Kalman to Detail ‘Perils of Biography’
At Associates’ March Luncheon Talk

BY ANITA GUERRINI

Biographies are among the most popular forms of historical literature. But, according to History Prof. Laura Kalman, they are also among the most difficult genres to master.

In her talk “The Perils of Biography,” Prof. Kalman will tell the History Associates about the particular pitfalls she encountered along the path of writing a biography of Abe Fortas, Supreme Court Justice and adviser to Lyndon Johnson.

Prof. Kalman, who had never considered writing a biography before, decided Fortas deserved a biography after she read his obituary in the New York Times.

She believed his life was worth writing about, but she also felt that sense of personal connection which drives the biographer to immerse herself in someone else’s life.

It is always preferable, she points out, if that person is dead, but in writing about a contemporary figure, the writer must also deal with the living — spouses, colleagues, friends and enemies — and the biographer may end up knowing more about her subject’s life than any of them.

In the case of Fortas, there were also reams of manuscripts to wade through, including, says Prof. Kalman, some very dull court proceedings!

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The "judiciousness" of judges mean that they put their personal opinions aside in writing decisions; Prof. Kalman reports her delight in finding a penciled “Yech!” in
Read The Evaluations From Hell!

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fighting for the ideals of liberté, égalité, fraternité wherever he could find an opportunity.

He began his career in the service of Napoleon and was a participant in several important naval battles. Following Napoleon's decline, he found his way to Baltimore, Maryland, which was a hotbed of support for Latin American "freedom fighters" seeking independence from Spain, much to the distress of then-Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, who was negotiating with Spain for the purchase of Florida.

Bouchard eventually joined the naval forces of the Rio de la Plata (as Argentina was then known) and was granted letters of marque, giving him legal license to harass and destroy Spanish shipping and naval forces throughout the world.

Following great success as a privateer throughout the Pacific Ocean, Bouchard sailed to Alta California at the very fringes of Spain's empire. After sacking and pillaging the capital at Monterey, he selected the Rancho Refugio as his next target.

The Oteg family, owners of this large land grant, were known to be great supporters of Carlos III — as well as the wealthiest smugglers in California. During the looting and burning of the Rancho, three of Bouchard's men were taken prisoner by Santa Barbara Presidio forces (including a contingent of armed Mission Indians), which ultimately led to the confrontation between him and de la Guerra.

On December 6, 1818 Bouchard's two ships sailed into the Santa Barbara harbor, posing a major threat to the tiny military force at de la Guerra's disposal. Arching his small force continually around a small hillock within sight of the harbor, de la Guerra was able to deceive Bouchard into thinking he had a much larger force.

After some negotiation and "musket-rattling," the two commanders agreed to a prisoner exchange, after which Bouchard sailed south to ransack San Juan Capistrano before leaving Alta California waters forever.

O'Dowd pointed out that in this confrontation, the Old Order, in the person of de la Guerra, and the New Order, in the person of Bouchard, met face to face right here in the small pueblo of Santa Barbara on the very fringe of the civilized world.

And though Bouchard's raid was the only military manifestation of the struggle between them in Alta California, to the south the struggle raged from 1810 to 1821, when the Old Order fell to the newly-created Republic of Mexico and Californios were required to take it all on faith.

Patrick O'Dowd demonstrates period piece from De la Guerra era.

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UCSB Historian Finds Link To Explorer Vasco da Gama

The indefatigable Robert O. Collins informs us that “Dr. Livingstone has been lost in Hollywoold and will probably not be found until March.” Check your local listings for exact date and time on the H History Channel. Bob’s latest book, Africa’s Thirty Years War: Libya, Chad and the Sudan, 1963-1993,” co-authored with J. Millard Burr, is scheduled for publication with Westview Press.

Frank Frost’s excavation report, “Tectonics and H story at Phalasarna,” was published in Res M aritiae, the proceedings of an international conference held on Cyprus in 1994. Also in the volume is a paper by Elpida Hadjidaki (PhD 1987) on the 5th century BC shipwreck she is excavating off the coast of Alonisos, Greece.

Asst. Prof. Alice O’Connor gave a talk at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, entitled “On the Trail of The Underclass: Race and Class in American Sociology.” The lecture was sponsored by the Midwest Consortium for Black Studies and the Center for African-American Urban Studies and the Economy. She also spoke to the League of Women Voters of Ventura County on the historical roots of recent welfare reform and its implications for California.

Asst. Prof. Hyung Il Pai will appear on a panel at the new Getty M useum in Los Angeles M ar. 11. Her talk on “Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in the Representation of Korean Identity” is part of a series on “Shared Inheritance” sponsored by the Getty Research Institute. The M ar. 11 panel will focus on Insadong, Seoul as a case study of “Sites of Origin and Marketplaces of Identity.”

Despite the importance of Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama to world history, there is very lttledocumentation on his life, and almost all of that documentation was published in the nineteenth century.

But UCSB History Prof. Francis A. Dutra was able to supply a new piece of information in January at the III Encontro sobre Ordens M iliarees, 1550-1777 in Portugal (site of the headquarters of the Order of Santiago).

Before presenting his paper “Os Fornos da Ordem de Santiago e Sus Comenda- dores, 1550-1777” (“The Ovens of the Order of Santiago and their Commanders, 1550-1777”), Prof. Dutra announced that he had discovered the year that Vasco da Gama had become a knight in the Order of Santiago.

“Although one date might seem insignificant, given the fact that scholars know so little about Vasco da Gama’s life and almost all the documents known were published in the late 19th century, this new discovery is a major find,” Prof. Dutra explained.

The timing of the announcement had special significance because 1998 marks the 500th anniversary of Vasco da Gama’s arrival in India after a voyage that left Lisbon on 8 July 1497.

“In 1498 Joaquim Inácio de Brito Rebelo published a document for that time period, I was able to show that because the sixteen knights are listed according to precedence by the dates they became knights, it can be determined with a great deal of certainty that Vasco da Gama became a knight in the Order of Santiago in 1488 since the man following Gama on the list became a knight in Santiago on 3 January 1489.”

Prof. Dutra has recently published (December 1997) an article on Vasco da Gama and has two additional studies of Gama in press.

His paper on the thirteen oven-commanderies, all located in Setúbal, a few miles from Palmela, was the first detailed study of the ovens themselves, their annual receipts and the identification and social background of the approximately ninety commanders who held them.

A specialist in Brazilian and Portuguese history, Prof. Dutra came to UCSB in 1967 after teaching at Oklahoma State and St. Bonaventure University.

The lecture was sponsored by the Getty Research Institute. The Mar. 11 panel will focus on Insadong, Seoul as a case study of “Sites of Origin and Marketplaces of Identity.”
**From The Chair**

**Department CAT-Scan**

In academia, a program review is something like going in for a really thorough physical. The process takes a good year. It involves a lengthy self-diagnosis, followed by visits from teams of experts both from other departments at UCSB and from History departments at other universities.

Our Department is now near the end of this process. We have been poked and probed, X-rayed and Cat-scanned and put through our paces since last Spring, and now are awaiting the doctors' report. This has been our first checkup in ten years, and even without the report I don't think it's premature to say that—despite a couple of near-death experiences (such as the California Recession of the early '90s and flood of early retirements that followed)—the patient is in pretty good shape.

The first thing an academic Rip Van Winkle would notice about the Department now as opposed to ten years ago is the number of new faces. Between planned and unplanned retirements, only a handful of us are still around from those days.

The History of Public Policy was just a track in the Public History program ten years ago. Now it has a national presence and is recognized as the flagship program in the UC system.

We have developed strengths in a number of subjects that cross the geographic divisions of our discipline. Now students can study gender, religion, science, state formation and critical theory with historians in every part of the Department.

COWHIG—the Cold War History Group—is probably the best example of this blurring of geographical boundaries. The brain child of Fred Logevall (U.S. Diplomatic) and Toshi Hasegawa (Russian), COWHIG now brings together faculty and students with research specialties on every continent. There is no other program like it west of the Mississippi.

Last year Phi Alpha Theta adopted an open membership policy. This policy allows any student, regardless of major and GPA, to participate in our activities.

**Associates' Board Member Wins Award**

Mary Louise Days, History Associates Board member and former treasurer, a 1989 graduate of the UCSB History Department, received an Award of Distinction from the California Council for the Promotion of History at their annual conference in Ventura last fall.

The award recognized her work in preserving and promoting the history of Santa Barbara.

Mary Days recently retired from her position on the City of Santa Barbara Historical Preservation staff, where she was known as the unofficial city historian of Santa Barbara.

She has also been a longtime advisor to many projects of UCSB's Public History program.

Her replacement on the City staff is another UCSB graduate, Christine Savage Palmer (MA 1992).

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California State University, Bakersfield in April for our annual Regional Conference. Two of our members will be presenting papers at the conference.

In May, we will be trekking to Los Angeles to see the new Getty Museum.

Our Gamma Iota chapter is currently selling T-shirts as a fundraiser. The funds will go towards our annual banquet and the purchase of senior honor cords.

These high quality shirts are available in all sizes and are selling for $12 each. The shirts have a comic on the back and "UCSB HISTORY 1997-98" on the front. Order forms and samples of the T-shirt design are available in the History Department main office.

Please contact Christian Villasenor at 893-2992 by March 12 for more information. Orders will not be accepted after March 13th.

Our next meeting is scheduled for early spring quarter. If you are interested in more information, please sign the sheet posted outside of the History Peer Advising office, Humanities & Social Sciences Building 4036, or send an email to me at unlints00@mcl.ucsb.edu.

Tori Linton is President of the Gamma Iota Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta.

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**LET US HEAR FROM YOU**

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

Send your letters to:
Editor, Historia
Department of History
University of California
Santa Barbara, CA 93106
The History Associates' fund-raising thermometer only managed a $500 rise since the last issue, leaving almost $3,000 of the JoBeth and Don Van Gelderen Challenge to be matched. Every dollar you contribute to the History Associates Graduate Fund or the Dick Cook Fund makes two that go to support History students. You don’t want J oBeth and Don to walk off with that money, do you? Send your check (made out to appropriate fund) to:
Office of Community Relations
University of California
Santa Barbara, CA 93106

Departmental Checkup

(to name a field close to home) are often in Classics departments instead of History departments. The same goes for Women’s historians, Asian historians and Islamic historians.

Here, all of the historians are in one department. It makes for rich opportunities to broaden one’s reach, and I doubt that we would want it any other way. But it’s time for UCSB to realize that we are really serving the needs of more than one department.

Now that I think of it, this physical puts us in more than just “good shape.” We are robust, and maybe even a little feisty!
Don't Miss Out

You'll want to keep informed as the UCSB History Associates begin a new year. To renew your membership or to join for the first time, just fill out this form and mail it with your check or money order (payable to UCSB History Associates).

Enclosed are my annual membership dues of $ _____

- **Active** $30
- **Corresponding** $15
  (Available to residents outside of Santa Barbara County only)

In addition to my membership dues, enclosed is:

- $25 to obtain a UCSB Library card
- $ _____ gift to the History Associates Graduate Fellowship Fund.
- $ _____ gift to the History Associates Dick Cook Scholarship Fund.
  Gifts of $1,000 or more qualify for membership in the Chancellor's Council.

Name: ______________________________

Address: ______________________________

City/Zip/State: _______________________

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

Please make your check payable to the UCSB History Associates and return it to:

UCSB Office of Community Relations
University of California, Santa Barbara
Santa Barbara, CA 93106-2100

Bloopers and Map Bloopers

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Ben's second entry: "Many Chinese who work for Americans do not complain about the type of work they do because they are in fear of their employers and some are in fear of being turned into the INS." Or, as Ben puts it, "Beware of becoming what you fear."

Another entry from a History 4B midterm came from Kevin Chambers: "The Black Death was also known as the Pneumatic Fever."

Evaluations

Continued from page two

As Kevin puts it, "This should frighten anyone accused of being full of hot air."

In related news, Susan Snyder (Farmer) sends the following item from Italy, where she is studying this year:

"I just had to share this story. I was sitting in the internet shop where I check my e-mail here in Florence, and the two American students sitting next to me were discussing the recent Iraqi crisis. One of the students told the other that we were going to war and that the U.S. government was telling all the students in the Middle East to go back to the States for their own safety. The second student's eyes widened, and she asked, 'Does that include us?' The first student replied, 'You know, I've never really looked at a map.'

W rites Nancy, "Now I know what to tell my 4B students the next time that one of them asks me why it's so important that they can all place silly places like Florence on a map."

Susan's email provoked the following vintage wit from Frank Frost:

"Remember that Ronald 'I was at Buchenwald' Reagan convinced the American boobytrap that Nicaragua was two days’ drive from the U.S. border and that Grenada was a mortal threat to the U.S. although it is closer to Africa than anywhere on the north American continent. Always give map quizzes. Otherwise you are depriving the KMART night manager program of a vast recruiting pool."