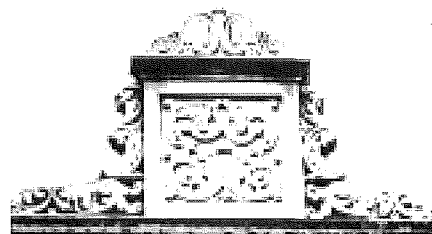


NEWS



of the History Department at Boston University

January 1998



BY FRANK COGLIANO

Long-time readers of the newsletter may recall that about five years ago I wrote an account of my experiences teaching American history at a small college in England. At the time I was finishing my dissertation and had no intentions of staying in Britain. The British phase of my career has lasted longer than I expected. Indeed it has lasted longer than the institution which originally employed me.

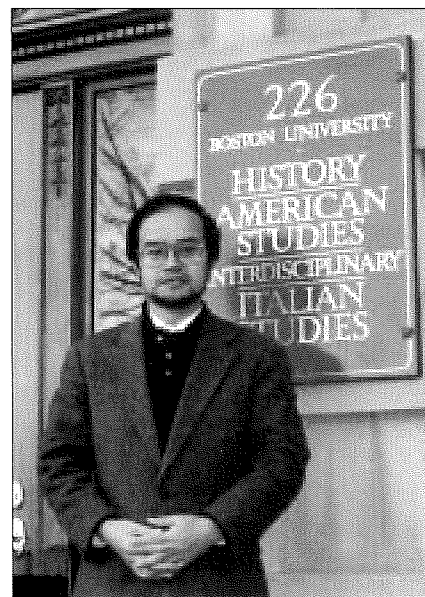
In 1992 on the suggestion of Fred Leventhal I applied for a temporary post at La Sainte Union College in Southampton, England. The position

Frank Cogliano received his PhD from the department in 1993 under the supervision of Professor Alan Taylor. Frank can be reached via e-mail at F.Cogliano@ed.ac.uk

was made permanent at the end of my first year, and with no immediate prospects of employment in the U.S., I elected to stay. My five years at LSU were, in the main, very happy ones. Professionally, I completed my Ph.D., published my first book, and, because in small institutions one has to wear many hats, was asked to undertake a variety of administrative positions. Personally, my wife Mimi and I settled into life in a new country, making new friends and welcoming our two children, Edward and Sofia, into the world.

Unfortunately, there were dark clouds on the horizon. In Britain, where the colleges and universities rely much more heavily on state funding than their counterparts in the U.S., institutions of higher education are also subject to much more rigorous oversight. After rapid expansion throughout the sector in the early 1990s, the various government bodies responsible for higher education undertook to "rationalise" the system. This meant a series of fairly rigorous inspections in an effort to consolidate the number of institutions receiving funding. There was little room in such an environment for a small Catholic college like LSU. As a result, in the spring of 1997 LSU was closed and absorbed by the University of Southampton with the loss of 150 jobs. Just as it seemed that my British sojourn was to come to an abrupt end, I was called to an interview at the University of Edinburgh.

In Britain the hiring system is different than in the U.S. All the candidates on the short list are called to campus at



Shigeo Fujimoto

Researching early American childhood

BY SHIGEO FUJIMOTO

My name is Shigeo Fujimoto, a visiting scholar in the Department of History, doing research on early American social history. I teach U.S. history at Tezukayama University at Nara-city in Japan.

Let me explain my current research subjects in more detail. My main concern has been the history of childhood

Shigeo Fujimoto is the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship enabling him to do research in the U.S. during the 1997-98 academic year.

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in early America, especially the history of white children in Northeast America. The lives of colonial children living in a society with a high infant mortality rate were far different from those of children in twentieth-century society. In the earlier nineteenth century, when the modern family and the common school system gradually appeared, a "modern" view of childhood emerged, and children's experiences began to change drastically. How did their lives change with the advent of a modern society? What is the meaning of this transformation? These issues are closely related to a more universal theme: the "modernization" of American society, which is important beyond the immediate interests of the specific field of my study.

Children's experiences varied according to geographical location, gender, class, ethnicity, and race. Therefore in my research I will examine childhoods different from that of a white male. For example, the childhoods of Native Americans and African Americans in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were different from the experiences of colonial white children. Some of the Indian children, just like their adults, were forced to change their traditional life styles by the European colonization. Slavery obviously imposed serious stresses on the lives of slave children. What basic differences were there among children of these different races? How were these different childhoods related in early American history? Finally, what do these differences and relatedness mean to American history? These questions

come from my present concern about "multiculturalism" in American society, which is also of importance beyond the immediate interests of the specific field of my study.

My basic hypotheses are related to suggestions by social historians in Europe, especially Philippe Aries, who argued that the idea of childhood did not exist before the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Before this period, Aries says, "children were mixed with adults as soon as they were considered capable of doing without their nannies," and were in some respects better off than children in later periods when, under the influence of the modern idea of childhood, adults began to deprive children of their freedom and confine them to the severe discipline of schoolmasters. The same modern idea of childhood appeared in the first half of nineteenth-century America as part of the phenomenon of modernization, when industrialization and urbanization slowly started in some cities in Northeast America and the modern family and modern common school system gradually emerged.

Multiculturalism is closely related to the above hypotheses. The idea of a white-centered civilization—which is still dominant in U.S. society—is based on the conceptions of modern European thought brought to America with the European colonization. Multiculturalism denies the nucleus of these modern European conceptions and reappraises them in the light of non-European and anti-modern ways of thought in U.S. society, a reappraisal first offered by non-white people such as African Americans. The important thing is the relation of such non-white conceptions and modern European white ideas in American society. The history of various kinds of childhood in America should be studied from this perspective.

As for my methods of approach and timetable: Working from primary writings and ancillary sources, I will visit local historical research centers: the American Antiquarian Society in Massachusetts for research on the Puritan family, Duke University Library in North Carolina for planters' sons and

daughters, the University of Kansas Library for frontier children, Oklahoma State Historical Society for Chickasaw Indian children, and Hampton Institute Archives in Virginia for slave families and children. After collecting sources, I will analyze differences and similarities among the lives of children appearing in these materials and argue how they were related in early America from the perspective of my ideas and hypotheses. During my stay in the U.S. I will also try to express my views on modernization and multiculturalism in exchanges with American scholars dealing with the early history of the family and school.

Returning to Japan in April 1998, I will first write an article on the history of female children in New England and then write a series of monographs about the history of childhood, leading to the publication of a book to be titled *The History of Early American Families and School: How Children Grew up in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*.

I'm very grateful to be accepted as a visiting scholar in the History Department. Thank you to all who have helped me to feel at home. I look forward to meeting you and invite anyone to stop by my office (Room 201 in the department building). ♦



CALIFORNIA PARTY

History Department faculty, staff, and graduate students who are native Californians or resided in California while working or going to school are invited to the Spring Semester California Blast-from-the-Past Nostalgia, Surfing, and High Life Party. Contact Al Sargis at the History Department office for details by the end of January.

News of the Middle East search

As of mid-December 36 applications had been received for the department's faculty position in Middle Eastern and North African history. Members of the search committee will meet early in the second semester to arrive at a list of finalists to be invited to campus for interviews. Contact the department office for information on the visits of the candidates.

Chairing this search is Professor Thomas Giick; others involved are Professors Irene Gendzier, Marilyn Halter, Herbert Mason, and Diana Wylie.

in brief
EVENTS OF NOTE!

Professor **Nina Silber** authored a review essay entitled "The Crisis of Confederate Womanhood" for the September issue of *Reviews in American History*. Another essay of hers entitled "The Northern Myth of the Rebel Girl" appeared in a collection, edited by Christie Anne Farnham, called *Women of the American South* (NYU Press).

Eric Schneider (PhD 1980), Assistant Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania as well as Adjunct Associate Professor in the History Department (he teaches the senior seminar in the Urban Studies program), writes: "My second book, *Vampires, Dragons, and Egyptian Kings: Youth Gangs, Violence, and Masculinity in Postwar New York*, will be published by Princeton University Press in late 1998. Paul Simon's first musical, 'The Capeman,' is based on the case I write about in my introduction, and I am hoping that his musical will have the longevity of West Side Story!"

Professor **Regina Blaszczyk** gave a paper dealing with the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency at the American Studies Association meeting in early November; she will also present a paper on the Steuben division of Corning Glass Works at the January meeting of the American Historical Association in Seattle.

Professor **James McCann** attended the annual meeting of the African Studies Association held in Columbus in mid-November. While he was bogged down in meetings of directors and librarians, he reports that the high point of the meeting was the presence of a number of Boston University alumni in African history: **Erik Gilbert** (PhD 1997) gave a paper on the Zanzibari dhow trade. Erik recently completed a research fellowship in Yemen at the American Research Center. **Kirk Hoppe** (PhD 1997), who is now teaching at the University of Minnesota, was

busily discussing his manuscript with publishers. **Jonathan Reynolds** (PhD 1995) is now in his second year as Assistant Professor of History at Livingstone College (Salisbury, N.C.). As reported in the December newsletter, Jonathan has just released his first CD as a blues (not jazz, as erroneously reported last month) guitarist and songwriter. **Barbara Cooper** (PhD 1992), now Assistant Professor at New York University, presented a paper on her new project on Christian missionaries in Islamic Niger. Her book, *Marriage in Maradi* (Heinemann, 1997), is now available. Another B.U. alumnus in African history, **Harold Marcus** (PhD 1964), missed the meeting because he was a distinguished visiting professor at the University of Kyoto, Japan, for fall semester.

Professor **Marilyn Halter** is serving as a consultant for an Immigration Series on Public Radio International and the BBC's "The World" program. The segments will be broadcast on WGBH in February and March. She also has authored chapters in two recently published volumes: "Identity Matters: The Immigrant Children," in *The Social Construction of Race and Ethnicity in the United States* (Longman/Addison Wesley) and "Longings and Belongings: Yiddish Identity and Consumer Culture," in *Yiddish Language & Culture: Then & Now* (Creighton University Press).

On November 20 at the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies National Convention in Seattle Dr. **Donald Ostrowski**, Lecturer in History during 1997-98, presented a paper entitled "Tsarevich Kudai Kul/Peter: An Extraordinary Episode in Tatar Crossover to Grand Princely Service in Sixteenth-Century Muscovy." At the same convention he chaired a panel on "Muscovy in the Era of Boris Gudonov."

In February, Professor **Bruce Schulman** will deliver a lecture at Princeton University as part of a series on "New Directions in Postwar American History." His lecture, "The Privatization of Everyday Life: Politics and Public Life Since 1970," is drawn from a chapter of his current book project. His ruminations on two other contentious aspects

of postwar American history will appear in forthcoming issues of the *Journal of American History*. In September, the *Journal* will publish his analysis of the recently released Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon tapes and the controversies surrounding them. In March of next year, an essay on historians' treatment of the 60s New Left and counter-culture will appear.

Joseph Patrouch, who received his BA from the department in 1982, received the Teaching Excellence Award in 1996 from Florida International University in Miami, where he is on the faculty; he was also promoted to the rank of associate professor.

The December 20 *New York Times* featured former department member **Alan Taylor** as one of six academic "stars" in U.S. universities at present. ♦

Graduate Student
Milestones

The following students had research papers approved:

Mark Abate, "The Conversion of the European Warrior Aristocracy: A Textual Analysis of Bernard of Clairvaux's *De Laude Novae Militiae*"

Wendi Kern, "Thomas Mann: The Quintessential Nineteenth Century German Apolitical Man"

Jeffrey Sanders, "Negotiating the Rails: Transient Culture and Narrative in the Great Depression"

Jeffrey Sanders passed the language examination in German.

On December 1 Mark Abate passed his qualifying oral examination. Examiners in the major field of medieval European history were Professors Clifford Backman, Thomas Glick, and Herbert Mason; examiner in the minor field, modern international relations, was Professor William Keylor.

On December 5 April Burgos passed her qualifying oral examination. In the major field of medieval European history the examiners were Professors Clifford Backman, Thomas Glick, and Herbert Mason; Professor Claudio Véliz was the examiner in the minor field of Latin American history. ♦

the same time. Usually they all give their job talks on one day (pity the poor members of the department). In the evening there is usually a "social" event to which the candidates are invited. The next morning everyone is interviewed. Sometimes one candidate is offered the job at the end of the day. More usually, the "winning" candidate receives a phone call in the evening from the head of department. If one has the right attitude, the whole affair takes on something of the aspect of a game

show. Indeed, I have made several close friends over the years attending interviews. After all, one is brought together with a group of people with similar interests. Nonetheless the procedure can be quite harrowing. It does have the virtue of being quick. If you fail you know within 12-36 hours of the interview rather than waiting for

weeks. After a lengthy interview I was offered the post in question. While very sad to say goodbye to friends and colleagues in Southampton (especially those who had been laid off), I was overjoyed at the prospect of moving to Edinburgh.

The University of Edinburgh is miles from LSU not only geographically but academically and culturally as well. The History Department has 27 members, organized in a confederated system by specialty: American, European, British, Imperial (essentially all non-Western specialists), and Medieval. I am one of five Americanists

(though the only American). The system is a plus in that it encourages a high degree of cohesion and a team atmosphere within the sections. Its weakness is that it encourages the sections to compete against each other for resources and students. To complicate matters further, ours is one of four history departments at the university. In addition to ourselves there are departments of Scottish History, Economic and Social History, and Ecclesiastical History. Additionally I have found scholars with like interests in American Studies and Canadian Studies. I have found my new colleagues to be a congenial lot. They hail from all over Britain and the world. The department has had a stable membership over the years so many are quite senior within the university and the profession. It speaks well for the university and the city that so many have been happy to make their careers there. Last year the department made three new appointments (including my own), which means there is some new blood as well. We have been made to feel very welcome with invitations for dinner, drinks, lunch, or a trip to the pub coming thick and fast.

By tradition in British universities new members of staff are not given teaching loads as heavy as those of their established colleagues (a stark contrast to American universities); as a consequence, I have a relatively light teaching load this year. My main responsibilities consist of offering tutorials and a few lectures to service our American history survey. That course, with approximately 200 students, is taught over the entire academic year (from October to May). The students have three lectures per week plus one tutorial. The five Americanists in the department share lectures according to specialty, and we each take some tutorial groups (as do graduate students). Because I have little other teaching, I have six tutorial groups. Tutorials are limited to nine students per group, and the students discuss readings, usually articles from scholarly journals relevant to the week's topic. Thus far I have been very impressed with the abilities of the students (who are equivalent to sophomores at a U.S. university) in engaging

with some pretty sophisticated scholarship. In part I think this is because of the structure of the Scottish degree system. Unlike in England and Wales, where a three-year degree is the norm, Scottish degrees are four years. After their second year students apply to be admitted to the Honours Programme; if they succeed they will study only history in their last two years, ultimately receiving an M.A. If they are not admitted to the Honours Programme, they pursue a more general non-honours degree. The result is that students in their second years are very eager to perform well. As I write this my students are submitting their first written assignments so I should have a much clearer idea about their abilities in a week or two. In addition to our American history survey I am assisting a colleague who teaches an honors-level course on American slavery. Next year I will introduce my own honors courses on the American Revolution and on the Frontier in American history.

Our students come from all over the world. In American history we have a native of Nome, Alaska, who told me it was cheaper for him to pay overseas fees at Edinburgh than to pay tuition at an American university like B.U. As he told me, if you live in Nome, you expect to travel thousands of miles to go to college so there isn't much difference between Edinburgh and Boston. Most of our students are British. They are split pretty evenly between English and Scottish students with a scattering of students from Wales, Northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland. According to my own unscientific observations (viewing student interaction and tutorials and reading their graffiti in the library) there is an undercurrent of tension and resentment between the two groups. Since Edinburgh is fairly selective in its admissions procedures, it gets some of the best students in Britain. Many of those who come from England are from prestigious private ("public") schools like Eton and Harrow. These students tend to be confident, well-spoken (and rich). Although many of our Scottish students also attended private schools (in England and Scotland) most are from the excellent sys-

tem of Scottish state-supported schools. They also come from Edinburgh or its environs and often live at home. While well-prepared for university, they do not necessarily have the same confidence in speaking (at least in their first two years) that many students from private schools do. As a consequence some tutorials can be dominated by students with “posh” English accents. I am quite sympathetic towards our English students who are not from “the South” or posh schools, but get tarred with the “English” brush. These students from Liverpool or Newcastle or any of hundreds of small villages in northern England often have more in common with the Scottish students than with the stereotyped “English” students. It is possible to overstate these tensions, but there is a palpable division between the two groups.

The divisions between certain groups of students are a reflection of Scottish resentment towards what is perceived as a bias towards London and the southeast of England by the media, the government, and most of the major cultural and economic institutions in Britain. Five years in the south of England taught me that Americans are not the only ones who say “England” when they mean “Britain”; many English do as well. In a recent example both England and Scotland played vital soccer matches in their respective bids to qualify for next summer’s World Cup in France. While England v. Italy received hours of coverage and miles of newsprint in the national media, Scotland v. Latvia was barely noticed outside of Scotland. While it could rightly be pointed out that 50+ million people live in England compared to 5 million in Scotland, the Scots have a long-standing sense that they are not accorded their due by the English. This resentment recently manifested itself in the overwhelming vote in favor of devolution and the creation of a Scottish parliament (to sit in Edinburgh). I have learned NEVER to say “English” when I mean “British,” NEVER to say “British” if I mean “Scottish,” and NEVER EVER to say “English” if I mean “Scottish.”

The research expectations of my

new post are quite high. British universities are ranked on a scale of 5 according to their research output. There is more at stake in these rankings than prestige (though that is important to the powers that be as well)—funding is doled out according to these research results. Consequently every member in our department is expected to be research active. To achieve the highest ranking (5) it is necessary to produce at least four items (books and refereed articles) of “international significance” in a five-year period. Fortunately, in recognition of this requirement, provision is made to support and encourage research: faculty grants, agreeable teaching loads, and a one-semester sabbatical for every three years of teaching. At the moment I am working on two books: a study of American seamen imprisoned by the British during the American Revolution and a synthesis of American history from 1763 to 1815 as well as a number of articles.

We have settled happily into our new lives in Edinburgh. Edward and Sofia spend their days at the University Day Nursery. Edward tenaciously clings to his Hampshire accent, but if he still has it a year from now, I don’t expect it will last too long when he starts primary school. (Incidentally he may attend Sean Connery’s alma mater but we hope he does not end up speaking like “the World’s Most Famous Living Scotsman” as the local paper calls him.) Mimi is in her third year of medical school at Edinburgh (her transfer from Southampton to Edinburgh was my only condition when offered the post here). As a place to live, Edinburgh is difficult to surpass. It is physically stunning, dominated by Edinburgh Castle and Arthur’s Seat, a small wild mountain in the middle of the city, each physically imposing and awe-inspiring in its own way. Most of the architecture is of Georgian stone as opposed to the Victorian brick of many English cities. As Scotland’s capital, Edinburgh has the cultural advantages of London in a city of 500,000. For music, theater, museums, and restaurants that cater to all tastes, Edinburgh is only topped in Britain by London. Within a short walk of each other in the

city center are the Royal Scottish Museum (everything you could imagine—a colleague calls it the nation’s attic), the National Portrait Gallery, and the National Gallery—all with free admission. For three weeks every summer during the Edinburgh Festival the city is one of the world’s cultural centers. During a typical day you can see an American high school performance of the Star Wars trilogy in thirty minutes, a Croatian production of *Hamlet*, alternative comedy, and the Royal Opera Company.

For restaurants the city has a complete range of eateries for every taste and price. Apart from an unusually good choice of pubs, Edinburgh has an incredibly impressive range of cafés, from gathering places for the beautiful people to drink their double lattes, to coffee shops where you sit with strangers and football is the only topic of conversation, to tea shops where you can get scones and jam and meet old women right out of the Prime of Miss Brodie—there is something for every taste (and not a Starbucks in sight!). Apart from traditional Scottish cuisine, Edinburgh has especially good Italian restaurants (Scotland was a popular destination in the Italian diaspora early this century and Edinburgh has a very large population of Italo-Scots). Recently we discovered a pub hidden in the Fife countryside which had some of the best Swedish food we have ever had (including our multiple trips to Stockholm).

When the editor of the newsletter asked me for my impressions of new job and environs, I intended to write a brief account of the university and city and a more general discussion of the ups and downs of life as an American academic in Scotland compared to England. I now discover after 2300 words that the former was a bigger undertaking than I anticipated. Should the readers and editor wish it I would be happy to undertake the latter in a later number. Until then best wishes from Auld Reekie. ♦

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WEB SITE UPDATE

The department's Web site continues to undergo small changes in an effort to make it more useful to those who consult it (in November there were approximately 1000 visits to the site from 943 different places on the Internet).

Sample syllabi are being added to the Course Inventory listing, so that viewers may see what a course is like (we include the caveat that courses do change from year to year).

The examination schedule for the current semester is now provided as

part of course listings, and the "Courses" section is complete with the class schedule for summer 1998, fall 1998, and spring 1999. Meanwhile the status of courses for spring 1998 is updated frequently so that students can know which classes remain open. There is a special notes section for the current semester that provides information on courses, for example, the reopening of courses previously closed, a list of still-available colloquia, changes in classroom assignments, and links to newsgroups for individual courses.

The "Graduate Program" section now has a Java applet (a small program written in the Java language, which will run on any computer) that allows an applicant for the MA or PhD to enter his or her Social Security number and

see the status of that (and only that) application.

To the "Faculty" section we have added an index so that it is no longer necessary to scroll through the whole list to reach "Yamamoto"; a "quick link" takes the user to an individual immediately. Faculty members continue to update their own pages with new information on their interests and accomplishments.

With the department's very fast Ethernet connection to the network, it is easy to forget that most people are using a much slower modem. Thus there has been a general effort to make the pages quicker to display: larger graphics (which may take several minutes to appear on screen with a slow connection) have been downsized. ♦