THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM:
Dr. Paul Townend, Undergraduate Coordinator

Working with undergraduate majors is what takes up most of the time of the history faculty, and it is time well spent! This is especially true at present, however, as we are experiencing an increase in new majors, especially incoming transfer students. Encouraging students to think more carefully and critically, to speak and write more clearly, and to become more confident and capable researchers is the ongoing mission of the department, and we continue to seek ways of improving the major. There are several new initiatives underway designed to do just that. In order to obtain a clearer sense of how students themselves see strengths and weaknesses in the program, the department is developing a survey that will be administered for the first time this Spring to “incoming” majors in our departmental methods course (the dreaded “290 experience!”) and “outgoing” majors during their second upper-level research seminar class. The survey will ask students to tell us how their history classes have enhanced their research, reading, and thinking skills. We hope that, as we build up a history of responses, this self-assessment will help us track of how well we are doing what we say we want to do, and to adjust our approaches accordingly.

We are also reconfiguring our approach to our core introduction to historical research and writing course, History 290. The goal of this ongoing effort is to increase the number of sections we offer for this class (to at least 3 a semester) and to make the course more effective and engaging for students and faculty alike, all the while maintaining the challenging rigor that makes a history major so worthwhile. The important change from the student point of view will be the introduction by faculty of a more topically-focused approach to the course. Offerings to date this year have reflected the new approach, including Dr. Toplin’s 290 course on American conservatism; Dr. Townend’s on Atlantic World; and Dr. Pollard’s courses on labor and on feminist approaches to history. With faculty teaching themes close to their own research interests and with class sizes kept below fifteen, History 290 can continue to be what it is meant to be—an intense but rewarding opportunity for students to collaborate with faculty and each other on serious research papers.

PUBLIC HISTORY PROGRAM Professor Virginia Stewart and Professor William D. Moore, Directors of the Public History Program

Lisa Whitman-Grise (M.A. 2000) has been named director of the Onslow County Museum, Richlands, NC effective March 1, 2004, succeeding its founding directors, Albert Potts. She also serves as head of the Onslow County Heritage Tourism Bureau and frequently appears on local public service television. Lisa credits public history at UNCW with transforming her from “that girl at the museum” to a full-fledged Professional. Dan Rhodes (B.A. 2003) writes that he is doing well at NC Central, where he entered the MA Program in Library Science over the summer. He reports that “history coursework from UNCW has prepared me for the library science degree, better than many of my fellow students and their universities.” Becky Sawyer (MA, 2001) and husband, Randolph, welcomed a daughter, Audrey Carolina, in 2003. Carrie Davenport’s honors
The project involved production of an advisory document for the Battleship North Carolina concerning how administrators at the battleship’s historic site can reinstall and reinterpret the ward room. Carrie was asked to present her research at a conference on undergraduate research of the Colonial Athletic Association.

PROFESSOR DAVID LAVERE PUBLISHES A NEW BOOK ON THE TEXAS INDIANS

The following is from the jacket of LaVere’s book:

The Texas Indians
By David LaVere

Texas A&M University Press, 2004

During an excavation in the 1950’s archaeologists discovered the bones of a prehistoric woman in midland County, Texas, and dubbed her “Midland Minnie.” Some believed her age to be between twenty thousand and thirty-seven thousand years, making her remains the oldest ever found in the Western Hemisphere. While the accuracy of these dates remains disputed, the find, along with countless other, demonstrates the wealth of human history is buried beneath Texas soil.

By the time the Europeans arrived in Texas in 1528, Native Texans included the mound-building Caddos of East Texas; the Karankawas and Atakapas who fished the Texas coast; the town-dwelling Jumanois along the Rio Grande; the hunting-gathering Coahuiltecans in South Texas; and the corn-growing Wichitas in the Panhandle. All of these native peoples had developed structures, traditions, governments, religions, and economies enabling them to take advantage of the land’s many resources. When the Europeans arrived, they brought horses, metal tools and weapons, new diseases, and new ideas, all of which began to reshape the lives of Texas Indians.

Over time, Texas became home to horse-mounted, buffalo-hunting Apaches, Comanches, and Kiowas and a refuge for Puebloan Tiguas, Alabama-Coushattas, Kickapoos, and many others. These groups traded, shared ideas, fought, and made peace with one another as well as with peoples outside of Texas. This book tells the story of all of these groups, their societies and cultures, and how they changed over the years.

Author David LaVere offers a complete chronological and cultural history of Texas Indians from twelve thousand years ago to the present day. He presents a unique view of their cultural history before and after European arrival, examining Indian interactions—both peaceful and violent—with Europeans, Mexicans, Texans, and Americans.

This book is the first full examination of the history of Texas Indians in more than forty years.
THE DEPARTMENT RELAXES! HISTORIANS WORK ON AN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT WITH CHRIS FONEVILLE, ONE OF WILMINGTON’S OLDEST RESIDENTS AND A MEMBER OF THE DEPARTMENT TO BOOT! FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, DR’S USILTON, TOWNEND, FONEVILLE, BERKELEY, LAVERE, AND LANGFUR

DR. FONEVILLE’S CIVIL WAR HISTORY CLASS AT SUGAR LOAF HILL
Focus on the faculty: Dr. Larry Usilton Leads Student Travel to Europe

Dr. Larry Usilton, UNCW’s longtime popular instructor of Medieval English history, has led student groups in travel programs to Europe for many years. His most notable travel activity has involved the “Medieval Sampler.” In those trips he takes UNCW students in 10-day exploratory visits during the period of the spring break. This year he led the Night Medieval Sampler, and his plans for next year are especially ambitious.

Dr. Usilton got into the spirit of these travels when he spent a semester abroad as faculty leader of the UNCW study program at the University of Wales at Swansea. After returning to Wilmington, he began to offer his students the opportunity to study and travel with him during the break. The most recent tour was called “In the Footsteps of William the Conqueror.” In that program students flew to Paris, worked their way to the Normandy coast, crossed the English Channel, visited the site of the Battle of Hastings, and then finished in London. Next year he is considering a tremendously ambitious travel route called “In the Footsteps of Hannibal.” Usilton hopes to start in Spain, follow Hannibal’s route over the mountains into southern France, then cross the Alps into Italy. If this sounds exciting, you had better get on the list quickly. Usilton’s travel program is enormously

On April 17, the Alpha Zeta Delta Chapter, now in its fourteenth year, will for the first time host one of the society’s annual regional conferences.

PHI ALPHA THETA: OUR Honor Society Update

Professor Hal Langfur, Society Adviser

Our campus chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the international history honor society, is enjoying an exciting year. On April 17, the Alpha Zeta Delta Chapter, now in its fourteenth year, will for the first time host one of the society’s annual regional conferences.

We expect students to attend form more than a dozen colleges and universities throughout the Carolinas. The conference is open to those who study any field of history, including American, European, global, and public historians. The event will provide both undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to present their research in an environment conducive to learning and scholarly exchange.

Our keynote speaker will be John Larson, Vice President for preservation at Old Salem, Va, who will speak about his work on restoring and interpreting a nineteenth-century African-American Moravian church.

The campus chapter continues to sponsor an annual series of meetings addressing topics related to the many facets of history as a scholarly enterprise.

OUR GRADUATE PROGRAM: Professor William McCarthy, Director of the Graduate Program

This year the graduate program is pleased to announce one of its biggest incoming classes in recent years. Joining us in the fall were Jeff Achterhof, Jenifer Bianchi, Carla Bradmon, Derrick Brown, Jennifer Cooke, Scott King-Owen, Doug Krehbiel, Matt Parnell, Mona Vance and Danielle Wallace. In January Rob Barnes, Anna Draughan, Chris Jeannot, Patricia Keman-Herrmann and Camilla Yamada began the program. Welcome to these students! We are pleased to have them in the program. Congratulations to Jenifer Bianchi, who will be the new president of the Graduate Student Association. We have received a large number of applications for next year and they keep arriving daily. Matt Jaeger successfully defended his thesis and graduated in December. Congratulations Matt! Ten or eleven people Educating with and Active Commitment of Equality (PEACE) and has been raising funds for the Milton Margai School for the Blind in Sierra Leone. Michelle Moore is teaching at the James Sprunt Community College and a local high school as well while working on her thesis. Several students are presenting or have recently presented conference papers in Connecticut, Virginia, at UNCG; a number is presenting this semester at the Phi Alpha Theta conference hosted by the UNCW History Department.
popular, and it often closes membership quickly.

If Hannibal program sounds like an extraordinary trip for just ten days, consider Usilton’s route in previous “Braveheart” tour. Students went from London to York and then went into Scotland. At Sterling they visited the William Wallace memorial, visited the site of the famous battle of Sterling Bridge, and toured a large castle. Then they moved to England’s Lake District, where they stayed at a farm and then visited magnificent castle built by Edward I. From there they crossed the waters to Ireland, where they visited Dublin, Trinity College, and a castle used in the Braveheart film. After crossing the waters back to England, they visited Stonehenge, toured another castle, and then spent a day touring at the famous sites of London.

You might think the students who accompany Usilton would report that they were in a state of exhaustion from all the travels and active study activity. They do not complain; in fact, they praised the programs enthusiastically. Perhaps the evening of free activity in English and Irish pubs are responsible for the programs’ popularity.

BELOW: STONEHENGE AS SEEN BY DR. USILTON’S STUDENTS

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Focus on the faculty: Dr. Larry Usilton, Leader of Student Travel to Europe

Last semester, for example, Dr. Amy Staples of Middle Tennessee State University spoke to chapter members on the subject of international organizations and U.S foreign policy. This semester we gathered for a meeting at which students presented their own research in preparation for doing so at the upcoming regional conference.

Meanwhile, we are now sending out letters to invite a new crop of chapter initiates. At our annual induction banquet, scheduled for March 30, our speaker will be the nationally prominent historian and UNCW professor Dr. Robert Brent Toplin. He has published numerous books on a variety of topics, especially Hollywood’s portrayal of U.S. history.

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PHI ALPHA THETA: An Honorary Society Update
Professor Hal Langfur, Society Adviser

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We are happy to bring you our first on-line newsletter. Thanks to the wonders of modern technology, we can offer more news and more pictures to bring you up-to-date on developments in the History Department.

When you graduate or if you have already graduated, we hope you will stop by and visit our faculty and staff at Morton Hall as much as you can. You are part of our extended family, and we always will have the welcome mat out for you.

We wish you the best in your personal and professional endeavors over the next year.

-Dr. Robert Toplin and Dr. Andrew Clark, Editors of the Newsletter

DR. MICHAEL SEIDMAN PUBLISHES A BOOK ON THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR AND ANOTHER ON THE REVOLUTION OF 1968

The following are comments released by the publishers of these two books that summarize their contents and their importance:

The Spanish Civil War (1936-39) excites ongoing interest because of its ideological scope and its supposed anticipation of World War II. The understandable fascination provoked by the struggles between democracy and dictatorship, Communism and fascism, anarchism and authoritarianism, Catholicism and anti-clericalism have marked the literature with an ideological/theological stamp.

Most recently, the many forms of the collective have mesmerized historians whose investigations have centered on social groups, such as classes or genders. This new emphasis was a healthy reaction to the previous stress on great men who supposedly made history by themselves. Yet the obsession with group identity has left much unexamined.

Republic of Egos: A Social History of the Spanish Civil War (University of Wisconsin Press, 2002) offers a different vision of the Spanish Civil War and Revolution. While not neglecting the collective identities of political/religious affiliation, class, and gender, it examines the anonymous individuals, families, and small groups who struggled for their own interest and survival, not for an abstract political or revolutionary cause. Republic of Egos analyzes the political economy of the war. It shows how price controls and inflation in the Republican zone encouraged peasant hoarding and black marketeering. The consequent lack of food in the cities promoted workers’ indifference, absenteeism, and pilfering. Soldiers responded to material shortages by looting, deserting, and fraternizing with the enemy.

This book offers a new explanation for the failure of the Republic and the success of Franco’s Nationalists. It breaks methodological ground by focusing on the personal and individual realms. Republic of Egos was a Choice Outstanding Academic Title of 2003 and has been translated into Spanish.

The Imaginary Revolution: Parisian Student and Workers in 1968 (forthcoming, Berghahn, June, 2004)
DR. MICHAEL SEIDMAN PUBLISHES A BOOK ON THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR AND ANOTHER ON THE REVOLUTION OF 1968 IN FRANCE

is the first history of the events which is based on recently available primary sources. It places the French ‘68 in an international context and offers a Tocquevillian perspective on the events. The opening chapter, “Sex, Drugs, and Revolution” and “Taking Desires for Reality,” show that in the university dormitories in the Paris region political freedom, libertarianism, and disrespect for property gained much ground from 1962 to 1967. The third chapter, “Incendiary Occupation,” demonstrates how in May and June 1968 the student movement fought the state over possession of air, water, fire, and fuel. As in other periods of French history, the challenge to state power provoked workers’ strikes, the subject of chapter four. These strikes were traditional, but work stoppages, particularly strikers’ control of gasoline supplies, imperiled the provisioning of the capital. The fifth chapter, “The Spectacle of Order,” relates how the police and military were able to overcome multiple challenges to order. The state proved capable of restoring normality even before de Gaulle’s May 30 address to the nation, which most historians have taken as the turning point of the crisis. The cooperation of shopkeepers and truck drivers enabled the government to supply Paris with gasoline and thus food. In other branches of the economy, major concessions helped to end strikes. Repression by an efficient and sporadically brutal police force did the rest.

The effects of 1968 were rather limited. Culturally, the events changed little that had not already been questioned and altered in the late fifties and early sixties. The workers’ strikes led to fewer working hours and higher wages, but these changes reflected the secular demands of the French workers’ movement. May is remarkable not by the transformation it brought but by virtue of the revolutionary power that much of the media and many scholars have attributed to it.

DR. YIXIN CHEN MAINTAINS A BUSY SCHEDULE STUDYING IN CHINA AND COMMENTING ABOUT THE NATION’S TWENTIETH CENTURY HISTORY

Last year Dr. Yixin Chen was prevented from going to China for a research trip by restrictions related to the outbreak of the SARS virus. Instead he worked on several papers that he will publish or present at conferences. His interview with Professor William Kirby, the Dean of Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University and a leading historian on modern China, has been published on the Chinese Historical Review, no. 1, 2004. His Chinese article “From kinship to citizenship: a study of rural Anhui lineages under the People’s Republic,” which he coauthored with a Chinese colleague, has been published on the Journal of Social Sciences in China, no.1, 2004, which is the most prestigious journal of humanities and social sciences in China. Another of his Chinese articles, “Respect the realities of Chinese population history: a response to James Lee and Wang Feng,” which he coauthored with a Chinese professor in Shanghai, has been published on Journal of Academic World. Dr. Chen has also presented a paper “The peasant rebellion against authorities: cases of three Anhui villages during the Cultural Revolution” at the convention of the Association for Asian Studies, in March 2004, in San Diego. He will present another paper “China Farmers’ Bank and the making of modern agricultural finance in China” at the bi-annual conference of the American Historical Society at Boothbay, Maine, in June. While he has planned to travel to China for research during the summer, he will also present a paper “China International Famine Relief Commission and the origin of the Chinese rural cooperatives” at the International.