consciousness, resulting in what Hoff-Wilson calls a "compensatory/remedial" view of history, which on the one hand focussed upon exceptional women, and on the other, upon woman as victim. A second phase of "pre-conscious feminist history" arose in the '60's and '70's, argued from a female—if not feminist—view, asking new questions and using new sources, but preserving traditional periodization. The present stage of "conscious feminist history," derived from the new social history, uses new sources and methodologies and has established gender as a fundamental category in social history.

Today women's history is in the forefront of historical study, and women historians have become more visible, but Hoff-Wilson warned that this does not guarantee stability, longevity, or real power. Perhaps that will be signalled by the fourth stage—"post-feminist history"—which is still to come.

Before and after lunch conference participants attended workshops on such topics as using community resources; administrative views on changing the curriculum; teaching women's history in the elementary school, the secondary school, and the college and university; writing women into history; and women's history: the national scene. At the summary session, workshop leaders reported on major issues discussed and major recommendations proposed.

Teachers on all levels spoke of meeting resistance to the notion of teaching women's history—sometimes from colleagues, students, administrators, or the public. Other problems cited included coping with textbooks which either ignore women or perpetuate sexual stereotypes, and integrating women's history into the traditional scheme of historical periods. Obviously there are no easy solutions to these problems, but developing networks both within and between educational institutions, as well as between scholars and educators, was strongly advised. It is also clear that untapped resources exist in the community, especially at a time of growing interest in local and family history.

Enthusiasm for the two days' proceedings may be summed up in the recommendation, made by more than one workshop participant: "have more conferences like this!" Since the success was the result of a cooperative effort, thanks are due to the many organizers and participants: to workshop leaders Pedro Castillo, Robert Cherny, Donald Fearis, Estelle Freedman, Joan Hoff-Wilson, William Issel, Molly MacGregor, Constance Ashton-Myers, Gabriela Pisano, Linda Popofsky, Bob Scrofoni, Marianne Sheldon, Judith Stanley, June Stephenson, William Thomas, and Jean Wilkinson; to the panelists and principal speakers; to Frances Richardson Keller (conference coordinator), and her co-coordinators Ellen Huppert and Susan Groves; to Anne Sherrill and the members of her program committee; to the members of the community liaison committee; and last-but-not-least to Bill Bonds, Chair of the History Department at San Francisco State University, and his staff, for local arrangements.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Institute continues to grow rapidly in size, as new members are accepted monthly, and in scope of program, as the Board and committees explore ways to use the energy of the membership to foster interest in history. Because membership has grown in areas at some distance from our center, informal sub-groups have formed in the Sacramento-Davis area and on the south Peninsula. They have met and will continue to have gatherings in the coming months, not as separate organizations but in keeping with our commitment to provide the fellowship of historians at easy distance from members' homes or offices. Other events developed by the program committee are mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter. Major new areas of development include a consulting service, Insight, under the leadership of Gail Sheridan, a fundraising plan, and an independent scholars' conference.

Our fundraising efforts are still in the preliminary stages, but some concrete plans have been made. A lecture on the Vatican Exhibit by Georgia Wright, scheduled for early November in Palo Alto, is planned as a money-raising event. We plan to solicit contributions from individuals and corporations for support of our general program. We are also seeking funding for an expanded newsletter, as well as for republication of the *Guide to Historical Resources in the Sacramento Area* and a continuing program on independent scholarship.

The independent scholars' project will receive major impetus from the conference on September 25, which is detailed in this issue of the newsletter. It will be an exciting opportunity for the Institute to reach out to scholars in other disciplines who might profit from our example, to influence those who provide essential services such as libraries and funding, and to look for creative solutions to some of the problems facing independent scholars. As a nationally recognized model for independent scholars' organizations, the Institute looks forward to bringing together scholars, research institutions, and the business community in pursuit of common goals.

—Ellen Huppert

FALL CONFERENCE

Independent Scholarship

A major series of lectures and workshops sponsored by the Institute will be inaugurated with a one-day conference, "Independent Scholars in the '80's: Making Connections," to be held at the World Affairs Council headquarters in San Francisco on Sunday, September 25. Keynote speaker will be Ronald Gross, author of *The Independent Scholar's Handbook* and co-author of the report just published by the College Board, *Independent Scholarship: Promise, Problems, Prospects*, in which the Institute for Historical Study is described and cited as a model.

At the conference independent scholars will be able to meet each other and to discuss their needs with representatives of libraries, foundations and businesses. The morning will be devoted to brief addresses by these representatives, outlining their perceptions of what might be done and what problems may be encountered. In the afternoon participants will work in groups on recommendations for action to be presented to the appropriate organizations and to serve as white papers for workshops in the following months. The papers will treat such matters as access to libraries, particular types of funding that independent scholars would find helpful, and forms of encouragement that corporations might give to their employees who have scholarly backgrounds and interests.

Gross will also lecture on serveral Bay Area campuses during the week of September 26-30, co-sponsored by the Institute and various campus organizations. The lectures, addressed to graduate students, faculty and administration, will emphasize the rewards of independent scholarship, the contributions of independent scholars, and the mutual benefits to be derived from closer relationships between independent scholars and institutions of higher learning. The Center for Studies in Higher Education at U.C. Berkeley will co-sponsor a lecture; others are planned at Stanford and San Francisco State University. A publications workshop, geared to the needs of independent scholars, scheduled for later in the fall, will be the first of a series of workshops planned for the winter of 1983-4. Contributions of time and/or ideas for the conference and workshop series will be eagerly accepted by coordinator Georgia Wright: (415) 549-1922.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

History at the San Francisco "Urban Fair"

At the second annual San Francisco "Urban Fair," to be held at the Moscone Convention Center on July 28-31, 10,000 square feet of space will be devoted to a history section, the biggest exhibition of San Francisco history ever held.

Booths have been taken by nearly every community group with an interest in the city's past, including the Chinese Historical Society, the Wells Fargo History Room, the African-American Historical and Cultural Society, the San Francisco History Collectors' Asociation, and Artistic License, a group of decorators and craftspepole who will demonstrate their use of nineteenth-century arts and crafts in renovating old buildings. Other features include a nine-part display of artifacts and photographs documenting the city's history from Ohlone times to the present, showings of commercial and documentary historical films, and actors from the One-Act Theatre in historic costume, mingling with the crowd. Tours of the exhibition will given in Chinese, Spanish and English.

Among the booths in the history section will be Institute member Jim Silverman's display, "California Children's Books Since 1836."

Hours of the Fair are 10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. on July 29 and 30, and 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. on July 31. Admission is $5.00.

Help Wanted for AHA Annual Meeting

Volunteers are needed to help with local arrangements for the AHA annual meeting in San Francisco in late December, 1983. If you are interested in helping, contact Thomas Wendell through the History Department of San Jose State University, (408) 277-2595.

Coit Tower Project

Georgia Wright needs assistance this summer for her video project documenting the history of the WPA murals in Coit Tower. No art history background is necessary, merely an interest in the project. Several important events will be happening in the next few months, including a reunion of some of the artists at a book-signing party at Coit Tower on October 8 which Georgia plans to videotape. If you can help in any way, call her at (415) 549-1922.

Historical Society Publication

The Berkeley Historical Society proudly announces its first publication: *Exactly Opposite the Golden Gate: Essays on Berkeley's History, 1845-1954*. This collection of the best essays from "Berkeley's History," the popular weekly series run by the Society for the past five years in the *Berkeley Gazette*, has been edited and chronologically arranged. The casebound edition

of approximately 500 pages, illustrated with maps and photographs, sells for a special pre-publication price of $12.95. After September 15 the price will be $16.95. For further information, write to the Berkeley Historical Society, P.O. Box 1190, Berkeley, CA 94701.

Festival of the Sea

The second annual Festival of the Sea, sponsored by the Maritime Humanities Center in cooperation with the National Park Service, will be held August 30-September 1 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Hyde Street Pier and National Maritime Museum in San Francisco. The Festival "commemorates the contributions of numerous populations to our unique heritage of the sea," with recognition of the roles of older men and women, ethnic relationships, sea-related unions and industries, and the participation of children. Events include music and dance, demonstrations of maritime arts, an Aquatic Park history walk, lectures and slide presentations, a presentation of Eugene O'Neill's famous one-act play, *The Long Voyage Home*, by the Julian Theater, readings from *Angel Island: Poetry of Chinese Immigrants* by Genny Lim and Judy Yung, and panel discussions of such topics as "Life and Labor at Sea," "Realities Afloat and Ashore: The Black Experience," and "Russian Immigration: Leaving, Voyage, Arrival." Admission is free. For further information, phone (415) 556-6435 or write to The Maritime Humanities Center, Fort Mason Foundation, Laguna and Marina Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94123.

CONFERENCE, MEETINGS

Army History Conference

Institute members Annegret Ogden and Joanna Bowen Gillespie are featured speakers at an all-day conference, "The Nineteenth-Century Army Family in California," to be held on Saturday, September 24 at the Presidio Officers' Club in San Francisco. Annegret's presentation is entitled, "Queen or Camp Follower: The Role of the Military Wife in California," while Joanna will speak on "Religion and the Army Family of the Old West." The conference is sponsored by the Ft. Point & Army Museum Association, whose executive director, Mitchell Postel, is also an Institute member.

PCCBS—Call for Papers

A call for papers and proposals has been issued for a joint meeting of the Pacific Coast Conference on British Studies and the North American Conference on British Studies, to be held at the Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, California, March 23-25, 1984. Proposals for papers, sessions, panels, and workshops on British history, literature, art, or interdisciplinary topics are solicited. Proposals should be sent with a typed abstract to Susan Groag Bell, PCCBS Program Committee, Center for Research on Women, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305, or to Linda Popofsky, PCCBS Program Committee, History Department, Mills College, Oakland, CA 94613. Deadline, September 1, 1983.

California History Institute

A call for papers has been issued for the thirty-seventh California History Institute, to be held at the University of the Pacific on April 13-14, 1984. The topic will be "Women in California History." Proposals for papers, including a summary or abstract of less than one page for the proposed paper, and a vita if the proposer is not well known at the University, should be sent to: Director, Holt-Atherton Pacific Center for Western Studies, University of the Pacific, Stockton, CA 95211. The deadline is September 15, 1983.

PUBLICATIONS, PRIZES

$1,000 California Historical Literature Award

The Turlock Centennial Foundation is offering a $1,000 award for the best book-length manuscript on California history by a hitherto unpublished author. Requirements: 1) the topic shall be on California history; 2) the author shall be a resident of California and shall not previously have published a book (published articles do not disqualify); 3) minimum length of the manuscript shall be 40,000 words with preface, notes and bibliography in addition (approximately 160 pp. pica type, 135 pp. elite type, double-spaced, for the body of the text); 4) the manuscript must be in a format suitable to a publisher (standard manuals such as handbooks by Kate L. Turabian and the University of Chicago Press's *Manual of Style*, 12th ed. rev., are recommended); 5) manuscripts must be postmarked no earlier than November 1 and no later than December 31, 1983; authors should submit dry copies, retaining the originals.

Manuscripts will be judged primarily on quality of research, significance of the topic, logical development of the theme, and literary skill. The University of California Press has agreed to consider the winning manuscript for publication. Address manuscripts and inquiries to: Turlock Centennial Foundation, Post Office Box 1694, Turlock, CA 95380

WORKS-IN-PROGRESS: REPORTS

March

For his doctoral dissertation in American history at U.C. Berkeley, Jules Becker, a professional journalist for many years, has scrutinized the treatment of Chinese, Japanese and blacks in the San Francisco press between the time of the first Chinese Exclusion Act, 1882, and the year in which the Japanese Exclusion Act was passed, 1924. One of his first tasks was to devise a reasonable methodology which would provide him with statistically significant data while eliminating the necessity of spending a lifetime sifting through newspaper collections or squinting into microfilm readers. His solution was to examine the two major San Francisco dailies, the *Chronicle* and the *Examiner*, in five-year intervals, keeping a detailed record not only of the kinds of stories in which Chinese, Japanese and blacks were mentioned, but the length of each story, its position in the issue, the headline, and the locale.

His findings provide evidence of the role of the press in perpetuating racism and influencing immigration policy in the early decades of this century. They also suggest that, contrary to the popular notion that prejudice against Asians grew out of economic competition, negative treatment of Chinese and Japanese was primarily racist in origin. When Chinese exclusion was first discussed, West Coast employers were advertising on the East Coast for white workers; clearly, jobs were not scarce. In 1902, when Chinese immigration was permanently excluded, there were only 24,000 Japanese in the United States—hardly an economic threat; yet a first effort was made to exclude Japanese as well.

Population size had some relationship to the negative treatment of Chinese and Japanese in the press. In the 1880's and '90's, when their number was relatively small, Japanese were generally depicted in favorable terms. Real vituperation was reserved for Chinese, characterized as "Chinese fiends," "cunning Celestials," "slippery Mongols," and, of course, "heathen Chinese." Chinatown was described as "a festering ulcer which needs to be removed." Although the two dailies had different polical affiliations they were united in their detestation of Chinese, each accusing the other of favorable bias.

When the Japanese population continued to grow despite a "gentleman's agreement" for self-restriction, the press image of Japanese changed accordingly and journalistic campaigns for exclusion accelerated. In contrast, blacks were less often the target of derogatory language, and Jules found that even during the height of anti-black lynch fever in the country as a whole, blacks were never depicted as negatively as Chinese and Japanese in the San Francisco press. Xenophobia appears to have predominated over color prejudice. The exotic "otherness" of Asians—their dress, language, cuisine (a common subject for negative comment), social customs—aroused suspicion and uneasiness, even in "cosmopolitan" San Francisco.

Journalistic bias can be seen not only in the use of derogatory language, in the kinds of stories printed (many of which emphasized crime and vice), and in editorials, but in what was **not** printed. In the 1880's and '90's Chinese became non-persons, in a sense—appearing in sensationalized news stories but never in the section on marriages, births and deaths. The weight of evidence suggests to Jules that the San Francisco press played an important role in the history of Chinese and Japanese exclusion, not only reflecting but shaping public opinion.

May 7th

In contrast to Jules' study of the journalistic bias against the Chinese in San Francisco newspapers, Sylvia Sun Minnick's study of "Chinese and White Interaction in San Joaquin County, 1850-1920: The Light Side of History" tells a story of racial interaction, if not necessarily racial harmony, in Sacramento River delta communities. Sylvia, a fifth generation Chinese-American, used a variety of source materials, from newspapers to cemetary records, to document the experience of Chinese farmers and fishermen who lived in San Joaquin County. According to Sylvia, intense anti-Chinese activity occurred in the major cities such as San Francisco, but in smaller communities such as Stockton, the Chinese were a vital part of the labor force and the feeling against them was much less intense. In fact, interaction with the white community was not uncommon; many household had Chinese cooks or servants.

Sylvia also pointed out that the Chinese were not above taking advantage of what they saw as the gullability of whites. For instance, Chinese felt that whites were unable to tell them apart, and they would give different names each time they were arrested, to avoid the harsher penalty for second offenses.

Sylvia's study was done as her Master's thesis, and it is an impressive work of history, documenting a side of human experience often lost between the pages of newspapers and governmental documents.

May 22nd

Many women have experienced, from time to time, the distaste for historical writing expressed by the heroine of Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*:

> I can read poetry and plays, and things of that sort, and do not dislike travels. But history, real solemn history, I cannot be interested in....I read it a little as a duty, but it tells me nothing that does not either vex or weary me. The quarrels of popes and kings, with wars or pestilences, in every page; the men all so good for nothing, and hardly any women at all—it is very tiresome. [Ch. XIV]

"Hardly any women at all"—a determination to compensate for that deficiency has inspired the work of two Institute members, though in very different ways.

An art historian, Nancy McCauley is concerned that in teaching and discussing prehistoric art the canon has tended to exclude the depiction of women. Typically, a course in prehistoric art will begin with paleolithic cave paintings, notable for animals depicted in subtle and realistic detail, and for few and sketchy representations of human figures. Seldom will there be any reference to the even earlier tradition of small female sculptures, of which the "Venus" of Willendorf is the most famous example.

In these figures, and in monumental architecture of the neolithic period, Nancy sees the roots of an alternative tradition in art which she terms "presentational" in its evocation of female fertility, as opposed to the more representational tradition deriving from cave paintings. One recent scholar has suggested that repeated patterns in the paleolithic figures indicate the deliberate creation of a possible "model" for the transmission of tradition. In modern times, Nancy believes, the tradition has been kept alive both in primitive art and as conscious symbolism in such work as a self-portrait by the Expressionist artist Paula Modersohn-Becker.

Equally interesting to Nancy is the possible relationship between the paleolithic fertility figures and the status of women in prehistoric societies. In the discussion the point was made that evidence for a privileged status for women, based upon their reproductive functions, is slim, and that we would need to have many more artifacts in order to draw conclusions about their function and importance. The recurrence of images and patterns over so many centuries clearly requires further study. The suggestion was made that folk art traditions might provide a link between prehistoric and modern art.

Karen Offen, who provided the Jane Austen quotation, discovered in the course of her recent work with Susan Groag Bell [*Women, the Family, and Freedom: The Debate in Documents*, Stanford University Press, 1983] that raising gender issues in relation to basic subjects and themes of the historical canon results in a rethinking of issues. For this study there was no lack of material. Since 1750, when traditional assumptions about masculinity came under attack, "the woman question" has been very much a part of political and philosophical discouse. Karen and Susan chose to illuminate this subject through a debate format, juxtaposing prevailing and dissenting points of view chiefly from English, French and German writings.

A case in point is their treatment of Rousseau's *Emile*, excerpts from which are juxtaposed with the writings of women who disagreed with the philosopher's position on the education of women. In all cases they have used early published versions, not modern editions, and in the course of making their own translation of *Emile* they discovered some important material that is not included in any of the five extant translations.

Other important discoveries emerged. In the post-revolutionary period discussion centered on the role of woman in a democracy or republic, shedding much light on the meaning of citizenship. In the course of the nineteenth century discussion shifted from issues relating to the family to a more individualistic focus. Finding feminism difficult to define, Karen and Susan decided to omit the word from the book *except* where writers themselves referred to "feminist," "feminism," etc. Instead, they tried to look at ways in which women spoke and thought about women's issues.

Although the emphasis of their book is upon texts they have not produced a "reader" in the usual sense, but a study, with examples, of the evolution of political and philosophical argument. As with Nancy's work there is an implicit political agenda: "to break the hold of tradition over us."

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Georgia Wright will join two other art historians, her husband David Wright and Loren Partridge, in presenting a series of five lectures on "The Papacy and Art" through U. C. Extension. The lectures, which survey the subject chronologically from the classical period through the nineteenth century, will be held on five consecutive Tuesday evenings, in Berkeley, beginning October 18. For further information, contact the Extension Division, 2223 Fulton Street, Berkeley, CA 94720, or phone (415) 642-1111.

Alison Klairmont Lingo spent three weeks in France in May, renewing old acquaintances and

making new contacts, including a woman archivist in Lyon who shared some of her archival findings with Alison and other scholars working in her field. She is now in Chicago, where she will be using her Newberry Library Fellowship this summer to research learned concepts of disease in early modern France.

Bogna Lorence-Kot has been in the Bay Area this month on her way from Hawaii, where she taught for a year in the History Department of the University of Hawaii at Hilo, to Mississippi, where she has accepted a tenure-track position in history at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. We wish her the best of luck and look forward to more return visits, however brief.

Best wishes to Frances Richardson Keller, who has been appointed Adjunct Professor of History at San Francisco State University, "for distinguished service to the University."

Best wishes also to Sheldon Rothblatt, who has been appointed Chair of the History Department at U.C. Berkeley.

Institute member Bill Strobridge addressed the annual dinner meeting of the Military Intelligence Service Association of Northern California on April 16 in San Jose. The Association is composed of Japanese Americans who performed intelligence duties for the United States during wartime. Speaking on "What Good is Military History?" Bill stressed the importance of making documents available to trained historians, preserving personal papers in established archives, and saving artifacts for museums.

Two more papers have emerged from Jo Gillespie's continuing research on ante-bellum nineteenth-century evangelical Protestant women. At the annual MLA meeting in Los Angeles in December, 1982, she delivered a paper, "The Clear Leadings of Providence," based upon the once-popular genre of print materials known as "memoirs of eminently pious women," and their junior-version imitators, the "beautiful death" stories which filled Sunday school library books. In April, at a conference in honor of the 200th birthday of American Methodism, held at the Methodist Archives at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, she presented "The Emerging Voice of the Educated Woman: Two Decades of *The Ladies' Repository*, 1841-61." This denominational magazine, intended to compete with *Godey's Lady' Book*, offers a unique glimpse into the mood of "self development" characterizing this sub-culture just before the Civil War.

Irena Narell's new project, an oral-visual study, "Community and Diversity—the Stories of Ten Bay Area Jewish Families," has been given a green light by the San Francisco Foundation.

New member Jim Silverman has an article, "Uncovering *The Snow Storm*," in a forthcoming issue of the journal of the California Historical Society. *The Snow Storm*, a children's book printed in San Francisco in 1857, is notable for illustrations by Charles Nohl, the first famous California artist.

Mary Lombardi has been involved in the tenth annual season of the Festival of Living Music in Santa Cruz, both as a resource coordinator on the production staff and as a member of the instrumental ensemble, playing the viola da gamba. This year the February-May program included such performances as "The Virtuoso Viol," "Frescobaldi and the Italian 17th Century," "Baroque Dance Music," "Chapel, Court & Countryside," "Rameau and the French Baroque," and "Five Centuries of Lute and Guitar Music."

New member Peter Palmquist is the author of the recently published study, *Carleton E. Watkins: Photographer of the American West* (Univ. of New Mexico Press/Amon Carter Museum, 1983), reviewed at length in the July 3 issue of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The book was written to accompany the traveling exhibition of the work of the noted nineteenth-century landscape photorapher, of which Peter is co-curator.

Ruth Friedlander's one-act play *Xanthippe*, first performed by Ruth on FM radio, was produced by the Aphrodite Theater Company in Oakland in early June, with Nicole Gilbert in the title role. Critic Robert Hurwitt found the dramatic monologue "interesting for its feminist wit, for what it tells us of Athenian society and philosophy, and for its barbs at Socrates and Plato in particular."

HISTORY AND FILM

Gandhi and *La Nuit de Varennes*

You may remember a Charles Addams cartoon of many years back, depicting an audience full of crying spectators, save for one man (the stock Addams ghoul) who is beaming happily. The historian often seems isolated in a different sense from an audience at a historical film. How can all those people be enjoying themselves? Don't they realize they're seeing a trivialized version of history—based, undoubtedly, on unreliable sources? Sometimes the historian will put aside habits of scepticism and scholarly zeal and simply enjoy the film, making allowances for the exigencies of popular art. Still, there may be a nagging uneasiness. Why can't successful popular art also be good history? Shouldn't we be concerned that so many people today are learning their history from movies and television rather than scholars?

At recent Institute discussions of two very different historical films, *Gandhi* and *La Nuit de*

Vaennes, just as at last year's heated discussion of *Reds*, these and other issues were debated. The enormous impact of Gandhi, its seriousness of purpose, and the director's insistence that he was not deifying Gandhi but presenting him "warts and all," left the film open to serious criticism even on the part of those who had enjoyed it. Leading the April discussion, Paula Gillett began by quoting the Indian historian R.C. Majumdar on the difficulty of passing historical judgment on a man who "combined in himself the dual role of a saint and an active politician." If it is not the business of the historian to judge the mystic or saint, Majumdar argues, history must nevertheless judge the public man by the same standards that are applied to all others who have played a role in political affairs. "Such history must begin by discounting the halo of semi-divinity—and therefore also of infallibility—which was cast round Gandhi during his life and continues to a large extent even now [early 1960's], thanks to the propaganda to exploit his name for political purposes."

In the discussion there was general agreement that director-producer Richard Attenborough did not present a rounded, dispassionate view of Gandhi and his achievements, but a film portrait with a powerful political message to audiences of the '80's. The problem for many of us seemed to be that in the course of presenting Gandhi in the most attractive light to Western viewers, the director distorted and sentimentalized his subject.

One scene in particular was objected to on that ground: the reenactment of their marriage by Gandhi and Kasturbai for the American reporter. Gandhi's torment in "the shackles of lust" during the early years of his marriage was central to his adoption of celibacy and the ascetic life in his thirties. Was this scene, with its oblique reference to marital friendship, Attenborough's way of glossing over an aspect of Gandhi's life that Westerners might find disturbing? (Frances Keller read excerpts of a letter from Nupur Chaudhuri, who noted that no Indian would reveal intimate feelings in a public or social situation, especially in the presence of Westerners, so the scene appears to be Attenborough's invention.)

In telescoping the whole of Gandhi's public life into three hours the director necessarily had to oversimplify issues and compress time. One result is that Gandhi is seen at the center of events, even the final negotiations for independence in which, it was pointed out, he played little or no role. The statement was made that it is difficult to think about the history of modern India without Gandhi. While that is true, the film does little to challenge popular notions about his character or achievements. For that reason it was disappointing to many viewers.

On a more positive note, the point was made that it is rare to see a major commercial film that not only treats serious themes but upholds humane values. It could be argued that Attenborough was not telling the history of the Indian independence movement, but dramatizing the progress of an idea, non-violent resistance. In doing so, and in identifying Gandhi so strongly with that idea, he was perhaps unable and unwilling to separate the saint from the man.

In *La Nuit de Varennes* history is treated in an altogether different fashion, as a playful conceit rather than as the backdrop for a great moral drama. Some viewers were utterly enchanted; others were irritated and disappointed. As is often the case, the closer one felt to the subject, the greater the disappointment. Discussion leader Lorrie O'Dell had come to the film with the expectation of hearing issues debated. Instead, she found that the talk was mostly about sex. Worse still, the historical characters were presented as stereotypes rather than complex and fascinating figures. The portrayal of Tom Paine as a callow young man rather than a substantial personage not all that much younger than Casanova and Restif de la Bretonne, and of Casanova as a faded lecher rather than a man of wide-ranging accomplishment, seemed especially unforgivable.

There was general agreement that the film was more successful in treating the non-historical figures, especially the Countess, an attractive and sympathetic character despite her allegiance to the court and its hollowness. (We made allowances for the fact that it was highly improbably for her to be traveling in an ordinary public coach.) There was agreement, too, that the film contained many finely-perceived details of everyday life, and that it conveyed, in almost comic-opera confusion, the experience of living through a revolutionary moment. Comparison was made to the Waterloo scenes in *La Chartreuse de Parme*.

Like *Gandhi*, *La Nuit de Varennes* does little to alter popular notions about its subject. The revolution is seen in sentimental terms, as the passing of a civilized, if corrupt era. The central historical figures are reduced to mouthpieces for familiar ideas. For a viewer with serious expectations it was bound to be disappointing.

Neither discussion settled the question of whether successful popular art can also be good history. It was agreed that film-makers must be judged, at least in part, according to their intentions. As for the influence of film and television, they may be imperfect teachers of history, but they can be valuable in stimulating discussion, both among historians and in the classroom.

—Joanne Lafler

AHA Elections

This is a reminder that three Institute members have been nominated for positions in the upcoming AHA elections, and would appreciate your support. They are:

Paula Gillett, nominated for a position on the Professional Committee. Paula has a Ph.D. in modern British history from U.C. Berkeley. Her dissertation, "Gentlemen of the Brush," was a study of the social position of artists in Victorian England. A founder, and the first president, of the Institute, she has devoted much of her time in the past five years to research and lecturing on alternative careers for historians. In addition to her important work for the Institute, she also served as coordinator of a recent conference at U.C. Berkeley on "The Humanist as Business Practitioner."

S. Barbara (Penny) Kanner, nominated for a position on the Research Committee. Penny has a Ph.D. in modern British history from UCLA. She is an Adjunct Associate Professor in history at Occidental College and was a Visiting Assistant Professor and Scholar at UCLA from 1981-83. Her publications include *The Women of England from Anglo-Saxon Time to the Present* (Archon, 1978) and *Victorian Women in English Social History: A Critical Essay and Bibliography* (Garland, in press). She is a member of the Executive Board of the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals, President of the Conference Group on Women's History, and past President of the Western Association of Women Historians.

Peter Stansky, nominated for a position on the Nominating Committee. Peter has a Ph.D. in modern British history from Harvard and has taught at Harvard and at Stanford. He has been a Guggenheim Fellow and at present is Frances and Charles Field Professor of History at Stanford. His published works include *Journey to the Frontier: Julian Bell and John Cornford—Their Lives and the 1930's*, co-authored with William Abrahams (Constable, 1966), *The Left and the War: The British Labour Party and World War I* (Oxford, 1969), *Gladstone: A Progress in Politics* (Little, Brown, 1979), and a two-volume biography of George Orwell, co-authored with William Abrahams, *The Unknown Orwell* and *Orwell: The Transformation* (Knopf, 1972, 1979). He is a member of the Conference on British Studies, and a fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We wish to extend a warm welcome to thirteen new members who were approved by the Board in April, May and June. They represent an unusually wide range of interests and backgrounds, with a strong Asian history component.

Jean Marie Ackerman joins the ranks of historical dramatists in the Institute. In addition to a Ph.D. in Education from Claremont Graduate School, she has an M.A. in Drama from Stanford. For her M.A. thesis she wrote a play about Jessie Benton Fremont, which won for her a Sam Shubert Playwriting Fellowship in 1966. Her current work, a one-act play which features five historic women, has been presented at Monterey Peninsula College. Through the Institute she would like to meet historians with similar interests, have the opportunity to present her work for comment, find funding sources, and "help encourage the living uses of history."

Judith Strong Albert has a Ph.D. in Philosophy and Foundations of American Education from Saint Louis University. She has published articles on the history of education and is presently working on a book, *Margaret Fuller's Women: Conversation and Confrontation*, for which she has had an Andrew W. Mellon stipend. In conjunction with the work on her book, and preparing papers for forthcoming conferences in women's history at Smith College in 1984, she would like to meet other scholars with interests in nineteenth-century American women educators in New England.

André Bacard also has a Ph.D. in philosophy, from Harvard. Founder of a new philosophic school, Affirmism, he has lectured widely and published articles on such topics as "Power, Impotence, and the Individual," and "Rescuing the American Professor." At present he is writing a book on the psychological underpinnings of power. An independent scholar, he is interested in meeting and networking with independent scholars in the Bay Area and in participating in discussions about history in an informal atmosphere.

Peter Bergmann has a Ph.D in modern European history; his dissertation was on "The Antipolitics of Friedrich Nietzsche." His current interests include German intellectual history and the history of Eastern Europe and modern Europe. Through the Institute he would like to maintain intellectual and professional contacts with other historians.

Robert Cherny, who has been on the faculty of the History Department of San Francisco University since 1971, has a Ph.D. in history from Columbia University. His publications include works on San Francisco history and on Nebraska politics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. At present he is completing a short interpretive

biography of William Jennings Bryan. His interests include United States history, 1865-1920, public policy and political behavior, and history of the Western United States. He would like, through the Institute, to support the work of independent scholars.

Neil R. Coleman lives in Southern California, where he is completing work for his doctorate in American history at UCLA. He has an extensive background in bibliographic research and has worked as a Graduate Student Assistant for the Antitrust Division of the California Department of Justice. He is interested in research opportunities in history, and would be happy to have his services used by any member who needs research done in the greater Los Angeles area.

Sandria B. Freitag has a Ph.D. in Asian history from U.C. Berkeley, and is currently revising her dissertation, "Religious Rites and Riots: From Community Identity to Communalism in North India, 1870-1940," for publication. She taught at Mary Baldwin College from 1979-1982 and is now working as a free-lance editor. She is particularly interested in participating in work-in-progress sessions on social history, and in exploring networking possibilities with other independent scholars.

Edward F. Little, another new member from Southern California, has a Ph.D. from the University of Montreal Institute of Medieval Studies, writing his dissertation on "The Heresies of Peter Abelard, the Council of Sens." At present he is working on the history of ancient Greek metaphysics. As an independent scholar he would like to affiliate with the Institute even though geographic distance makes participation difficult.

Marthe A. Lovell has a background in education, with a Master of Education degree in Learning Theory from the University of Oregon, and in dance. Mostly recently she has made two films on traditional dance in Bali, where she has been doing research since 1978. She is especially concerned about documenting this culture, in the face of rapid technological and social change. Through the Institute she seeks an affiliation with a recognized scholarly institution in order to find funding for this research.

Pauline D. Milone is another new member with an interest in Indonesia. She has a Ph.D. in Asian history from U.C. Berkeley and has been a teacher and researcher in Africa, Asia and the Bay Area, most recently as a Sophomore Seminar Instructor in Contemporary Southeast Asia at Stanford. Her publications include articles and books on urbanization in Asia, particularly Indonesia. She has also been affiliated with the Center for Research on Women at Stanford, and includes women's history among her interests. She enjoys the informal interchange of Institute work-in-progress meetings and discussions.

Sylvia Sun Minnick is a scholar of Asian American history, with an M.A. in history from Sacramento State University. Her current work, on a grant from the California Council for the Humanities, is a study of ethnic communities in the Sacramento area, and she is also a historical photograph researcher for a history of Stockton now being prepared for the Stockton Chamber of Commerce. In addition to Asian American history she cites interests in California history and social history in general. Through the Institute she would like to learn more about employment opportunities in historical research projects, grants, and other short-term assignments.

Peter E. Palmquist is a historian of photography with a B.A. in art from Humboldt State University. He is especially interested in nineteenth-century California photography, book design, and picture research. He has served as a consultant on the Chinese Culture Foundation's Chinese American Women's History Project, and learned about the Institute from Vincente Tang. He looks forward to the opportunity for collegial interaction with Institute members with similar interests.

James A. Silverman has a Master of Library Science degree from Louisiana State University. For the last thirteen years he has been working on the history of children's books, especially regional American children's books, and he is currently trying to develop a computerized bibliography of the material he has gathered. Recently he has created a slide presentation on children's books published in California, which will be on display at the San Francisco "Urban Fair." As an Institute member he would like to meet other California historians to discuss topics which overlap in their work.

GUIDE TO NORTHERN CALIFORNIA ARCHIVES: II

American Music Research Center
Rooms 210-11, Alemany Library
Dominican College
San Rafael, CA 94901
(415) 457-4440, ext. 310

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 1:00-4:30 p.m.,
by appointment
Staff: Sister Mary Dominic Ray, O.P.

One of only two research institutions in the entire country devoted to four centuries of American music, the American Music Research Center at Dominican College is the ideal place to begin one's research. The aim of the Center is to foster the preservation of the American musical heritage, through research and the dissemination of accurate information, and in performance. Special emphases are: early New England singing schools, California mission music, and eighteenth-century comic opera in America.

The large collection of psalm books and tunebooks includes some rare items from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as facsimiles, photocopies and microfilms. The California mission music collection includes a typescript copy of an 1842 inventory of musical items in the Mission San Antonio de Padua, a long microfilm of all the music in the Santa Barbara Mission Archives (in color), 500 photographs and 160 slides of music manuscripts and early instruments, and typescripts of reminiscences of local life in the 1830's and '40's, by Charles Lauff and Steven Richardson. There is also an excellent collection of reference materials on mission music and the historical background. Included in the comic opera collection are the texts and music of 200 comic operas and ballad operas performed in America between 1735 and 1860: some originals, the rest in facsimiles, photostats, and xerox copies.

Other holdings include recordings, sheet music (scores, parts, etc.), books, slides, periodicals, and articles about Moravian music in America; eighteenth and nineteenth-century playbills of operatic amd dramatic performances, originals and microfilms; complete works of William Billings, mostly on microfilm; the complete 41-volume reprint of *Dwight's Journal of Music*, 1852-1881; 2,000 slides covering four centuries of composers, managers, manuscripts, programs, theatres, instruments, performers, etc.; 675 recordings; 600 volumes of essential reference works; sheet music from the seventeenth century to the present; cassette tapes of performances and lectures; and miscellaneous photos, scrapbooks, and programs. Listening facilities and a piano are available, as are copying facilities in the library.

The Center is very much the product of one person, its founder and director, Sister Mary Dominic Ray, O.P. A concent pianist by training, and music teacher for many years at Dominican College, Sister Dominic first became interested in American music in the 1950's, when she came across an article about the newly-discovered manuscripts of Moravian music in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Thus introduced to a little-known part of America's musical heritage, she was instrumental in bringing Moravian music to the attention of West Coast musicians and critics, through performances at Dominican College. Her interest grew to include California mission music, early psalm books and tune books, and the English comic and ballad operas that were popular in America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The collection was begun in 1960, and the Center was officially founded in 1968. The collection continues to be augmented through donations and purchases. Sister Dominic runs the Center, with part-time student clerical help, and she can call upon a Research Associate, Thurston J. Dox of Hartwick College, New York, and three consultants: Richard Crawford of the University of Michigan, Sam Dennison of the Free Library of Philidelphia, and Robert Stevenson of UCLA. Scholars using the Center can be put in touch with these consultants as well as with specialists all over the country, with whom Sister Dominic maintains close ties. The atmosphere of the Center is exceptionally friendly, with emphasis upon personal attention. It is open to all researchers with a serious scholarly interest in the subject. There is a small service charge.

In addition to the research facilities at the Center, Dominican College also offers a year course and independent study in American music history, as well as musical performances open to the public.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING INSTITUTE EVENTS

On August 14th, Vernon Stumpf will discuss his study of "'Nifty Nancy Flake' and the Invasion of Privacy Case in North Carolina during the Depression," in San Francisco.

On September 9th, Max Dashu will present her slide lecture on women's history, in San Francisco.

On September 11th, the membership pot-luck dinner will be held, tentatively in Saratoga.

On September 25th, the Independent Scholars Workshop, discussed elsewhere in this *Newsletter*, will be held in San Francisco.

On September 29th, Jim Silverman will present his study of children's books published in California, in Berkeley.

On October 29th, a publication workshop will be held. Full details will be provided at a later date.

WAWH Conference

A large contingent of Institute members participated in the fifteenth annual meeting of the Western Association of Women Historians at the Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove on May 13-15. Mary Agnes Dougherty showed and discussed her slide-based videotape, *The Deaconess Story*, answering questions both about the technical process of making a video cassette and her research. Carol Hicke gave a paper on "Using Oral History in the Classroom: A Method, a Resource," and Georgia Wright and Lorrie O'Dell gave presentations on a panel devoted to "The Woman Historian as Independent Scholar." Georgiana Davidson, Penny Kanner, Gayle Gullett, and Karen Offen served as chair-commentators for panels.

At the Presidents' Dinner, outgoing President Frances Richardson Keller was honored and her husband, Bill Rhetta, received a tribute for his contributions, past and present. Joanne Lafler, representing the committee for the Sierra Award, announced the 1983 winner: Susan Strasser, for *Never Done: A History of American Housework* (New York: Pantheon Press, 1982). As co-chairs of the program committee, Leslie Hume and Francesca Miller deserve a major share of the credit for the success of the conference.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS, 1983

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Submissions to the *Newsletter* are due as follows: by February 28 for the Spring issue; by May 31 for the Summer issue; by August 31 for the Fall issue; by November 30 for the Winter issue.

The Institute Newsletter is published four times a year. Contributions of general interest, announcements, and requests for research materials are solicited from all members and should be addressed to the Newsletter Editor at the Institute address. Institute membership information can be obtained from the Secretary at the same address. Membership dues are $30.00 per year and may be paid annually or semi-annually. Dues assistance is available for members unable to pay the full amount.

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