



**GORDON**  
COLLEGE

# Department of History

Fall 2010



Above left: JAF student Tala Strauss '13 had questions for speaker James Davison Hunter '77, pictured right. The September 30, 2010, event was hosted by JAF as part of Gordon's Faith Seeking Understanding lecture series. Dr. Hunter, University of Virginia's LaBrosse-Levinson Distinguished Professor of Religion, Culture and Social Theory, spoke on his book *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World*.

## Engaging Ideas in History: Jerusalem and Athens Forum

by Laz Mancilla '13

As an eager scholar, I couldn't be happier participating in Gordon's Jerusalem and Athens Forum. Taking an entire class based on reading and discussing world-class books, listening to lectures from a variety of disciplines and meeting other thinkers who come from different backgrounds have greatly enhanced my academic experience at Gordon.

If there's anything I've learned about being a history major, it is that everything has a history and relates to other aspects of life. The Jerusalem and Athens Forum provides me an opportunity to better perceive the world around me as I'm exposed to a variety of ideas and their contexts. Based off Tertullian's questions "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" and "What has the Academy to do with the Church?", the program invites us to experience the rich heritage of Christian scholasticism. Reading, discussing and writing papers has allowed me to develop my own voice, and better articulate my observations and arguments in an environment rich with ecumenical and intellectual diversity.

The class's melding of faith, intellect, and social response integrates with our class outings, such as a visit to Shaker Village in New Hampshire, which correlated with our readings in *Rule of St. Benedict*. The joining of these two worlds provoked thoughts on the understanding of transcendent themes, like piety and communal living, that we find throughout history. The Jerusalem and Athens Forum weaves a rich tapestry from the fabric of knowledgeable wisdom throughout the ages, providing this inquisitive mind a holistic liberal arts education in a community pursuing truth, goodness and beauty.

#### History Department Hosts Genzo Yamamoto

by Ryan Groff '06

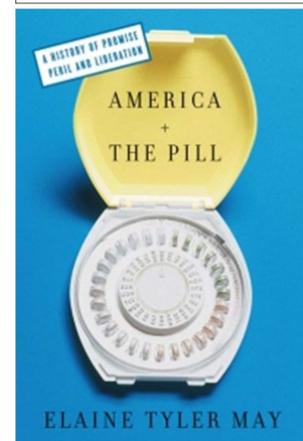
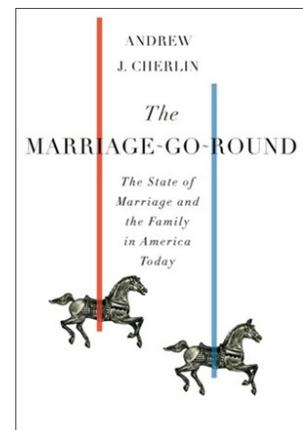
The History Department was pleased to welcome Genzo Yamamoto to Gordon College on September 16, 2010. Professor Yamamoto earned a Ph.D. in Japanese history from Yale University and is assistant professor of history at Wheaton College (Illinois). History faculty and students enjoyed an informal conversation with Professor Yamamoto, discussing his research and teaching interests relating to the history of modern ideas, Japanese culture, society and politics, and global perceptions of the European Enlightenment. Gordon faculty, staff and students from various departments attended his public lecture, titled “Western Modernity and Its Global Discontents,” which was part of Gordon’s annual Faith Seeking Understanding lecture series. Tal Howard, professor of history and director of the Jerusalem and Athens Forum, commented on the timeliness of Professor Yamamoto’s visit: “Professor Yamamoto is a rare scholar, whose interests span Asian cultures and modern intellectual history. In our globalized age, minds like his are in demand, and it was a pleasure to host him on our campus.”



#### Love, Sex, and Marriage in the Modern West by Agnes Howard

This fall a seminar-full of students considered love, sex and marriage in the modern West. Questions about the meaning of marriage and the right ordering of sexuality are pressed upon us from many directions: experience, moral traditions, science, religion and, perhaps most visibly, cultural expressions of romance. We take for granted—or else define our practices in opposition to—high divorce rates, nontraditional families, same-sex coupling, planned child-bearing, and reproductive aids that make families where nature could not. Both attitudes and behaviors have undergone enormous shifts from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to our own time, a sea-change Francis Fukuyama has called “the Great Disruption.” But exactly what changed? And how did individuals and institutions respond?

Our reading generated lively talk about old-fashioned courtship habits (like parties where girls were expected to dance with everyone except their own dates) and new-fangled baby-making (with potentially five parents involved in making one child). Students set themselves to research papers on topics of particular interest, including Mormon marriage practices, U.S. Army policies for military families, and Protestant responses to the birth control encyclical, *Humane Vitae*. Both classroom conversations and writing projects profited from their willingness to think well about these things.



#### Educating Future Leaders in the Islamic World

by Anne Sanders '03

My name is Anne Sanders, and I graduated from Gordon in 2003 with a major in history. As a senior, I wrote an honors thesis on the relationship of church leaders and government authority in early medieval France. After college I went to Paris to study early medieval history at the Sorbonne and to complete my teacher certification. My husband and I now work in North Africa, in a country that is closed to the gospel. Our school serves the middle and upper classes, forming future leaders by teaching them about faith, values and character.

Last spring we discovered how difficult it could be to live out your faith in this area of the world. Many of our friends, including my principal, my husband's supervisor and several other staff members were asked to leave the country, because they were accused of sharing their faith. Some were given 48 hours to leave the country; others, less than 24. And yet in spite of difficulties, we know God has called us to be here, and the friendships we have formed with North Africans as well as our relationships with our students make it all worth it.



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#### Welcome Back!



**Jerry Logan '07** has returned to Gordon as the academic programs coordinator, assisting the provost and faculty senate on many academic projects. Jerry completed a master's degree in educational leadership, policy and planning at The College of William and Mary.



**Hiromu Nagahara '03** has joined the History Department as an adjunct faculty member, teaching a course on modern Japan this fall and an advanced seminar on media in East Asian cultures in the spring. Hiromu is completing his dissertation at Harvard University on popular culture and censorship in modern Japan.

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#### Alumni and Student Updates

We would love to hear from you! Please send contributions to: [elisabeth.whittet@gordon.edu](mailto:elisabeth.whittet@gordon.edu).

## Department of History

### News from the Institute for Public History

#### Announcing the Inaugural Old Town Hall Lecture Series

Speaker bios and lecture details available at [www.oldtownhallecures.com](http://www.oldtownhallecures.com).

Thursday, November 18, 2010

#### **Judge Sewall's Apology**

Illustrated lecture and book signing with Richard Francis

Thursday, December 16, 2010

#### **Witchcraft and Conflict in Early New England**

Illustrated lecture and book signing with Emerson ("Tad") Baker

Thursday, January 20, 2011

#### **Judith Sargent Murray: A New Era in Female History**

Illustrated lecture and book signing with Bonnie Hurd Smith

Thursday, February 17, 2011

#### **Salem and the Civil War: 150th Anniversary**

Illustrated lecture by K. David Goss

Thursday, March 17, 2011

#### **America, Europe and the Religious Divide**

Illustrated lecture and book signing with Thomas A. ("Tal") Howard

Thursday, April 21, 2011

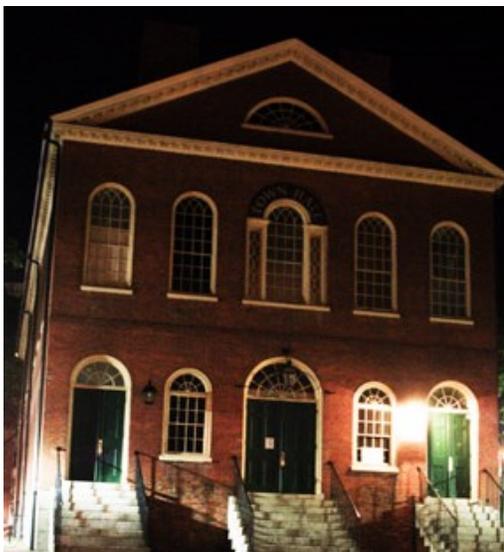
#### **Opening of the New Museum of Salem**

Featuring representatives of the museum planning team

Thursday, May 19, 2011

#### **Witch Hunting and Popular Religion of the 17th Century**

Illustrated lecture and book signing with David D. Hall



Richard Francis



Tal Howard



David D. Hall



Bonnie Hurd Smith



K. David Goss