

BUCERIUS SEMINAR 2006: AMERICAN HISTORY AND AMERICAN ARCHIVES

Co-organized by the GHI, the Department of History of the University of Chicago, and the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies at the Free University of Berlin. Conveners: Kathleen Conzen (University of Chicago), Andreas Etges (Free University of Berlin), Christof Mauch (GHI). Made possible by a grant from the ZEIT Foundation Ebelin and Gerd Bucerius.

The third Bucerius Seminar on American History and American Archives took place from September 4–16, 2006. Twelve doctoral students—nine from different German universities and three from the University of Chicago—visited American archives and libraries in Chicago, Madison, Boston, and Washington, DC. As in years past, the program began with a reception on Labor Day. Kathleen N. Conzen of the University of Chicago invited the group as well as colleagues and graduate students to her house.

The first day and a half of the seminar was organized by the excellent staff of Chicago's Newberry Library led by Martha Briggs, John Brady, and Jim Grossman. Their task was to give a general introduction to the American archival system, major finding aids, and search strategies, as well as to present some of the large collections of the Newberry. The second half of Day Two was spent at the University of Chicago. Alice Schreyer and Daniel Meyer welcomed the group to the Regenstein Library's Special Collections Research Center. Showing many examples from their large collections, they discussed the peculiarities of their archive, which holds many papers of famous professors who taught at Chicago. This was followed by four intense hours in the history department's John Hope Franklin Common Room, where each of the research projects was discussed briefly. Kathleen Conzen, her colleague Jim Sparrow, Jim Grossman of the Newberry Library, and Andreas Etges served as commentators. On the final day in Chicago, the group visited the Archive of the Circuit Court of Cook County on the eleventh floor of the Richard J. Daley Center. Philip J. Costello skillfully described how much social history can be found in court records and how scholars have made use of it.

The next stop was Madison. Harry Miller and Michael Edmonds of the Wisconsin Historical Society gave an introduction to the immense archival and library sources of their institution, including quite a number of collections of use to several of the participants. Over lunch, the group met with Jack Holzhueter. Like his former colleagues, the retired editor of

the Wisconsin Magazine of History and leading expert on the history of Wisconsin proved how much an institution like the Historical Society is shaped by the people working there. Holzhueter, who helped generations of researchers there, shared his many insights on doing local and regional history.

It might have been because the group traveled east on September 9, and not September 11, or because the domestic flights had been booked in the United States this time. But to everyone's surprise, unlike in past years there were no special screenings at the airports for any of us, and the group arrived safely in Boston.

Michael Comeau of the Massachusetts Archives presented some of the most famous and valuable documents in the possession of his institution, including Massachusetts's constitution of 1780. Later in the day, the group visited the Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, where Ellen M. Shea had brought out documents of potential use to the individual research projects and gave an overview of the collections. Not far from there, Timothy Mahoney of Harvard's Baker Library presented a sample from the library's immense historical collections in economic, business, technical, and social history. In the reading room the group met Jon Levy, who had participated in the Bucerius Seminar in 2005 and had received a fellowship from Baker Library. The Kennedy Library hosted the group on its final day in Boston. This year Stephen Plotkin met the group in the Hemingway Room, decorated with a lion skin among other things. Plotkin talked about why the Hemingway Papers are now housed in the Kennedy Library. After Laurie Austin had described the large audiovisual holdings, Maura Porter expertly discussed the issue of declassification and played a number of "secret" tape recordings by John F. Kennedy.

In Washington, DC, where the group traveled next, the program deviated slightly from that of previous years. The National Archives in College Park was visited on the group's first day in DC. Robert Coren, Peggy Adams, Bob Richardson, and Nick Natanson spoke about the archives, the possible use of electronic records for research, and the large collections of cartographic and architectural maps, aerial photographs, as well as still pictures. The group was shown important examples from the archives' priceless collections, including battle maps from the Civil War and some of the famous Mathew Brady photographs of Civil War battlefields. For those who might use State Department records, Michael Hussey later gave a special introduction to the respective record groups.

The next day began at the National Archives in downtown Washington, DC, where Rick Peuser gave an overview of the holdings there and received much praise for his very entertaining "performance." He had pulled some of his favorite items, including "fan mail" to the imprisoned

Jefferson Davis from “your assistant, the devil.” Next, the group got an introduction to the Center for Legislative Archives, which holds the records of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Later in the day, at the National Museum of American History, John Fleckner gave a brief overview of the Smithsonian Institution and its many collections, and described the large holdings of his archive in business, engineering, communications, and advertising history. In the evening, eminent historian Robert Dallek talked about doing research in Presidential Libraries and about his current project, a book about Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger. His wonderful talk was followed by a reception at the GHI, where there was also a chance to meet the director and a number of the fellows.

The final day of the Bucerius Seminar was spent at the Library of Congress. The tour guide in the morning had a hard time adjusting to the fact that this was not a group of high school kids. Next, Daun Van Ee showed some examples from the vast holdings of the Manuscripts Division and also gave a tour through the stacks, where the papers of many presidents, judges, the NAACP, and numerous other famous individuals and institutions can be found. One of the highlights of the archives seminar was once again the visit to the Prints and Photographs Division, where Sara Duke and her colleagues had spared no effort to find photos, cartoons, and so on for all the topics. Several participants left this session convinced that they needed to return. The day at the Library of Congress ended with a new part of the program, a visit to the Geography and Map Division. Division chief John R. Hébert showed the group magnificent globes and all kinds of old and newer maps, and discussed how maps might be used for historical research. A farewell dinner near Dupont Circle concluded the archival seminar.

The Bucerius Seminar 2006 was the third consecutive seminar that introduced groups of American and German Ph.D. students in American history to archives and research libraries in the United States. The participants have been very grateful for the unique opportunity that was offered to them, made possible by the generosity of the ZEIT-Stiftung and the GHI. Librarians and archivists involved have been full of praise for this innovative way to prepare students for their prospective dissertation research trips, which in their view should become an essential part of graduate training of historians. They sometimes voiced their jealousy in not being able to travel with the group and get to know so many different institutions. I think I can speak for the participants of all three Bucerius Seminars in once again thanking everyone involved who has made the seminars possible: the sponsors as well as the librarians and archivists, who generously invited us and hosted sessions at their institutions.

Andreas Etges

Participants and Their Projects

ANDREJ BARTUSCHKA (University of Jena), "Fighting the Other War: U.S. Propaganda and Counterinsurgency during the Cold War. The Hukbalahap Insurrection 1946–1954 and the Vietnam War"

BERNADETTE FISHER (University of Mainz), "American Politics in the Rhineland, 1918–1923"

SEBASTIAN HAUMANN (University of Düsseldorf), "The Interdependence of Protest and Urban Renewal, 1965–1985"

ROMAN J. HOYOS (University of Chicago), "'A Fifth Branch of Government': Constitutional Conventions, Law, and Democracy in the Nineteenth-Century U.S."

DANIEL KARCH (University of Würzburg), "Genocides of Indigenous Peoples: The German Colonial Wars in South-West Africa in Comparison with the U.S. Policy towards the Plains Indians"

NORA KREUZENBECK (University of Cologne), "The Haitian Revolution in Southern Discourse, 1791–1865"

NEA MATZEN (University of Hamburg), "Bella Fromm: A German-American Life"

DOMINIK NAGL (Free University of Berlin), "Ruling the Unruly: Social Discipline, Public Order Crime, and the Lower Classes in Eighteenth-Century Boston and Charleston"

ANNA-MARIA PEDRON (International University of Bremen), "Contacts and Conflicts: German-American Relations in Bremen from the End of the Second World War through the 1950s"

PETER SIMONS (University of Chicago), "Isolation on the Road to Damascus: World War II and Internationalism in the Rural Midwest."

MARION STANGE (Free University of Berlin), "Governance of Health: Disease Control and Regulation of Health Care in Eighteenth-Century South Carolina and Louisiana"

ELIZABETH TODD (University of Chicago), "From Grassroots to Governing: African-American Politics in the Post-Civil Rights Era"