

American History TV Puts Michigan Profs On The Air

IF YOU HAVEN'T watched “Lectures in History,” launched in 2011, you’ve missed seeing a number of your favorite U-M professors on TV! C-SPAN3 has returned repeatedly to the Ann Arbor campus to tape our faculty doing what they do best—present fascinating lectures on important topics.

Professor Kevin Gaines led off in December 2011 with “Music of the Civil Rights Movement,” which was rebroadcast a number of times and is archived on the C-SPAN site. A steady procession of others have been invited to participate: Jonathan Marwil, on remembering the victims of September 11, 2001 (Dec 1, 2012); Howard Brick, on the Black Power Movement in the 1960s (Feb 23, 2013); Regina Morantz-Sanchez, on the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment and the Women’s Liberation Movement (Sept 23, 2013); David Hancock on the rise of corporate public relations (Jan 18, 2014); and Juan Cole on Egypt and the Origins of al-Qaeda (Feb 6, 2014). This fall Martha Jones talks on “The Case of ‘State of Missouri v. Celia, a Slave.’”

In 2012 “Lectures” programs were made available as podcasts, and the number of hits gives an indication of their popularity with a national audience. Jonathan Marwil’s talk, for instance, was downloaded 87,335 times and Howard Brick’s lecture was downloaded 83,420 times. Something like 47 million adults watch C-SPAN at least once a week, and our faculty members have seen nice bumps on social media after their lectures were broadcast. ■



From the Chair

AS I LOOK AHEAD to my second year as chair, I am pleased to report on some of the activities, achievements, and challenges that made my first year a particularly lively one.

New hires! History welcomed Perrin Selcer, an expert in global environmental history, to our faculty in January 2014. We are also very pleased that Ken Mills (currently at the University of Toronto), a renowned senior scholar in early modern Iberian Atlantic history, will join us in fall 2015.

We are delighted by the uptick in excitement and engagement among our undergraduate majors! We attribute this new energy to our curricular reforms, which won us two prizes last year and have produced new courses and advising structures, and enlivened the History Club. Students surveyed this year appreciate “the phenomenal support received from faculty” and the challenging coursework that prepares them for a whole range of careers. They specifically praise “the emphasis on critical thinking and presenting an argument fairly” as well as the “historical empathy” they gained. They recognize the importance of learning to approach issues from multiple angles and read enormous amounts of material for the key arguments, which also teaches time management skills.

The momentum in our undergraduate program continues with two minors launched in January. The Medicine and Health minor takes advantage of faculty expertise and provides historical perspective to the growing number of students who plan to study medicine, public health, or neuroscience. The multidisciplinary minor in Religion encompasses



a range of religious traditions. Two additional minors, Global History and Law and Policy should be open for enrollment in 2015. With these new minors, our invigorated Career Day activities, and our No Free Mopping (NFM) internship program, we offer students the intellectual foundation and informational tools they need to pursue a wide range of professional opportunities. We are also thrilled about a new public history initiative, “Michigan in the World: Local and Global Stories,” that will launch in 2014-15 ahead of the university’s bicentennial and open up new and

exciting research opportunities for our undergraduates in U-M libraries and archives.

At Michigan 2013-14 was also a year of challenges: Issues of climate and diversity were most acute on the U-M campus as the #BBUM (“Being Black at Michigan”) Twitter campaign generated national press about minority representation in the campus community. History graduate students were key organizers of the February 2014 Speak Out for Racial Justice event that featured History alumna Dr. Barbara Ransby and former U-M President James Duderstadt. These topics produced lively debates at department events, including the Eisenberg Institute’s “Detroit Plural” workshop in April.

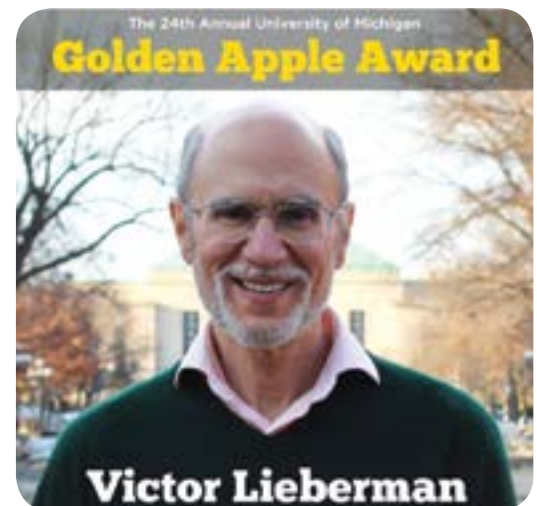
Despite the media’s repeated invocation of the Humanities in decline, this newsletter makes clear that History at U-M is thriving, not least through the ambitious intellectual pursuits of our faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students. We aim to keep not only Michigan but also History actively present in the world!

Best wishes,



New \$75,000 Endowment to Support Legal History

Emeritus Professor Tom Green and his wife Ruth have established an endowment to develop interest and scholarly work in legal history, as well as provide support and mentorship to the next generation of legal historians. The endowment will be used to bring prominent scholars from a wide range of specializations to the University of Michigan for lectures, proseminars, and meetings with students. A committee representing both Law and LSA faculty will select the speakers. “Our gift is in grateful recognition of the support and encouragement extended to me, and the friendship extended to us both, over four decades by two truly great and collegial scholarly communities,” says Green. ■



Congratulations to Professor Lieberman on this recognition of excellence in undergraduate teaching!

Other Worlds

By **Deirdre de la Cruz**, Assistant Professor

WHERE THERE IS death, there is the desire to communicate with the dead. From the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, this desire gave rise to a global movement that began when Kate and Margaret Fox, two sisters living in upstate New York, decided they would finally do something about the mysterious rapping sounds that had been resonating from the walls of their home. They posed a series of questions to the mysterious entity, and it responded by rapping once for “yes” and twice for “no.” The Fox sisters’ spirit phenomenon grew into American Spiritualism, which quickly spread across the Atlantic and then via colonial routes to the rest of the world.

My current research examines modern Spiritism (Spiritualism’s European counterpart) in the turn-of-the-century Philippines. I am interested in how Filipino Spiritists drew from a repertoire of avowedly *global* discourses and practices to express anti-imperial sentiment at home, and more broadly, Spiritism’s standing in the genealogy of religious practices and systems of belief that to this day comprise the colorful and variegated landscape of Filipino Christianity. These themes are present in an article I am working on that explores a series of spirit photographs taken in Manila and compiled in an album published in Barcelona circa 1903. The photographs attest to the geographical reach of Spiritism, its transnational networks,

and its belief that the existence of the spirit world was an empirical fact, observable thanks to the development of new technologies that rendered the invisible visible. Some of the spirits that appear in the Manila photographs are identified as the nation’s most revered martyrs, which

lend the images a political dimension in a period marked by violent transition to American imperial rule.

Recent studies of Spiritualism and Spiritism have rejected a skeptical view that might dismiss them as frivolous, irrational, and thus anti-modern. Instead they examine the impact of these movements on a wide range of social and political identities and issues. Yet it is safe to say that taking a sympathetic, albeit critical, approach to Spiritism presents certain methodological challenges. What is the place of spirits in the making of history? What kinds of archives do words spoken by the dead represent?

I bring these and other questions to bear in my teaching on the history of religions. My colloquium entitled “Occult Internationalisms: The Global Spread of Secret Knowledge”

draws students who are intrigued by the topic, but often resistant to suspending judgment about how “weird” or “irrational” these movements and their followers appear to be. That is, until they realize that many of their own cultural touchstones, such as the television program “Ghost Hunters” and the obsession with the Illuminati in popular culture have their historical precursors in modern imaginaries of other worlds, including those we might categorize as “supernatural.” ■



During a spirit session in Manila, the deceased wife of D.N. Javier pays him a visit. From: *Album de fotografias espiritas* (Barcelona: Casa Editorial Carbonell y Esteve, ca. 1903)

Michigan in the World: Local and Global Stories

A new initiative in public history will highlight online multimedia presentations of historical (archival, interviews, museum-based) research conducted by undergraduates about the university and the southeast Michigan region in many contexts. Students and their professors will begin producing digital exhibits and multimedia resources for the public as part of the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the University of Michigan. Stay tuned! ■

CLASS ACT

Speaking Out for Racial Justice at U-M

By **Austin C. McCoy**, Doctoral Candidate in History

LAST YEAR, THE University of Michigan became a hotbed of activism around diversity and racial justice. U-M students, faculty, and staff sought to push university leaders to address declining minority enrollments and the poor campus climate. The student organization “We are Michigan” organized a silent protest on the Diag to raise awareness about those issues. The Black Student Union’s nationally recognized campaign, #Being Black at the University of Michigan (#BBUM), led to the formulation of seven demands for a more inclusive campus.

The Department of History had a large footprint in the racial justice movement. Professors Matthew Countryman, Kevin Gaines, and Kathleen Canning served as plaintiffs in the original 2006 court case, *Cantrell v. Cox*, which was deliberated before the Supreme Court in October 2013 as *Schuetz v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action*. Department chair Kathleen Canning also organized a panel on race and the affirmative action case, and several History graduate students helped organize the “1,000 Speak Out for Racial Justice” event.

I got involved in the struggle for racial justice after co-authoring a *Michigan Daily* op-ed about U-M’s history of black student protest. After attending a mass meeting sponsored by the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies and several student organizations, graduate students from the departments of American Culture, English, Philosophy, and History joined together to form the United Coalition for Racial Justice.

Our primary goal was to organize an overnight demonstration modeled on the 1965 Vietnam War Teach-In. We envisioned taking over the Shapiro Undergraduate Library and hosting a demonstration, a student-centered open-mic, and teach-in sessions that addressed various topics including affirmative action at the Supreme Court, race in the classroom, and the rhetoric of diversity. We asked Dr. Barbara Ransby, a History alum and veteran of the anti-racism movement at U-M in the 1980s, to deliver the keynote address.



Dr. Barbara Ransby, Director of Gender and Women's Studies at University of Illinois at Chicago

The Speak Out was a success. Attendance topped 1,000, and around 400 people participated in the eight teach-in sessions. We helped change the conversation about the declining African-American student body—showing that it predated Prop 2 and resulted from university policies—as more student organizations took up our arguments. And university administration took notice: The president devoted much of her opening remarks at the February 20th Regents meeting to the issue of diversity on campus. The Speak Out provided mass support and inspired further efforts to produce student-led racial justice plans by groups such as the Students of Color-Rackham. History was well represented—many graduate students helped organize and worked the event, and many more students, faculty, and staff attended.

1,000 Speak Out For Racial Justice!

8pm Tues, February 18th 2014 (through 8am Wed)

Shapiro Undergraduate Library

Open mics, performances, and grassroots organizing!



facebook.com/UnitedCoalitionForRacialJustice

Our organizing efforts dovetailed with the department’s efforts to improve its own climate. Our work informed internal discussions about how to create a more supportive environment for current and prospective students of color, whether through restructuring introductory courses, offering additional training for graduate student instructors and faculty, or devising ways to facilitate an ongoing conversation about inclusion and what constitutes a healthy climate.

Along with the efforts of many student organizations, our work helped lay a foundation for future racial justice activism. ■



Teach-in sessions were lively.

UNDERGRAD NOTEBOOK

By Anne Berg, Assistant Director of Undergraduate Studies

RECENTLY I WAS approached by a Florida-based journalist working on a piece for *Fast Company* magazine. She asked me to comment on whether humanities degrees still adequately prepare students for today’s global economy, particularly compared to STEM-focused education. I was not a little perplexed that this continues to be an either/or proposition. Can we really develop technologies adequate to tackling contemporary problems without knowing about different cultures, people, and their histories, when any new technology must be integrated into the social webs it is to serve?

As one of our students explained, “The key is simple: Learn a lot about a lot.” To gauge the value of the History major, we invited graduating seniors to complete an exit survey. Our students are clearly aware of the image problem facing history (and the humanities and social sciences in general), yet across the board, they insisted, “There is SO MUCH you can do with a History degree—it teaches you a new way of thinking that is priceless.” While most of our students have always loved the subject, many came to see history not merely as a lifelong passion, but as a carefully calibrated tool kit and a range of portable skills. “I can walk into a job interview and ask meaningful questions,” one student reflected. Others stressed the importance of learning to “question assumptions, do research, think critically, write, have compassion, understand people from different backgrounds, be more culturally aware, to empathize, to have something to talk about, to understand the world.” Our seniors agreed that “you don’t need a BBA to get a job after college,” but some remained insecure about “how to advertise the skills learned from studying history.”

Interestingly, when asked what advice they would give to incoming students, they were keenly and concretely aware of the opportunities history training holds and how easily they can be missed. So collectively they told the future generation to “try something new, don’t be scared to speak up, don’t imprison your interests, go in cold, do the damn readings, talk with your professors, find something you are passionate about, go to office hours, participate in class, step out of your comfort zone, take the freedom that comes with being a history major seriously.”

That advice is the non-quantifiable “stuff” you learn in the humanities and social sciences; it provides real opportunities for

personal and intellectual growth. Many of our students double major in fields such as Biopsychology, Economics, English, Political Science, Neuroscience, Sports Management, American Culture, and Biology. Similarly, their current positions or career plans cover a broad spectrum—engineering, the financial sector, advertising, medicine, law, journalism, publishing, education, media, and government. What History taught them is not how to do the individual tasks their various jobs will require. Rather, as one student pointed out, studying history at the Michigan teaches you something different. It teaches that “you and your thoughts matter.” ■



History Undergraduate Service Award winners Rosie Levine and Korbin Felder.

Doctor Returns to Graduate with Granddaughter, Completes History Degree

Theodore G. Dodenhoff, MD, a native Detroit, went from premed studies right into U-M’s Medical School, where he graduated in 1960. After completing his specialty, he moved his family to Phoenix where he practiced for the next 30 years. He had always regretted never finishing his Bachelor’s, so since his granddaughter was two years out from getting her degree from the Ross School, he decided to see if he could not finish up with her. Lacking only five History courses, eighteen months later he proudly received his degree in Michigan Stadium. A Michigan man to the heart! ■



By Hitomi Tonomora, Director

GREETINGS FROM THE Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies, where we are preparing to enter the second year of talks organized around the theme “materials of history.” Last fall, we began with our own Paolo Squatriti’s observations about a “Dark Age success story”—the biological invasion of exotic plants, in particular, the chestnuts, which thanks to their ready adaptation spread quickly across the Mediterranean empires and western Asia, eventually raising a politically charged modern debate over the “native” versus “immigrant” status of these trees. Among our many programs, guest speakers and department members showcased topics such as nature and public lands in the American West, spirit possession among girls in Nigerian schools, Spanish crosses on sixteenth-century Indian highways in the American Southwest, and rose petals that fell from the skies of Lipa in the Philippines. The materials of history are everywhere!

When asked which event from last year was most memorable, one graduate student responded, “That one on television and animé.” He referred to a seminar with Thomas LaMarre (McGill University), “From Cyberspace to Mobile Phones: A History of Expanded Television” and a workshop, “One Frame at a Time: Decoding Animé.”

The history of media, their form and technology, has transformed the ways in which we receive, interpret and impact what becomes available within and across cultures. Media have changed the human condition and notions of selfhood. This seminar and the subsequent workshop gave us a technically informed introduction to the evolving world of media images and the many debates generated over its meanings and roles in society.

The two-day session led by LaMarre, who has a background in oceanography and premodern Japanese literature, was challenging to many of us with little background in the technology of visual culture. We learned that cinematic works of animation, such as *Spirited Away* by Miyazaki Hayao, make up only a small percentage of the animation industry. The dominant form, at least in Japan, is television animation. And in

turn, animation has played a critical role in determining what television has become since the 1960s. LaMarre studies this transformation in the context of what he calls “media ecology,” which synthesizes questions of production and consumption, as well as circulation and distribution.

Take, for example, the famous “*Pokémon Shock*” incident of 1997, which induced photosensitive epileptic seizures in about seven hundred children and epileptiform responses in a vaster population, perhaps as large as 100,000. Government officials, in conjunction with broadcasters and animation producers, launched a frenzied search for the cause and eventually determined it to be flicker effects covering much of the screen during a battle scene. This was a moment of pure media experience, one that connected many people in a new way. It illustrates



that circulation and distribution affect what happens in production and consumption and vice versa; it even involved the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare and Japan’s stock exchange. The *Pokémon* series went into hiatus for four months, but the incident lived on in spoofs that appeared in episodes of *South Park* and *The Simpsons*.



Discussion also turned to the meaning of failures in the technology and the affective dimension of media infrastructure. (Can a website be intimately fuzzy?)

Finally, ethical and political considerations around animé generated strong audience reactions as we sampled footage showing figures of little girls shaped like battle ships in combat. All the while they emit, in a “feminine” animé voice, phrases such as “Here I go!” or “Help!” LaMarre explained that in animé gender, race, and other received forms of social difference are often treated lightly and subordinated to interest in the technological possibilities of form and movement. Stories around “fleet girls” are hugely popular throughout Asia. Whether one finds them interesting or disturbing, they steer us back to the question of how materials make history and how we begin to talk about them.

As we enter the new semester, we remember fondly EIHS fellows and affiliates who have recently returned home, especially those from abroad—as far away as the Canary Islands! As we welcome new fellows and visitors, we urge everyone to join us for the upcoming year’s fascinating events. We welcome you to visit our website for the schedule and sign up for email announcements: www.lsa.umich.edu/eihs. ■

Faculty Honors

PAULINA ALBERTO'S book, *Terms of Inclusion: Black Intellectuals in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (University of North Carolina Press, 2011), won the 2013 Warren Dean Memorial Prize, awarded by the Conference on Latin American History.

PAM BALLINGER will hold a fellowship during 2014-15 at the Shelby Cullom Davis Center at Princeton, where she will work on her book project, "Forgotten Refugees: Decolonization, Displaced Persons and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-1961."

JAY COOK has been awarded an NEH fellowship for 2014-15 at the New York Historical Society, where he will work on his project, "Colored Men Heard 'Round the World: A Global History of Black Celebrity, 1770-1950."

HUSSEIN FANCY has won this year's Charles Julian Bishko Memorial Prize from the Association for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies for his article "Theologies of Violence: Recruitment of Muslim Soldiers by the Crown of Aragon," *Past & Present* 221:1 (2013), 39-73.

GABRIELLE HECHT'S *Being Nuclear* (MIT Press, 2012) has won its third prize, the Susanne M. Glascock Humanities Book Prize for Interdisciplinary Scholarship, awarded by Texas A&M Center for Humanities Research.

NANCY ROSE HUNT will hold a fellowship at the Institute of Advanced Studies of Paris in 2014-15, where she will work on a global history of medicine for Oxford University Press and launch her new monograph, "Mental Health Zones: An African Genealogy."

MARTHA JONES received the University of Michigan's 5th Annual Distinguished Diversity Leaders Award (DDLA) for co-organizing the Understanding Race Theme Semester (2013).

SUSAN JUSTER will hold a fellowship at the Huntington Library during 2014-15 for her project on "Sacred Violence in America."

MARY KELLEY has been named to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

IAN MOYER'S book, *Egypt and the Limits of Hellenism*, has won the First Book Award of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South.

RACHEL NEIS'S book, *The Sense of Sight in Rabbinic Culture: Jewish Ways of Seeing in Late Antiquity* received an Honorable Mention in the Biblical Studies, Rabbinics, and Jewish History and Culture in Antiquity category of the 2013 Jordan Schnitzer Book Awards.

DOUGLAS NORTHROP has been awarded the John Dewey Award for 2014 by the Executive Committee of the College of LSA in recognition of his outstanding contributions to undergraduate education.

DEREK PETERSON'S *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival: A History of Dissent* was awarded both the Melville J. Herskovits Award of the African Studies Association and the AHA's Martin A. Klein Prize in African History.

MRINALINI SINHA has been elected president of the Association for Asian Studies for 2014-15.

RONALD SUNY won the 2013 ASEEES award for distinguished contributions to Slavic, East European, and Eurasian studies.

RAY VAN DAM received the 2014 John D'Arms Award for Distinguished Graduate Mentoring in the Humanities.

In Memoriam

STEPHEN J. TONSOR III, Emeritus Professor of History, died on January 8 at the Chelsea Retirement Community, Towsley Village, at the age of 90. Read his full obituary at <http://record.umich.edu/articles/obituary-stephen-j-tonsor-iii>.

Alumni News

ROBERT C. BLACK (BA 1973) had his fifth book, *Defacing the Currency: Selected Writings, 1992-2012*, published by LBC Books in 2013.

DAVID CHURCHMAN (BA 1960), now professor emeritus with California State University, saw a second edition of his book *Why We Fight* published by University Press of America in 2013.

CAYTLIN DEERING (BA 2009) graduated from the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in May 2013 and is now employed as an internal medicine resident at Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge, Illinois.

JUDITH LAIKIN ELKIN (PhD 1976) writes that a third edition of her book *The Jews of Latin America* was published by Reinner in 2013.

MATT GREENBERG (BA 2013) wrote to tell us that he won a year-long fellowship with Challenge Detroit. Six such "challenges" are awarded each year to engage the multitude of issues facing the city.

CHARLES HUMPHREY (BA 1972) let us know that in May he published a book entitled *Guide to ERISA Fiduciary Responsibilities – For Advisors and Sponsors of 401(k), 403(b), and Profit Sharing Plans*.

JENNIFER JENKINS (MA 1996) informs us that she received her PhD in History from Brandeis University in 2007. Her dissertation was on the French government's immigration, employment, housing, and healthcare policies for West African immigrants in Paris in the 1960s and 1970s. She is now working in higher ed administration.

KAREN SAMUELS JONES (BA 1984) has become a partner in the Banking and Financial Services Division of Stinson Leonard Street LLP in Denver. She represents financial institutions and companies in real estate leasing and construction; she has extensive experience with complex transactions secured by real estate.

A. AZFAR MOIN (PhD 2010) tells us that his book *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam* (Columbia UP 2012) won both the American Academy of Religion's 2013 Best First Book award and the American Historical Association's 2013 John F. Richards Prize in South Asian History.

NORMAN OWEN (MA 1971, PhD 1976) retired from the University of Hong Kong in 2004 and lives in North Carolina. He has published, as editor and co-author, *The Emergence of Modern Southeast Asia* (Hawaii, 2005) and *The Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian History* (London, 2013).

JAMES PEDERSEN (MA 1972, PhD 1974) is retired now, with ample time to read and reflect.

REBEKAH PITE (PhD 2007) won the 2013 Gourmand Prize for the "Best Latin America Cuisine Book" published in the United States as well as the 2014 Social Sciences Book Prize from the Latin American Studies Association, Southern Cone Studies Section for her book *Creating a Common Table in Twentieth-Century Argentina: Doña Petrona, Women, and Food* (North Carolina, 2014).

MILLERY POLYNE (PhD 2003) has earned tenure at NYU and published his second book, *The Idea of Haiti: Rethinking Crisis and Development* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

AHMAD RAHMAN (PhD 2006) was named 2013 College Professor of the Year by the Michigan Council for the Social Studies. The UM-Dearborn associate professor of history was honored at the Michigan Joint Social Studies Conference in Lansing.

CHRIS SCHMIDT-NOWARA (PhD 1995) has a new book out, co-edited with Josep M Fradera, *Slavery and Antislavery in Spain's Atlantic Empire* (New York, 2013).

BRAD SCHWARTZ (BA 2012) co-wrote a PBS "American Experience" episode based on his thesis on the 1938 Orson Welles "War of the Worlds" broadcast.

ROBERT THURSTON (PhD 1980) is senior editor and contributor to *Coffee: A Comprehensive Guide*, 2013. *Author of Lynching: American Mob Murder in Global Perspective*, 2011, he is founder of Oxford Coffee Co., a roastery and coffee bar and is preparing to retire as professor from Miami U., Oxford, OH.

CHRISTOPHER WILSON (BA 1989) has become Director of Experience and Program Design at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. He was named a Smithsonian Palmer Scholar in 2013 for participating in the Institution's Palmer Leadership Development Program. He continues to lead the museum's educational theatre programs and created its annual National Youth Summit, focused on bringing high school students across the nation into conversations about history.

In Memoriam

DANIEL HILL (BA 1950, MA 1954), passed away at home on September 20, 2013, at the age of 89. Born in Grand Rapids, MI, he spent his career as a high school history teacher and tennis coach at Niles West H. S. in Skokie, IL. He leaves behind his wife of 63 years and three children.

ROBERT O. DEVRIES (BA with distinction 1964, MA 1965) of San Diego passed away on March 20, 2014. Robert was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1942 and worked in the healthcare insurance industry for 45 years. He was politically active in California's Democratic Party, a devoted Christian, and a tireless explorer of the national parks.

STAY IN TOUCH!

WWW.LSA.UMICH.EDU/HISTORY/ALUMNIFRIENDS/STAYINTOUCH



Speak Out mass meeting in the Shapiro Library. Photo courtesy of United Coalition for Racial Justice.



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