

*Spring 2013*

*News in Student Research*



**Richard Siegler**

We recently had the opportunity to speak with Honors student, Richard Siegler, about his impressive Honors thesis and exceptional plans following graduation.

A deep interest in history, particularly Napoleonic History, encouraged Richard to enroll in the Honors Humanities Track under the direction of Dr. John Peterman. Dr. Susan Dinan, professor of History and Director of the Honors College, is his thesis supervisor. His thesis project is a combination of historiography and history that aims at using a new approach to military history, an applying it to the Napoleonic Wars. Richard explains that much of the theorization of military history is Eurocentric, describes military capability through technological biases, focuses on leading powers, and favors a separation of land and sea conflict to name a few. As such, he was inspired to look at the Napoleonic Wars in a new context that incorporates these issues in a more comprehensive view than would normally be presented.

In his research, Richard calls the Napoleonic War the first modern global total war. He examines the new methods of fighting invoked, such as shifted interest in defeating the enemy armies rather than merely acquiring territory and the development of the Corps System. Richard also touches on the idea of modern government and its use of propaganda. He cites examples of bulletins written and used by Napoleon himself as well as political cartoons to demonstrate the evolution that has taken place in the manner in which governments shared and distributed information.

Richard's interests and thesis project have helped to finalize his plans for his future. He has completed his degree in History and the Honors College at William Paterson in only three years and has recently been accepted into a master's program at Florida State University. The work he will complete through the Honors Track will enable Richard to obtain his master's degree in only a year and a half through an accelerate program. From there, he plans on beginning his journey to receive his doctorate in the hope of one day becoming a university professor.

Reflecting back on his experience in the William Paterson University Honors College, Richard admits the proposition of a thesis is not as intimidating as its initial notion was. He explained that college coursework and requirements have prepared and eased him into the process of preparing his own thesis. He wisely believes that completing an Honors thesis is very rewarding in that it will put students ahead, whether that be in career opportunities or in graduate school. He said that at the completing of the research, students should give themselves a pat on the back and be proud of their dedication.

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*Honors Thesis Research in Nepal*



**Dylan Anderson**

The Honors Club was joined by Honors student, Dylan Anderson, at the Lunch in the Lounge on Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>. Dylan is a Jazz studies major and has chosen the Independent Track under the direction of Dr. Susan Dinan. Dr. John Peterman is supervising his thesis work. He has been playing the saxophone since the age of ten and has also had a deep interest in Zen Buddhism, both of which he has worked to integrate into his research.

In his studies, Dylan is looking at jazz as a methodology within the realm of critical social theory in order to designate it a liberating force against social oppression. With a grant from the Student Undergraduate Research Program, Dylan was able to conduct research for his thesis in Nepal. He shared a few interesting and adventurous stories about his seven week experience including accounts of navigating public transportation, overcoming the language barrier, and interacting with people he met along the way.

Perhaps most interesting, was the ten day Vipassana Meditation retreat Dylan attended in a monastery. The retreat had a strict program that called for no speaking, ten hours of meditating while sitting in the same position, and one main meal a day. Dylan explained how difficult it was to adjust to the program initially, but recognized how rewarding it was in the long run. He shared how learning to meditate and spending much time

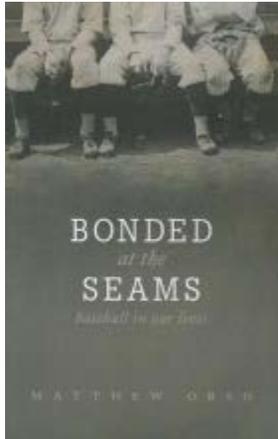
doing so, gave him the opportunity to liberate himself from regular thoughts and mental formations he is exposed to on a regular basis. The experience was very insightful to his research.

Dylan returned from his trip with a wealth of knowledge and experiences, and also with a greater appreciation for the life and opportunities he has been given. He stressed how fortunate he is, and we all are to have the opportunity to attend college and expand our education. He urged students to take advantage of all that college has to offer. Dylan noted that there are wonderful programs available and that with hard work and patience, there is nothing that cannot be imagined, arranged, and accomplished.

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*First Year Student and Author*



Not many eighteen year olds can call themselves published authors however, Matthew Orso, a freshman in the Honors College can do just that! We recently had the privilege of meeting with Matthew and asking him questions about his unique experiences. Matthew's Book *Bonded at the Seams*, chronicles baseball history through an American sense and perspective highlights the author's passion for both baseball and sports journalism which he hopes to pursue further through his studies.

Matthew keeps himself busy working for New Jersey Baseball Magazine as well as being the voice of a radio sports talk show. Despite all that he has going for himself, he remains humble and gracious for each opportunity that comes his way.

Matthew's advice for all aspiring writers and anyone with a dream is to simply go for it. He says that with persistence, determination, and hard work, anything can be accomplished.