From Despair to Hope: Women’s Grassroots Movements in Nicaragua

Feminism may be considered an outmoded idea here in the United States, but in Nicaragua — and many other regions of the developing world — it’s an essential strategy for survival.

That was just one of many insights gained when 26 of us — representing day and weekend students from Augsburg and Hamline — traveled to Nicaragua from January 7 to 15 with Augsburg’s Center for Global Education.

Our wonderfully diverse group included the passions and perspectives of students whose majors range from Business and Psychology to History and Women’s Studies.

We were deeply engaged by the stories of struggle and hope from this beautiful, war-torn country. Each day we met with a handful of extraordinary individuals who taught us that history is lived experience. Their testimony provided first-hand knowledge of the contours of Nicaragua’s Sandinista-led revolution in the late 1970s and 1980s, the traumas of the Contra War, and the progress Nicaraguans have made since 1990 to nurture democracy and restore economic stability.

Selected readings fired our imaginations and provided useful context for our experiences. The book Sandino’s Daughters by Margaret Randall provided oral histories of women guerrilla fighters and revolutionary organizers. Salman Rushdie’s The Jaguar’s Smile revealed the controversies of the Sandinista regime and helped us grapple with the variety of perspectives we were to encounter in Nicaragua.

The stories of women’s contributions to the revolution were perhaps the most riveting. Father Fernando Cardenal (a Jesuit priest and former Minister of Education under the Sandinista Front in the 1980s) told us about teenage women who risked rape and death to work among Nicaragua’s rural poor in the Literacy Campaign of the early ‘80s. Pinita Gurdian, a middle-class businesswoman, described her conflicted response as she watched her pre-teenage children march off to war.

The speakers challenged our easy complacency. Rita Arauz, a small, fiery Nicaraguan who grew up in San Francisco but returned to her country in the 1980s, challenged us to look closely at human rights practices in the United States. An open lesbian, Arauz recently was awarded a prestigious UN award for her work on HIV and AIDS in Latin America.

The poverty is what touched us the most. In Nicaragua, the average worker earns $1-2 a day, and unemployment and underemployment affect more than half the population. Women often play the role of “tortilla maker” (bread winner) in their families. While pride sometimes prevents men from taking menial jobs, women labor in any industry that will help feed their families.

In the very poor community of Nueva Vida (above), a group of 25 determined women founded a sewing cooperative as an alternative to the sweat shops often run by U.S. clothing companies. Women’s grassroots organizing is slowly transforming despair into hope for many Nicaraguans.

Often our days ended with us lingering over dinner (or a campfire on the beach), engaged in deep conversations about our own responses. If you have not yet participated in a short-term trip to one of our CGE-sponsored sites in Mexico, Central America or Namibia, please consider doing so. It’s hard to predict the transformative effects it might have on your life and the lives of others.

—Jacqueline deVries, Associate Professor of History and Women’s Studies (excerpted from the Augsburg Echo)
**WHAT WE’RE UP TO**

**Our faculty ...**

Phil Adamo will deliver an invited lecture in April, “Medieval Connections: Teaching the Middle Ages to Undergraduates,” to the “Human Odyssey” Humanities Faculty at Auburn University in Auburn, Georgia. He will also deliver two papers in May at the 41st International Congress on Medieval Studies: “Monks and Heretics: Using Umberto Eco’s *The Name of the Rose* as a Textbook in an Upper-level, Undergraduate History Seminar,” and “The Sentinel’s Tale: A Chaucerian Forgery by a Post-Post-Chaucerian Forger.”

Jacqueline deVries has published book reviews in *Victorian Studies* and the *Journal of British Studies*; presented a paper on “Religious Metaphor and the Public Sphere” at a conference on the History of Religion at Boston College in March 2006. She has been invited to write an essay on “The Decline and Fall of Christian Britain” for the *Journal of British Studies* for fall 2006, and will travel to London this summer for additional research on her edited collection on the 19th-century reformer Josephine Butler. As if that weren’t enough, she hopes to run her first half marathon in June.

Bill Green (left) has been named Interim Superintendent of Minneapolis Public Schools. The announcement came less than a day after then superintendent Thandiwe Peeble resigned from the position. Green agreed to the interim position, which will probably last for at least one year.

Green has continued to teach his spring semester classes at Augsburg, but will take a leave of absence in 2006-07. Some of his classes will be taught by adjuncts in his absence.

Beyond his position as associate professor of history at Augsburg, Green holds a bachelor’s degree in history from Gustavus Adolphus, as well as a law degree, a doctorate in education, and a master’s degree in educational psychology, all from the University of Minnesota.

Green has published over 30 articles in scholarly journals and periodicals, writing a considerable amount of work covering Minnesota’s black history.

—Brett Cease ‘07 (excerpted from the Augsburg Echo)

Don Gustafson traveled to the Center for Global Education’s site in El Salvador over winter break. He is currently completing his last year on the Tenure and Promotion Committee. He has also just begun maple tapping on his property in Saint Peter, MN—we look forward to a good syrup harvest.

Michael Lansing co-organized and presented at the “Planting the Seeds of International Environmental Activism: Greening the Peace Prize Consortium Colleges” session at the Nobel Peace Prize Forum at Luther College on March 11, 2006. He also prepared a poster presentation, “Protecting What the River Runs Through: Legal Activism and Its Effects in Minnesota’s Sierra Club, 1966-2000,” for the American Society for Environmental History Conference in St Paul from March 30-April 1, 2006. Finally, in March, he refereed an article submission for *Minnesota History*.

**Our students ...**

Returning history majors receive departmental scholarships

- Alissa Kappes (left), was awarded the Dr. Bernhardt Kleven Memorial History Scholarship.
- Diane Perrault (left), was awarded the John R. Jenswold Memorial History Scholarship.
- Winter Shaler (left), was awarded the Theodore and Lucille Nydahl Memorial History Scholarship.
- Sean Stanhill (above), was awarded the Carl H. Chrislock (formerly H.N. Hendrickson) Memorial History Scholarship.
- Jake Thomas (left), freshman religion major, wrote a paper entitled “Judas Iscariot: The Phenomenon, From Biblical Villain to Pop-Culture Icon,” for Phil Adamo’s Western Civ history class (HIS 101), which was accepted for presentation at the Under-graduate Research Section of the Upper Midwest Regional Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. The conference will be held at Luther Seminary on March 31 to April 1. Thomas’ presentation is at 1:00 PM on April 1.

- Phil Alpha Theta, the national history honor society, has come to Augsburg College. The new chapter will honor the academic achievements of Augsburg students of history. Student inductees are David Bailey-Aldrich, Thompson Blodgett, Brett Cease, Neal Dodge, Keith Doten, Eriks Dunens, Benjamin Haynes, Alissa Kappes, Kristin Kaspar, Kate Mahon, Missy Motl, Diane Perrault, and Colin Stephenson will be initiated in a ceremony in late April.

- Eriks Dunens and Colin Stephenson have both been nominated to graduate summa cum laude. Dunens is also writing a paper on medieval philosopher Roger Bacon for departmental honors.

On February 23, Kristin Kaspar and Darcey Trunzo, officers of the Augsburg History Society, welcomed a crowd of over 100 guests to the student dual’s inaugural Carl H. Chrislock Memorial History Lecture.

The lecture is named in honor of Carl H. Chrislock (left), esteemed member of the department, and prolific author on Minnesota history, who passed away in 2001.

Carl’s son, C. Winston Chrislock, a professor of history at the University of Saint Thomas, opened the evening with recollections of his father. The speaker for the evening was journalist and local historian Larry Millett, author of *Twin Cities: Then and Now.*
Alumni profile: CHAD DARR

“History teaches you to take a step back and evaluate the entire situation: how it all impacts what follows.”

So says Chad Darr, a 2004 history grad, who is currently working as a Financial Advisor with a Fortune 100 company. Initially, one might assume that an undergraduate degree in history would be of little use in such an environment. Chad is quick to affirm that this is not the case. When asked how a history degree helps him in his current job, he answered with two words: “critical thinking.”

“My profession often presents situations which may have multiple solutions,” Chad elaborated. “For one of my history classes we were given a picture of a Greek amphora vase and basically had the task of discussing what it was by using critical thinking. Much like the Greek amphora, each of my business clients has his or her own story. It would have been easy for me to say that my picture was an old pot with two handles. Likewise, it would be easy (but foolish) for me to look at a client and come to a premature conclusion about who they are, or what they need.”

Reflecting on his memories of studying history at Augsburg, his study trip to Greece immediately came to mind. “It was an incredible opportunity to experience history outside of the classroom.”

Along with the unique opportunity to study abroad, Chad says the history courses he took at Augsburg prepared him for working life in unique ways that other institutions did not.

“What I specifically enjoyed about my Augsburg history experience was that it wasn’t focused on memorizing names and dates; it was focused on an entirely different way of thinking about and understanding history.”

—Chris Stedman ’09

Chad Darr surveying at an archaeological dig in Isthmia, Greece in 2003.

Kimball accepts position at CLU

Augsburg President William Frame sent out a press release on January 13 announcing the future departure of Provost and Associate Professor of History Chris Kimball (left).

Kimball will resign his position at Augsburg and will serve as the chief academic officer at California Lutheran University beginning this summer.

Kimball expressed pride in the accomplishments that Augsburg has made during his time here.

“The list of good things that have happened in recent years is due to the inspiration and hard work of Augsburg’s faculty and staff,” he said. Some of the changes have been the institution of a new core curriculum, strong new graduate programs, a free-standing theater department, and a stronger mission focus on hiring.

Frame acknowledged Kimball’s talents: “It was only a matter of time before a college with high promise and a taste for leadership would come calling for Chris Kimball.”

In the past two years, Kimball has been nominated for over a dozen positions at other institutions. CLU offered him the position in mid-December, and it was one of two positions that Kimball considered accepting.

Kimball said, “CLU has a mission very much like Augsburg as well as a commitment to a liberal arts education for all students.”

Kimball’s education at McGill University in Canada and the University of Chicago made him an important professorial addition to Augsburg in 1991. In 2000, he was appointed dean of the college and associate professor in 2004.

Chris will be missed in the department.

—Theodore Fabel ’07 (excerpted from the Augsburg Echo)

Mardi Gras Madrigals

On the evening of February 28, Augsburg students and faculty adorned in tights, puffy shirts, and other medieval attire, ushered approximately 300 people into a candle-lit Hoversten Chapel in celebration of Mardi Gras. The feast, sponsored by Augsburg’s Goliard Society of Medievalists, hosted three high school choirs from Anoka, Como Park, and Wayzata, and featured a performance by Augsburg’s Gospel Praise Choir.

Medieval history prof Phil Adamo, emcee for the event, pronounced the theme of the feast: “The greatest shall be the least, and the least shall be the greatest.” With the help of Goliard and Medieval Studies major Matt Raatz, Adamo crowned a young audience member, Christine Redmond, “Queen of the Festivities.” Next, costume donkey ears were placed on the head of Augsburg President, William V. Frame, who was crowned “Fool of the Festivities.” Frame wore these ears for the remainder of the night. Adamo then instructed “Queen Christine” that she had the power to command Frame — re-named “Billy” — to dance three times during the course of the evening. Christine immediately commanded Frame to dance.

“It was the funniest thing I’ve ever seen,” one audience member said. “I can now die a complete person.”

—Brian Krohn ’07 (excerpted from the Augsburg Echo)
### Course Offerings

#### Fall Semester 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIS 101O</td>
<td>The Beginning of Western Culture</td>
<td>MWF</td>
<td>8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m</td>
<td>P. Adamo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 103A</td>
<td>The Modern World</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>3:10 p.m. - 4:40 p.m.</td>
<td>D. Gustafson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 103B</td>
<td>The Modern World</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>D. Gustafson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 120A</td>
<td>America to 1815</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>9:40 a.m. - 11:10 a.m.</td>
<td>M. Lansing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 236A</td>
<td>American Indian History</td>
<td>MWF</td>
<td>11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>E. Buffalohead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 280A</td>
<td>The History Workshop</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.</td>
<td>J. deVries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 316A</td>
<td>Environmental History</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>11:50 a.m. - 1:20 p.m.</td>
<td>M. Lansing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 323A</td>
<td>Modern China</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.</td>
<td>D. Gustafson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 360A</td>
<td>Ancient Egypt and Classical Greece</td>
<td>MWF</td>
<td>11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>P. Adamo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 480A</td>
<td>Seminar: Asceticism</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.</td>
<td>P. Adamo</td>
</tr>
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</table>

#### WEC Fall Trimester 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIS 122A</td>
<td>20th Century U.S. History</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.</td>
<td>M. Lansing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 280A</td>
<td>The History Workshop</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.</td>
<td>J. deVries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 354A</td>
<td>Modern Britain and Ireland</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1:15 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.</td>
<td>J. deVries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIS 480A</td>
<td>Seminar: Asceticism</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.</td>
<td>P. Adamo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Registration Info

Registration dates for spring semester (day):
April 3-4: Seniors (24 or more credits)
April 5-6: Juniors (16 – 23.99 credits)
April 7-10: Sophomores (7 – 15.99 credits)
April 11-12: Freshmen (0-6.99 credits)
April 13-May 4: Open enrollment for all students

*Be sure to contact your advisor to discuss your schedule for Spring Semester.*

### Featured Course

**HIS 316 Environmental History**
11:50 am-1:20 pm, TR
Taught by Michael Lansing

Studying the many and varied ways in which people interact with nature, this class will survey the history of humans, nature, and the environment in the United States over the last four hundred years. Themes include the interactions of Americans and the nonhuman world, the commodification of nature, political movements organized around nature, ways of knowing nature, and the relationships between American culture and nature. We will also research and write the environmental history of Augsburg College.

### Fall Seminar

**Asceticism**

This course examines the history of asceticism, the practice of denying the body—for example, by fasting or abstaining from sex—to promote spiritual gain. Asceticism is a phenomenon found in all historical periods, in cultures and religions around the world. There are many ways to study ascetic movements in history. This class will focus on three very broad categories: 1) origins and meanings—how and why ascetic movements began; 2) politics—how do ascetic movements interact with the societies in which they function; and 3) aesthetics—how do literary and material expressions evoke certain emotions that make up ascetic practice. This course will fulfill the AugCore Capstone Requirement.

**HIS 480 — Taught by Phil Adamo**
HONORS

Got a GPA of 3.6 in the major (3.0 overall)? Plan to take the equivalent of two years of a foreign language? Consider pursuing an honors degree in history! The following timeline can help you plan ahead. Usually, honors students enroll in an independent study (HIS 499) during the fall or winter semesters of their senior year. For more information, talk to any history department faculty member.

Junior Year:
- Fall -- indicate your interest to your history advisor
- Spring -- choose a topic for your project and a professor with whom to work

Senior Year:
- October 1 -- submit a project proposal to the department
- November 1 -- receive feedback from the department on your proposal
- February 1 -- present draft of the project to your supervising professor (and receive feedback within 2 weeks)
- March 15 -- submit completed essay
- April 15 -- oral presentation completed
- May 1 -- final revisions submitted

INTERNISHIPS

HECUA. The Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs, or HECUA, offers student programs that focus on changing the world, one student at a time. Ideal for students of peace and justice, sociology, political science, social sciences, history, philosophy, and language, Semester-long and J-term programs. Deadline for abroad fall programs is March 15; for domestic fall and summer programs is April 15. More info, at: www.hecua.org

HISTORY DAY. Each year, the Minnesota Historical Society hires an intern to work on various aspects of History Day. The History Day Research Intern position is from Mid-January 2007 – early May 2007. A stipend of $1500 will be paid. Interns are required to work 11-16 hours per week for a total of 200 project hours. More info at:: www.mnhs.org/school/historyday

Other internship contact possibilities ...

**Minnesota Historical Society**
(Various internships)
Tim Hoogland,
Institutional Outreach
Program Coordinator
Tim.hoogland@mnhs.org
651.297.20081

Brian Horrigan, Exhibits Curator
Brian.horrigan@mnhs.org
651.297.8228

David Grabitske, Grants Assistant,
State Historic Preservation Office
David.grabitske@mnhs.org
651.297.4416

Wendy Jones,
Interpretive Programs Manager
Wendy.jones@mnhs.org
651.296.9393

Erik Holland, Historic Sites
Erik.Holland@mnhs.org

Anna Anderhagen,
Schools Programs Supervisor
Anna.anderhagen@mnhs.org
651.284.4177

**Bell Museum of Natural History**
(Public Programs, Natural and Environmental History)
Peggy Korsmo-Kennon,
Head of Public Programs
Peggy.korsmo-kennon@bellmuseum.org
612.626.3858

**Nicollet County Historical Society**
(General Public History)
Ben Leonard, Executive Director
ben@chsmn.org
507.934.2160

**American Swedish Institute and Minnesota Association of Museums**
(Museum Studies, Public Programs)
Nina Clark, Education Coordinator
(and MAM membership chair)
ninac@americanswedishinst.org
612.870.3374

**Minnehaha Creek Watershed District**
(Historical Research)
Michael Pressman,
Land Conservation Specialist
m.pressman@minnehahacreek.org
952.471.0590, ext. 203

**North Star Chapter of the (Minnesota) Sierra Club**
(Historical Research, Public Programs, Forest History)
Scott Elkins, State Director
Scott.elkins@northstar.sierraclub.org
612.659.9124

Heather Cusick,
Conservation Director
heather.cusick@sierraclub.org
612.659.9124

**City of Minneapolis**
(Historical Research)
Gene Ranieri, Director,
Intergovernmental Relations
Office: 612.673.2051
gene.ranieri@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
Stay in touch ...

Please send your alumni news, or other history related activities to adamo@augsburg.edu.

We have many opportunities for you to support our students through the following scholarships:

The Carl H. Chrislock (formerly H.N. Hendrickson) Memorial History Scholarship
The John R. Jenswold Memorial History Scholarship
The Dr. Bernhardt Kleven Memorial History Scholarship
The Theodore and Lucille Nydahl Memorial History Scholarship

To support these scholarships, or to find out about other opportunities, please contact Herald Johnson, Director of Advancement Programs, at johnsonh@augsburg.edu, or 612-330-1752.

CALENDAR  (Check A-Mail for updates.)

Thursday, March 30, 4 to 10PM — various locations on campus
Minnesota History Day — Regional competition for high school students
Sponsored by the Augsburg History Society

Sunday, April 2, 7:30 PM — Lindell 301
“Ringers: Lord of the Fans” — Documentary about the LOTR phenomenon
Discussion led by English professor and Tolkien specialist John Harkness
Pizza and pop — Sponsored by the Goliard Society of Medievalists

Monday, April 3, 5 to 5:30 PM — Marshall Room, CC
Learn Latin: Info session about classes for classicists, medievalists, & others.
Refreshments — Sponsored by the Goliard Society of Medievalists

Friday, April 7, 6:30 PM — SCI 123
“Horsefeathers” — Marx Brothers parody about higher education
Discussion led by English and Film Studies professor Bob Cowgill
Pizza and pop — Sponsored by the Augsburg History Society

April 24 — Room TBA
Phi Alpha Theta Initiation Ceremony (Initiates and invited guests only)
Dinner — Sponsored by the Department of History

Thursday, April 27, 3:30-5:30 PM — Murphy Park
History Department Spring Picnic — Families and children welcome.
Catered by d’Amico’s — Sponsored by the Department of History