January 2017

1 Director’s Message

2 Shipping, Labor, and New York City as a Global Port City

4 ESC Spotlight

5 In Review

Director’s Message

It is the mission of the European Studies Center to facilitate research and teaching on Europe past and present. This is a broad mission and it has many audiences. Certainly, we are committed to engaging with Pitt faculty and students to provide educational excellence on campus. But we also believe in the University as a public good and we seek to broaden access to the resources we offer, reaching out to the wider community, including K-12 educators and students, community colleges, regional colleges, the business community, and the general public. As you will see in this issue, that engagement takes many forms: from issues-based videoconferences to a community-wide EuroFest.

Similarly, while our focus is on Europe, the interests of faculty and students at the University necessarily expand the focus to include Europe’s neighborhood, the United States, and indeed the rest of the world. Europe as a discretely bounded geographical location does not hold up when faced with centuries-long movements of goods, people, and ideas across time and space. That is certainly reflected in this issue, as well, in Mirell Luecke’s piece. This is why we offer a related concentration for students in Europe and Eurasian Studies and a certificate in Transatlantic Studies.

Over the past few years, the Center’s mission has also compelled us to find new ways to respond to student interest in contemporary events. Our Conversations on Europe videoconference series was one such attempt, and it has proven remarkably successful. This year, we added a new partner institution, Georgia Tech University. But we have also worked to be more responsive in our one-off events. In the wake of the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris in 2015, for example, the ESC organized a panel discussion about political satire and terrorism in France. After the November 2015 Paris attacks, the ESC worked with UCIS to hold a University-wide “Hail to Paris” event

Continued on pg. 3
COMING UP
Feb. 6 - 17, Posvar Hall
The Great War in Broad Outlines
A traveling exhibition will be set up on the fourth floor of Posvar Hall, beginning on Monday, Feb. 6.

Join us on Feb. 16 at 4:00 P.M. in 4217 Posvar Hall for a talk related to the outlines. Dr. Bernard Hagarty will present “The Great War and Belgium: How a Small Country Helped Save Europe.”

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Feb. 11, Cathedral of Learning
Teach-In: The U.S. and the World: American Immigration and Trade Policy
Join UCIS and the ESC on Saturday, Feb. 11 as we discuss American immigration and trade policy, and its global implications. Open to all Pitt students, faculty and staff. Visit http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/main/teach-in for information.

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Feb. 21, 4217 Posvar Hall
12 - 1:00 P.M.
Conversations on Europe: Transgender Europe
Join us in-person or remotely as we discuss the culture and policies surrounding transgender Europe. Contact Ashley DiGregorio at aad87@pitt.edu to join remotely.

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Upcoming Conversations on Europe:
March 21
The Dutch Bellweather: What is the forecast for a ‘Neat’ or ‘Frex-

Shipping, Labor, and New York as a Global Port City
by Mirelle Luecke, Ph.D Candidate, Department of History

In July 1790, a common sailor named Alexander Ross presented a protest to the New York district court, petitioning for his wages on a voyage from Dublin to New York. Demanding a wage “as was customary to be given to seamen on such voyages,” Ross based the calculation of his wages on his own experiences in other Atlantic port cities and the shared knowledge of his crewmates. Such protests were a fairly common occurrence in the American courts in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The communication networks through which sailors and other waterfront workers shared knowledge of hiring practices, wage prices, and other customs of labor were made possible by the various trade routes which served New York City. Indeed, the city’s location—a seaport nestled between the Hudson and East Rivers—has made it a site of global connection for people, goods, and ideas for centuries. Examining these connections in the decades following the American Revolution, my dissertation explores the social experience of unskilled and semi-skilled wage workers in New York. In my work, I seek to uncover how moments of exchange across regional boundaries influenced the ways workers participated in the social organization of the city. Central to this project is examining how the wider connections of workers—to ports in Europe, the Caribbean, and Africa—impacted their daily lives in New York.

A dissertation grant from the Provost’s Research Funds in European History enabled me to expand my research beyond New York City, examining the ways that the movement of people throughout the Atlantic world shaped the lives of workers in New York City. I began this research in Boston, Massachusetts. At first glance, Boston does not appear to be a likely destination from which to explore the European component of my research. However, my work in Boston served as a jumping-off point from which to study the ways in which New York City was connected to other ports around the Atlantic. While in Boston, I examined account books, ledgers, and letter books of merchants. As merchants wrote to each other about business concerns, the price of goods, and shipping interests, their records provided information about trade networks between Boston and New York, and pointed to trade connections that existed between merchants in these cities and others in the Caribbean and Europe. In Boston, I identified the names of merchants and trade houses I would search for in Great Britain. I used these records to identify labor patterns, available work, and hiring practices that affected Boston waterfront laborers. For instance, Boston merchant H. Russell regularly hired workers for “sundry repairs” to his ships, and to guard the merchandise before it was removed from the dock. Knowing that, and what he paid those men, allows me to compare job availability and expected wages across cities.

Building on this Boston research, I used the Provost’s Research Funds to travel to Great Britain to examine the networks of communication and exchange created by trade routes. In London, I continued to examine the records of merchants, often using the names of merchants found in my Boston research. As in Boston, these records provided information about the continuities of labor across port cities. In London, I also examined formal instances of petition and protest by workers in the Royal Navy Dockyards. I then compared these protests with others brought forward by workers in both the Brooklyn Navy Yard and waterfront workers in New York more generally, such as Ross’s protest mentioned above. How did worker concerns compare across port cities? Were their strategies for demanding better wages and customary labor rights similar? Continuities of practice suggest informal communication networks through which workers were able to share knowledge.

By moving my research beyond New York City, I have been able to gather information about the ways in which New York’s wide-ranging trade networks facilitated the migration of people and the movement of ideas, emphasizing the importance of the Atlantic world in shaping the life and labor patterns of workers in port cities. I also expanded my research by examining merchant records in Liverpool and Glasgow, as well as looking at records from merchants based in Jamaica and Cuba. With this wide-ranging research tracing the movement of people and goods throughout the Atlantic world, my work reveals the systems that shaped the ways laboring people interacted with each other, with their employers, and with other residents in the city at large.

Director’s Message, cont’d

Continued from page 1

which saw the Cathedral of Learning lit up in the French tricolore. And this month, our Center has worked with the other centers of UCIS to organize a half-day Teach-In on Saturday, February 11, 2017 that will allow Pitt faculty and students an extra-curricular space in which to explore the global implications of the Trump Administration’s America First policy actions, particularly the President’s Executive Orders related to trade and immigration policy issued within its first three weeks.

These kinds of rapid-response events are not easy. Most large events held in the University require weeks of planning, careful negotiation, and marshalling of resources. That we can do it so quickly is due largely to the dedicated staff at the ESC, our colleagues in UCIS, and colleagues throughout the University. But we could not do it without the regular and often selfless cooperation of Pitt faculty members who often go above and beyond to offer their expertise outside of the classroom. They are motivated only by a desire to educate. To those University staff and faculty members who make such opportunities possible to our broad range of constituents and who place real value on teaching, I offer my sincerest thanks. Hail to Pitt!

ESC NEWSLETTER
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For newsletter announcements, comments, or submissions, please email eucnews@pitt.edu.

This newsletter has been funded with assistance from the European Union and the International and Foreign Language Education (IFLE) office of the U.S. Department of Education. The contents are the sole responsibility of the ESC and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the EU or the U.S. Government.
In Review

In January, the ESC held its first Conversations on Europe of 2017, which focused on the contentious issue of transatlantic electoral interference. The round-table received buzz on social media, and participants joined from partner centers in Illinois, Florida, and Georgia!

The ESC, in partnership with City of Asylum, the University Center for International Studies, and Google, hosted Kids Without Borders on January 29. This workshop aimed at kids, teens, and parents, took place in the new City of Asylum Books. Kids and teens participated in activities promoting the arts, including poetry, improv, storytelling, photography, and arts and crafts. Parents were offered sessions focused on legal support, counseling, and combating bullying. Yoga, story recording, and silk screen printing at The

ESC Spotlight: Kyle Daugherty

Interview by Avery Keatley

Kyle Daugherty is a senior majoring in Political Science, with a minor in Economics and a certificate in EU Studies. Last fall he traveled to Bruges, Belgium as part of the European Horizons Youth Summit, which invites students to come to Bruges to participate in policy simulations. This year, the Youth Summit focused on the formation of a single Digital Transatlantic Market. Policies were then presented to industry leaders (like Google) and European bureaucrats.

Q: What was Bruges like?
A: I really liked it. It was my first time travelling alone, and I was so jet-lagged and lost on the train. The conductor told me to get off at one stop to switch trains, and I did. All the signs were in Flemish or French, and I don't speak either, so that was fun.

Q: What was the highlight of the summit?
A: The highlight was that we were with a group of very like-minded people, who wanted to achieve goals, so we wanted to make things work. It's really good to have lofty goals, but it's easy to see why politics takes so long to accomplish things, because there are so many individual interests. European Horizons is really beneficial in the sense that it promotes the open dialogue of ideas between peoples.

Q: What got you interested in European Horizons Europe in general?
A: I went on a People-to-People trip to France, Italy, and Greece, and after that it was all Europe everything. I met with Steve Lund, and he mentioned the EU Studies certificate. I studied abroad in the UK and traveled to, I think, 11 different countries. It's just amazing how there are so many people, so many cultures, and they all get along now, for the most part.

Q: Do you have any plans after graduation?
A: I'm looking for jobs now. I considered going to grad school, maybe law school, but I'm not sure what I want to do just yet.

Q: What advice would you give to underclassmen?
A: Find what you're interested in and follow it as far as it will take you. Never give up if you really want something, just do it.

Save the Date: EuroFest

Save the date for this year’s EuroFest on Saturday, April 8. Join us for this exciting day of European dance, food, crafts, children’s activities, and family fun!

If you are an artisan or food vendor interested in having a table at this event, please contact Kate Bowersox at kal68@pitt.edu.