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A House Reunited

Historian Steven Hahn examines the successes, failures and ongoing effects of Reconstruction

Pulitzer Prize winner and member of the Pulitzer Prize board Steven Hahn presented “Why Reconstruction Mattered” at the fifth annual Summer Institute Evening Speaker Event hosted by the College of Education in collaboration with Facing History and Ourselves. During the event on June 28, Hahn discussed this turbulent time in U.S. history, during which the seceded states were reintroduced into the Union after the Civil War. Hahn discussed what went right, what went wrong and how the actions taken at the time set off a chain reaction that would eventually lead to civil rights legislation in the 20th century. “Had the Civil War or Reconstruction not happened, slavery would have had a totally different history,” he said.

The 13th, 14th and 15th amendments to the U.S. Constitution—which abolished slavery, granted citizenship to all people born in the United States and outlawed the denial of voting rights on the basis of race, color or previous condition of servitude—set the stage for federal authority over the states of the Confederacy. “Without these amendments and the Reconstruction acts, black people couldn’t vote, Lincoln wouldn’t have won a second term and slaveholders would have been the ones to oversee the transition out of slavery. Things would have gone very differently.”

Hahn went on to discuss how the effects of Reconstruction and the accompanying constitutional amendments continue to affect some of the prominent social justice debates of today. “History is often thought of as linear, but it goes backward, too,” he said. “Gains you thought you made can be reversed. Think about voting rights in the United States now. You had the Voting Rights Act in 1965, which theoretically overturned all sorts of devices used to hinder certain populations’ right to vote. Now, some states are again trying to make it much more difficult for people to vote, and it seems like we’re moving back in time.”

“Reconstruction was certainly controversial,” he continued, “but it’s important to note that the amendments that emerged from this era continue to be the basis of concrete arguments for civil rights. If you think about what it would be like without them, you realize why Reconstruction really mattered.”

Meet DePaul’s New Deans

Ronald Caltabiano hit the ground running as dean of the School of Music, overseeing the construction of the school’s new facility, set for completion in spring 2018. Caltabiano, a Juilliard-trained musician, is a composer whose works have been performed by the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and other ensembles. He joins the School of Music from Butler University in Indianapolis, where he served as dean and professor for the Jordan College of the Arts and managed the completion of and final fundraising for the Howard L. Schrott Center for the Arts, a 450-seat multiarts venue.

International scholar and designer Guillermo Vásquez de Velasco took the helm of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, and also serves as professor of art, media and design. He previously worked as dean of the College of Architecture and Planning at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind. Vásquez de Velasco is an architect who has dedicated much of his career in higher education to developing experiential learning opportunities across multiple disciplines.
On Their Way
DePaul Community Celebrates 2016 Commencement

The highlights of every year are the commencement ceremonies that launch a new class of graduating seniors and graduate students toward exciting futures. Some 6,500 DePaul students matriculated during the university’s 118th commencement ceremonies, joining more than 176,000 DePaul alumni worldwide as part of the extended DePaul family.

Nine colleges held their ceremonies during the weekend of June 11-12. The College of Law’s ceremony took place on May 15. Keynote speakers included Martin R. Castro (LAS ’85, DHL ’16), chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights; Grammy Award–winning singer-songwriter and actress Lila Downs (DHL ’16); refugee and immigrant advocate Edwin Silverman (DHL ’16); National Public Radio education correspondent Claudio Sanchez (DHL ’16); theatre scholar Todd London (DHL ’16); and Coca-Cola CFO Kathy Waller (DHL ’16).

Kerrie Holley (CSH ’76, JD ’82, DHL ’16) served as the keynote speaker at the combined commencement ceremony for the College of Communication and the College of Computing and Digital Media (CDM). Holley, technical fellow at UnitedHealth Group accountable for providing visionary technology direction, is a strong advocate for mentoring, addressing cultural barriers and providing better math and science education to underserved youth and college students.

After receiving his honorary doctorate from CDM, Holley opened his keynote address by saying, “Growing up on the South Side of Chicago in a crime-infested neighborhood steeped in poverty, I would never have imagined receiving this honor.” He shared several lessons he learned during his life, which he calls inflection points: “It’s not who you know, but who knows you; blaming is the biggest waste of time; thoughts that you accept as true become your beliefs; our highest currency is respect, and mastery creates respect; choose to do things that challenge your assumptions; and the people who are telling you it can’t be done are simply telling you they’ve never done it before.” He encouraged students on their journey following graduation by saying, “Impossible is not a fact, it’s an opinion. Everything is possible.”

Webcasts of all the commencement ceremonies are available at depaul.origindev.com/index.html.

Welcome Back!
DePaul Celebrates Alumni Weekend 2016

“You can always go home again” was the presiding sentiment at Alumni Weekend 2016, held Oct. 14-16. Approximately 500 alumni and friends took advantage of activities DePaul’s Office of Alumni Relations planned to help them feel at home again at DePaul.

The Chicago Cultural Center was the striking setting for the Alumni Weekend Reception, with opening remarks by the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M., president of DePaul University. Alumni and guests reminisced and made new connections over hors d’oeuvres and beverages.

The Class of 1966 and those who graduated more than 50 years ago attended a Reunion Luncheon, which featured the Fifty Year Club induction ceremony. Jennifer Rosato Perea, dean of the College of Law, welcomed attendees to the College of Law 50th Reunion Dinner at the Union League Club of Chicago.

At the Metropolitan Club, the Class of 1991 celebrated with a reception, three-course dinner and beer and wine. On Saturday, the Fall Family Harvest gave some of the youngest members of the DePaul family—future Blue Demons perhaps—a chance to play games and eat treats. The festivities concluded on Sunday with the Alumni and Family Weekend Mass and Brunch at St. Vincent de Paul Church.
DePaul University and the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA) have announced that the new event center at McCormick Square will be called Wintrust Arena. The announcement comes after the signing of a letter of intent that contemplates a definitive 15-year sponsorship agreement between DePaul and Wintrust Financial Corporation.

“As Chicago’s Bank, we try to align with the iconic brands, organizations and institutions that make this city what it is. DePaul University and McCormick Place fit right into that,” said Wintrust President & CEO Edward J. Wehmer. “Sponsoring DePaul’s new arena is both a great way for us to increase our presence in the city and a great way to help revitalize a historic Chicago district. We’re proud to be involved with the project.”

Upon completion in fall 2017, Wintrust Arena will be home to DePaul University men’s and women’s basketball, and is planned to become a prominent Chicago venue for concerts, sporting events, meetings and conventions, family-friendly shows and other major events. DePaul also plans to hold its academic convocation and commencement ceremonies at the new arena.

“We are grateful to have found an ideal naming-rights partner in Wintrust, a company deeply rooted in the city of Chicago,” said the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M., president of DePaul University. “We are excited to see the Wintrust Arena come to life over the next year, and ultimately, bring DePaul basketball back to Chicago.”

Located at South Indiana Avenue and East Cermak Road, Wintrust Arena will be part of a lively entertainment district that includes new dining and entertainment options, hotels and vibrant streetscapes. The diverse programming and location of the new entertainment and sports venue will bring additional tourism for local businesses and help ensure long-term economic growth for the neighboring communities.

“We are thrilled to welcome Wintrust to McCormick Square,” said Lori Healey, CEO of MPEA. “Wintrust Arena will be a game-changer for our McCormick Square campus, allowing us to compete for new events and activities, creating new jobs and economic opportunities for Chicago and the entire state of Illinois.”

The 10,387-seat venue will feature 22 suites, 479 club seats, two VIP club lounges and the Demon Deck, a designated section for DePaul students with a close-up view of the on-court action. Amenities will include state-of-the-art technology, multiple locker rooms, sports medicine areas and training facilities.

The building’s distinct architecture is based on the original work of internationally renowned firm Pelli Clarke Pelli and completed by the award-winning firm Moody Nolan, which served as the primary architect. Based in Columbus, Ohio, with offices in Chicago, Moody Nolan is the largest African-American-owned and -managed architecture firm in the country. Clark Construction Company is the general contractor for the project.

For more information on the progress of the project, visit www.homecourtchicago.com.

Welcome the Wintrust Arena

Mark Aguirre Joins Collegiate Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2016

DePaul great Mark Aguirre is one of eight outstanding players and coaches inducted into the National Collegiate Basketball Hall of Fame on Nov. 18, 2015, in Kansas City, Mo. Aguirre is DePaul’s third Collegiate Basketball Hall of Famer; Coach Ray Meyer and player George Mikan (LLB ’49) were inducted in 2006.

During his three collegiate seasons, Aguirre averaged 24.5 points per game. As a freshman, he led the Blue Demons to the NCAA Final Four. He received the Naismith Men’s College Player of the Year trophy in 1980, and following his junior season, he was named National Player of the Year by the Associated Press, U.S. Basketball Writers Association, United Press International and Sporting News.
DePaul Legacy

Alumnus avidly promotes event center’s potential

There is passion in Dan Ustian’s (BUS ’73) voice as he marvels at what he fully expects will become another of Chicago’s iconic structures. The DePaul alumnus chairs the Athletics Committee, which is raising funds for the Wintrust Arena at McCormick Square.

Ustian sees the Wintrust Arena as a way to ensure that DePaul’s legacy to the City of Chicago continues for many years to come. He has personally contributed funds toward the Alex Ustian Donor Wall in honor of his father, who passed away in 2011 at age 91.

As he works to extend DePaul’s legacy into the future, Ustian also honors the memory of the man who supported his great success. “There will be a lot of emotion thinking about my father when my family and I see the donor wall for the first time,” Ustian says. “My dad was like the Ray Meyer of our family.”

Gold Mine!

Doug Bruno helps USA women’s basketball dominate in Rio

DePaul women’s basketball coach Doug Bruno (LAS ’73, MA ’88) once again played an integral role in one of the most dominant championship runs in sports history. The U.S. Women’s National Basketball Team has won 49 straight games over six Olympics, and Bruno has been an assistant coach at the last two Olympics.

USA Basketball Head Coach Geno Auriemma and Bruno directed a team led by four-time Olympic gold medalists Diana Taurasi, Tamika Catchings and Sue Bird on an eight-game rampage in Rio that saw the team win by an average of 37.2 points. “Nobody competes like Diana, Sue and Tamika, and that’s why they’ve won four gold medals,” Bruno said.

Will Bruno be going for the gold at the Tokyo Olympics?

“Will I coach again in 2020?” he said. “Let me answer it this way. As long as I’m being asked, I will serve.”
It seems ironic that a television show based on going “where no one has gone before” has been revisited again and again since it first debuted in 1966. The original “Star Trek” series has spawned six more TV series, with another in the offing for 2017, as well as 13 feature films. On the 50th anniversary of “Star Trek,” the perennially popular science fiction saga was the only logical subject of DePaul’s annual Pop Culture Colloquium. “A Celebration of ‘Star Trek,’” held “stardate” May 7 at the Loop Campus, is the fourth such pop culture enterprise helmed by Paul Booth, associate professor of media and cinema studies in the College of Communication.

A full roster of “Star Trek” creatives and academicians participated in the colloquium, including Brannon Braga, who created, wrote and executive-produced more than 300 episodes of “Star Trek”; Lisa Klink, a writer on “Star Trek: Voyager”; and Lincoln Geraghty, reader in popular media cultures at the University of Portsmouth in the United Kingdom. About 250 people attended the full day of panel discussions, seminars, screenings and vendor displays.

Seminars included “History of the Klingon Empire” and “Learn Klingon.” Panels took up such topics as “The Federation: Politics and ‘Star Trek’,” “The Future Is Here: Science and Technology in ‘Star Trek’” and “‘Star Trek’ and Gender.” The “Star Trek: Deep Space Nine” series is less discussed than other versions, but the “Reevaluating DS9” panel called it the one that remained closest to series creator Gene Roddenberry’s humanistic vision of the future, with Captain Benjamin Sisko, the only black captain so far, providing commentaries on race, religion, politics, leadership—and baseball.

John and Maria Jose Tenuto, sociology professors at the College of Lake County in Grayslake, Ill., who use “Star Trek” to explore sociological concepts with their students, gave a moving tribute to “Star Trek” actor Leonard Nimoy, who died in 2015. They said that Nimoy, a first-generation American whose parents were Russian-Jewish immigrants, felt the sting of anti-Semitism as a boy, and this experience informed his portrayal of Mr. Spock, the half-Earthling/half-Vulcan officer who symbolized the outsider at the core of the Starship Enterprise’s leadership.

Booth said, “I love seeing everyone having a really good time and having interesting conversations about things they really love. One takeaway was just how powerful a work like ‘Star Trek’ can be. It has affected the way technology has developed, how people think about the world today, how we live today. It’s a mirror to our culture. There is an endurance to those iconic images and phrases, but at the same time, every iteration of ‘Star Trek’ has kept up with the times.”