

BERKELEY EMERITI TIMES

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NOVEMBER 8TH LUNCH WITH ERICH GRUEN – IDENTITY THEFT IN THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN WORLD

The greatest pleasure in preparing this notice of the upcoming talk at the next Emeriti lunch lay in renewing my acquaintance with Erich Gruen. A world-class scholar in the History Department, Eric specializes in the history of the Greek and Roman worlds. He came to Berkeley in 1966 after completing his BA at Columbia, a Rhodes scholarship and a second BA at Oxford, and then a PhD at Harvard.

The list of honors he has received goes on and on. Here at Berkeley he has been Faculty Research Lecturer, and he has received the Berkeley Citation for distinguished achievement and service to the University. At the same time he has shown great concern for his students and has received the Distinguished Teaching Award. No isolated ivory tower scholar, he has supervised or served on dissertation committees for nearly a hundred PhD students, including seven current aspirants.

For the upcoming Emeriti lunch he is concentrating on a problem that we think we understand. After all, identity theft is in the news every day, and some of us have suffered from it through the loss of credit cards or hacking of accounts. But when thinking historically we have to define carefully the meaning of the word “identity” when applied to nations, states, and ethnic groups – an identity we share beyond the strictly personal.

One basis of defining identity lies in a group’s setting itself apart from others by stressing what their members are *not*. The Greeks and Romans scorned the “barbarians,” everyone who wasn’t so lucky as to be born a Greek or a Roman and who “babbled” in inferior languages. Similarly the Jews identified themselves as *not* being Gentiles, those beyond the law.

But many individuals have identified themselves *with* other groupings. In the case of the Israelites, we see Abraham coming from Ur, Moses from Egypt, Ruth from Moab. (I myself identify as an American when traveling, but do not forget that I grew up English.) So the question of identity is a complex one.

Erich is currently working on a long term project on the understanding of ethnicity, which covers a whole range of matters beyond simple genealogy (descent groups, bloodlines, etc.).

His earlier work continues to resonate internationally in his chosen subjects and constantly comes under review. He currently looks forward to taking part in an upcoming conference in Berlin where he has been asked to report on what changes he might make if he were to write today his 1974 U.C. Press book *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic!*

Come to the lunch and learn more from a vibrant, active scholar who makes us rethink what we think we know about that familiar topic: identity and its theft.

Phyllis Brooks Schafer

ELIZABETH COLSON – EMERITA OF THE YEAR

At the November meeting, we will also honor our Emerita of the year, Elizabeth Colson. Since Elizabeth has moved permanently to Zambia, where she has conducted her research for over sixty years, she cannot be with us in person. Her colleague Gene Hammel will, however, present her comments on the award. A longer appreciation of Elizabeth's life, personality, and work will appear in our December issue.

SHORT TAKES: Emeriti Lunch Table, 2nd and 4th Thursdays monthly at noon in the northwest corner of The Great Hall in The Faculty Club. Pick up a salad or sandwich, and find the table – usually near the fireplace end of the Hall – with our reservation sign. All are welcome to join in our informal discussions!



JAMES BOSSON – AN HONOR FROM MONGOLIA!

Some of the awards our Emeriti receive have a highly unusual form, source, or title. On Sunday, September 28th, all three coincided at the Mongolian Consulate in San Francisco. James Bosson, who taught Mongolian and Tibetan in the East Asian Languages Department from 1963 until his retirement, was awarded the Order of the Polar Star medal for his contributions to the study of the Mongolian language and culture in this country. This order is the highest award that the Mongolian government can give to a foreigner and was presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bold Luvusanvandan (seen in the picture with Jim), who had flown from Ulan Bator expressly for this ceremony.



FLU AND PNEUMONIA SEASON IS ON ITS WAY: WHAT TO DO TO BE SAFE – John Swartzberg

Influenza and pneumonia together make up the eighth leading cause of death in the United States and both of these diseases are especially lethal in people 65 and older. In 2011 (the most recent numbers available), nearly 55,000 died from one of these two diseases.

Fortunately, we have vaccines that are moderately effective against both influenza and the leading cause of bacterial pneumonia. In late summer of this year the CDC came out with new recommendations for older Americans.

Consider a more potent flu shot: A study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, which included nearly 32,000 people in our age group, found that the high-dose flu vaccine (developed in 2009) was more effective in reducing lab-confirmed influenza than the standard flu vaccine. Both vaccines protect against three strains of influenza, but the high-dose one—which the FDA deems safe and is covered by Medicare—is four times stronger and induces a higher antibody response. (This response declines with age, and older people get less protection from the regular vaccine than do younger people.). Everyone over six months of age should be vaccinated annually, but this is especially important for people 65 and older, who have higher rates of complications, hospitalizations, and flu-related deaths. If the high-dose vaccine is not available, the regular flu shot still offers us good protection.

There's an additional pneumonia vaccine: The CDC now recommends that people age 65 and over receive two different types of pneumococcal vaccines—the one that has long been advised for older people, Pneumovax 23, *plus* a newer one called Prevnar 13. If you haven't previously gotten

the pneumococcal vaccine, you should get Prevnar first, followed by Pneumovax at least 6 to 12 months later.

Being immunized with both vaccines offers additional long-lasting protection against *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (pneumococcus)—the most common bacterial cause of pneumonia in older people and a cause of meningitis and other serious infections as well. Prevnar has previously been advised for immunocompromised adults ages 19 to 64 as well as for all children under 5. You can get the vaccine when you receive your flu shot, if you haven't already gotten that. As this is a new recommendation, your insurance may not yet pay for it. Check with Medicare or your provider.



Caroline Kane

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fall continues as a second summer for us at Berkeley, and I hope you too are enjoying this time before the rains begin (we hope). As a midterm election approaches, it should command some of your attention with important local, state, and national votes that impact us and our friends and relatives. The Governor has declined to add back \$50 million to each budget of the University of California and the California State University systems, monies that would have been designated for infrastructure. Your personal feelings on such things are worth sending to Sacramento.

Your Emeriti Association is about to co-host a UC-systemwide meeting of the Council of UC Retirement Associations (CUCRA) and the Council of UC Emeriti Associations (CUCEA), October 22 and 23 at the Alumni House on the Berkeley Campus. A joint meeting of CUCRA and CUCEA is held the morning of the 23rd, and all retirees are invited. I am sure that health insurance will be on

the agenda as will the recent report on Faculty Remuneration compared to other benchmark institutions along with Berkeley. Since the Office of the President always sends representatives to speak to us, you can get your questions aired by attending.

In this Emeriti Times is also information about our upcoming November 8th lunch, our first of the academic year. I hope you can join us for both camaraderie and for new insights gained from our speaker, Erich Gruen. Our Emerita of the Year has also sent remarks all the way from her home in Zambia for us to share.

Join us on November 13th to welcome new retirees, faculty and staff, at the Clark Kerr Campus from 1-3pm. In addition to tasty treats and beverages, our campus provost Claude Steele will talk with us. There will be ample time for all of us to welcome these newcomers to the kaleidoscope world of retirement. There will also be opportunities to join into activities with other emeriti in mentoring, in advocacy, and in engagement at many levels. Come and see!

Best,

Caroline, President UCBEA

RETIREMENT CENTER UPDATE

For more information on any event listed here, check the Center's website retirement.berkeley.edu.

Remember the New Retirement Center Location and Walk-In Hours

The UCB Retirement Center now in 101 University Hall, on the ground floor of the tall building located at the corner of University Avenue and Oxford Street. Drop-in hours are still Monday-Friday, 1pm-4pm.

Learning in Retirement Course

There are no enrollment fees for Learning in Retirement (LIR) courses, but advance registration is required. Please call the Center at 510-642-5461 or email ucbrc@berkeley.edu to register; course location will be provided with your registration. We suggest you call to see whether there is space left in this interesting course.

The Aftermath of World War I

Organized by Professor Emeritus Donald "Al" Riley
The Center is commemorating the centenary of the onset of WW I with a series on the aftereffects of the War, which continue to the present time. Five historians will examine developments as they affected different parts of the world. The series will be moderated by Professor Margaret Anderson of the Department of History.

Wednesday, October 15, 2-4pm, "The Aftermath of World War I in Russia," Yuri Slezkine, Professor of History

Tuesday, October 21, 2-4pm, "The Folly of Nation Building: East Central Europe," John Connelly, Professor of History

Wednesday, October 29, "The United States and the First World War," Daniel Sargent, Assistant Professor of History

Wednesday, November 5, 2-4pm, "The Last Great Power? The Japanese Empire in the Wake of World War I," Andrew Barshay, Professor of History

Wednesday November 12, 2-4 p.m., "What World War I Wrought and Those who tried to Stop it," Adam Hochschild, Author and Lecturer, School of Journalism.

UCBRC Publication *Center Piece*

For details of more upcoming activities you may also consult the current issue of the Retirement Center's publication *Center Piece* at <http://retirement.berkeley.edu/pdf/CPfa14.pdf>.

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