

THE ARCHIVE

The Annual Newsletter of the Muhlenberg History Department

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: DR. JOHN MALSBERGER

*Interview by Sophia Framm '24
Photography by Rebecca Clark '23*



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Spring 2023 culminates Dr. John Malsberger's impressive 45-year career as a Professor of History at Muhlenberg College, in which he has influenced hundreds, if not thousands, of students. Tucked in the corner on the third floor of Ettinger, in the History Department, is an office filled with history of its own. Dozens of books remain stacked on partially empty shelves as Dr. Malsberger works to pack up his acquired collections from the past four decades at Muhlenberg. Growing up only a couple blocks from Muhlenberg, Dr. Malsberger had been on campus and attended many basketball games with his father long before he got a job here. Deciding to stay local for his undergraduate degree, Dr. Malsberger attended Temple University in Philadelphia with the intention of avoiding Muhlenberg and Allentown for the foreseeable future...which didn't last too long. Starting his undergraduate studies, Dr. Malsberger focused on finance and the future of becoming a stockbroker. However, before the end of his first year at Temple, he changed his direction and decided to pursue his life-long interest in History. Prior to college, Dr. Malsberger was adamant about avoiding teaching at all costs, since high school history classes seemed lackluster and very fact-based with little room for discussion. But, once he got to college, Dr. Malsberger saw the difference in how history classes were taught in college and recognized his passion for teaching. After completing his undergraduate degree in 1972, Dr. Malsberger applied his interests in politics and economics throughout his PhD program at Temple, and was offered a position as a lecturer at Muhlenberg in 1978, before he received his PhD in History in 1980. After nine years at the college, Dr. Malsberger was promoted to Associate Professor of History in 1987.

Throughout his career as a historian and professor, Dr. Malsberger has published a number of essays and three books, most recently about the political relationship between Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon. During the interview, I asked Dr. Malsberger why he decided to write about Eisenhower and Nixon. His answer was simple. Much of Dr. Malsberger's interest in the subject surfaced from his own research and preparation for the classes he planned to teach at Muhlenberg. Additionally,

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Dr. Malsberger wanted to look at the relationship between the two political figures from a historian's perspective and approach, rather than political, in order to add to the discourse and understanding of these two well-known figures in 20th century American politics. In recent years, Dr. Malsberger has shifted his focus towards studying American science fiction from the Cold War era in order to better understand its reflection and views of American society. His essay, *Hula Hoops, Buicks, and Anxiety: American Science Fiction and the Affluent Society*, was published in the *Journal of Popular Culture* in August, 2020.

Something I was curious about was how has Muhlenberg changed in the 45 years? According to Dr. Malsberger, the answer is a lot. Starting with the faculty offices, the History department's faculty offices used to be located in the former Head of History, Dr. J. Edgar Swain's house, which is now known as the Hoffman House. After his retirement, Dr. Swain and his wife gave the house to the college. Professors shared office space before the department relocated to the third floor of Ettinger Hall with the Economics and Political Science Departments in the early 1990s. Now, every History professor has their own office space and room to display their impressive collections of books and their own pieces of history, like old Muhlenberg postcards, political campaign posters, or an anti-Nixon political flier found in an old textbook from Dr. Malsberger's undergraduate days. Another major difference that Dr. Malsberger has discovered is the way that students learn in class; since his start at Muhlenberg, Dr. Malsberger has found that students prefer and retain more knowledge from in-class discussions and writing assignments

rather than long lectures. Along those lines, Dr. Malsberger makes sure to provide students with various sources that argue or demonstrate different perspectives to allow his students to develop and support their own opinions on major historical events, especially the controversial topics. Dr. Malsberger's passion for history and learning has not diminished in his time at Muhlenberg, but he also is very enthusiastic about what's waiting for him in retirement.

After Spring 2023, Dr. Malsberger plans to travel with his wife on trips that they were never able to attend due to their working schedules. Next fall you might run into Dr. Malsberger and his wife in Italy, but instead of starting up a conversation about some paper you wrote for him about 20th century American politics, talk to him about science fiction and maybe offer to read a draft of a fiction book he's writing. Maybe even give Dr. Malsberger a book recommendation since he plans to start crossing books off of his reading list. No matter what, Dr. Malsberger has a busy but fun start to retirement planned already.

To end our interview, I had to ask one of the most cliched and hardest questions for any historian to answer:

if you could have dinner with any person, living or dead, who would it be and why? I allowed Dr. Malsberger to choose more than one person since choosing one seemed impossible. He chose John C. Calhoun and Dwight Eisenhower. According to Dr. Malsberger, Calhoun would be interesting to talk with because of an 1850s news report stating that despite Calhoun's pro-slavery views, he was one of the most intelligent and kindest people, unlike Daniel Webster, a known abolitionist. Now, Dr. Malsberger's choice of Eisenhower over Nixon was due in part to Nixon's reported shyness and an easier likelihood of carrying on a conversation with Eisenhower.

Unfortunately, I never had the chance to take a class with Dr. Malsberger, but he was still able to impart some wisdom to me even during our interview: "Follow your passion and don't be deterred by the possibility that you might not succeed, you may not." Dr. Malsberger took a chance to follow his passion of teaching, and he was "lucky to end up at Muhlenberg in a full-time tenured position." I speak for every student and professor that has been influenced by Dr. Malsberger when I say **thank you and good luck and enjoy retirement!**



PHI ALPHA THETA

An American honor society for undergraduate and graduate students and professors of history.

Congratulations to our 2023 initiates!

Joshua Chait	RJ Mahar
Matthew DeGirolamo	Max May
Simone Dutton	William Moody
Sophia Framm	Bridget Parks
Cooper Glass	Leah Trunsky
Declan Kelsey	Carlie Nieman
	Ava Pirie



HISTORY CLUB

The History Club is dedicated to keeping the excitement and fun in history, while still providing factual information. Everyone is welcome at our meetings where we have a variety of activities. Activities include a timeline game, finding when things occurred relative to each other, and PowerPoint duels on historical topics presenters choose. We have even had a one man show about the Alamo!

We also have trips and activities outside of our club meetings too. We had a ghost tour of Muhlenberg around Halloween and assisted with National History Day in early March. At the end of March, we went to Crystal Cave, one of the oldest continuously operating show caves in the US and the most visited cave in Pennsylvania.



2022-2023 OFFICERS:

*President: Joshua Benson
Vice President: Alissa Knopf
Secretary: Patrick Higgins
Treasurer: Anthony Panuccio
Social Media Manager: Maggie Haber*

**FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM
@MUHLENBERGHISTORYCLUB FOR
UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS!**



2023 HONORS CONVOCAATION AWARDS



DR. EDWIN R. BALDRIGE PRIZE

Eva Vaquera

DR. VICTOR L. JOHNSON AWARD

Sophia Framm

DR. JOHN J. REED AWARD

Jenny Lee

THE HYMAN-GOODMAN AWARD

Declan Kelsey

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Quentin Bernhard '20

Even though I finished my degree from Muhlenberg College in 2020, my learning hasn't stopped! I'm currently living abroad in Yeumbeul, Senegal, in the Dakar region of the West African country. I'm serving with Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM), a program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). My role involves working with community members in the library and mutual fund areas of a community center run by Senegalese Lutheran Development Services (SLDS), a Senegalese NGO. My year in Senegal is centered around accompaniment, meaning I focus on being present with and walking alongside the people I'm in community with, wrestling with the legacies of the likes of colonialism and imperialism, along with the dehumanization of Black communities, that significantly shape the world we all live in. Studying history at Muhlenberg led me to think critically about historical issues and what it means to be a global citizen. This has helped me challenge my assumptions and ideas about community, diverse expressions, and our world this year. I'm excited to see where it takes me after I leave Senegal this summer!



A building used to hold captive human beings before they were shipped across the Atlantic Ocean and sold into slavery in the Americas on Gorée Island, off the coast of Dakar, Senegal. Often a final point in West Africa before people were forcefully moved across the ocean from their homelands across the African continent, Gorée Island is a place for reckoning with the history of violence and dehumanization we all must confront.



Me with fellow Young Adults in Global Mission, Sam Susina (left) and Sol Namir (center), at a church-wide celebration and harvest festival with the Lutheran Church of Senegal in Fatick, Senegal.



Me with Thiané Samba (left) and Dame Fall (right) at an ngente celebration for Dame and his wife Khady Fall in the Tally Bou Xonq neighborhood of Yeumbeul, Senegal. An ngente is a traditional Senegalese event celebrating the birth and naming of a recently-born child.

HISTORY HONORS

*Congratulations to our 2023 Honors
in History Recipients*



Sophia Framm - High Honors

Gender, Revolution, and War: the Impact of Women's Participation on Changing Gender Norms During the Mexican Revolution

"My paper is about the significance of women's participation during the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917) and their impact on traditional gender norms as well as how the legacy of revolutionary Mexican women has been distorted throughout history."

Madison Leonard - High Honors

*A Spirit of Dogged, Sullen Resistance:
Southern Upper-Class White Women's
Experiences of the Civil War*

"My paper was about how wealthy Southern women's attitudes concerning Confederate patriotism as well as the Southern gender hierarchy changed throughout the Civil War. It further explored whether or not women gained power, or if they had it all along, especially in terms of slavery."



History Majors who are rising Seniors (or Juniors who are completing the research portion of their CUE during their 6th semester) who have earned a 3.75 grade point average in History and a 3.50 grade point average overall have the opportunity to participate in the Department's Honors Program. Students work with three faculty members (at least two from the History Department) to review their work over the course of the semester, which culminates in an oral defense of their independent research project. Students who wish to pursue honors are eligible for one of three honors categories: Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors.



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

What have our faculty been up to this year?

Dr. Jacqueline Antonovich

Assistant Professor of History

This year, Dr. Antonovich's article, "White Coats, White Hoods: The Medical Politics of the Ku Klux Klan in 1920s America," won honorable mention at the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians. She delivered talks at Smith College, USC, The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, and the Pennsylvania Bar Association. At Muhlenberg, she was appointed Director of the Shankweiler Scholars Medical Humanities program and Chair of the Pre-Health Advisory Committee.

Dr. Thomas Cragin

Professor of History

This year, Dr. Cragin presented a paper on Fascism in *La notte di San Lorenzo*, completed a related article, and published the forward to Charles L. Fletcher, *Love and Kisses, Charlie: World War II Letters from a Jewish American Serviceman*, edited by Joshua Gerstein. He continues work on an edited volume and a monograph, both examining the representation of World War Two in European films. At Muhlenberg, Dr. Cragin taught a new course in Fall 2022, "The Second and Third Reichs: Germany, 1848-1945" and he plans to offer this course regularly in future.

Dr. Tineke D'Haeseleer

Associate Professor of History

Last summer, Dr. D'Haeseleer prepared the second editions of the student-authored textbooks of Korean History and China's Magical Creatures. You can find both in the College's Pressbooks catalog: <https://open.muhlenberg.pub/catalog/> In Fall 22 Dr. D'Haeseleer worked with students in the eponymous class to create a third, enhanced edition of the China's Magical Creatures textbook. In January Dr. D'Haeseleer received the happy news that she received tenure and promotion to associate professor.

Dr. Sarah Runcie

Assistant Professor of History

In the fall Dr. Runcie taught a new FYS called *New York City: A Global History* and facilitated the first-year seminar for the Shankweiler Scholars Medical Humanities program. She presented research at an international online conference on the theme of "Rethinking Late Colonialisms in Africa" and at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association. In February Dr. Runcie gave a lecture on public health in Africa at the Foreign Service Institute of the United States Department of State, speaking to diplomats who will soon be posted on the continent.



Dr. Cathy Marie Ouellette
Professor and Chair of History

Dr. Ouellette published two articles this year. The first, "A New Way of Asking Why": The Transformative Promise of Integrative Global Learning, appeared in Arts and Humanities in Higher Education. The second, "What Being Human Means: Integrating Global Learning through Lived Experiences" appeared in the International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. She presented at the American Historical Association on "Creating an Inclusive Classroom" as part of a series of panels about The Future of History at Liberal Arts Colleges.

Dr. Mark Stein
Professor of History

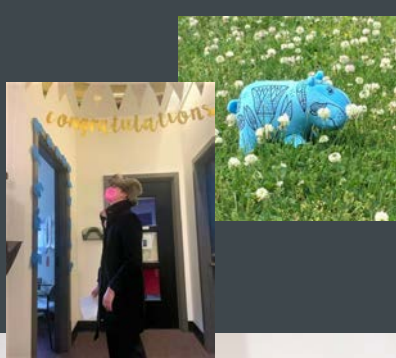
Dr. Stein began a three-year term as Director of the Center for Ethics this year and oversaw programming for the Center's "Speculative Futures" theme. He continued work on a digital humanities project mapping the Ottoman military presence along the Ottoman-Habsburg frontier in the seventeenth century and began to develop a new Senior Seminar sequence on the Early Modern World, to be taught starting Spring 2024

Dr. William Tighe
Professor of History

William Tighe enjoyed a sabbatical leave in the Fall 2023 semester. He has an article on conflict and rivalries at the Elizabethan English Court almost ready for submission for publication. He and his wife spent two weeks over the Christmas vacation in Italy visiting their daughter, who is studying in Bologna for the year. He will be teaching his current CUE course, "Tudor and Stuart Britain," in the 2023-24 academic year.

Dr. Lynda Yankaskas
Associate Professor of History

Dr. Yankaskas continued work this year with an international team of collaborators on Eighteenth-Century Libraries Online, a Digital Humanities project to unite the surviving catalogs—and other records—of 18th-century social libraries in the English-speaking Atlantic world. In April, she presented preliminary research on women borrowers in 18th-century Salem, Massachusetts, at a hybrid conference associated with this project. She also continued as an M.C. Lang Fellow at Rare Book School, using her fellowship this year to study the history of bookbinding and to lead a Faculty Learning Community on the topic of teaching with special collections materials. She enjoyed leading a CUE sequence on early American community, citizenship, and identity, and teaching students in several courses how to set type and print on a replica 18th-century hand press.



A Fond Farewell!

After six years, Dr. D'Haeseleer is leaving the History Department (and the country!).

We have all benefited from her contributions to intellectual life at the college, and her collegiality, tea time, and chocolate.

We will also miss William, our popular departmental mascot.

Please wish Dr. D'Haeseleer the best in her next endeavors!

