Happy Birthday to YOU!
CAPE turns 40 years old this year – Happy Birthday! There have been many changes since the program started in 1982. CAPE is a regular resource for volunteering and contributing to Cornell – whether it’s assisting incoming freshman or at Cornell events -- teaching or providing administrative services where needed – CAPE was there! In recent years, CAPE has expanded its programming to include social hours, outreach activities, such as hiking. CAPE’s lecture series branched out to do a special series: Cornell Collects highlights some of the impressive collections housed throughout Cornell. CAPE’s membership is broad, as you can see in the Charter Statement on membership above – come join us!

You’re Invited! We will be celebrating CAPE’s birthday on January 19th at the Moakley House, from 2pm to 4pm. We will be serving cocktails and refreshments and celebrating 40 years of CAPE! As usual, if you think you’ll attend, send us an email: cape@cornell.edu; this will ensure that we have enough refreshments for all. Parking/access is pretty easy at the Moakley House and we hope you all can come! If you can think of things that have changed over time, please send a message our way: cape@cornell.edu. It’s nice to reflect on where CAPE started and where we are today! Here is a brief history of CAPE’s activities:
https://cape.cornell.edu/A_brief_history_on_CAPE_activities_and_events.pdf
We wish to thank the retiring members of the Executive Council
We had several retiring Executive Council members recently. They came to the Executive Council and helped to shape and bring energy to CAPE’s Programs. Mary Woods has served on the council for several years, volunteering as Secretary (after not having one for some time). Although Mary has retired from the Executive Council, she continues to assist with the Lecture Series and we are grateful to her for her contributions. We wish to thank Lisa Earle, outgoing president. Lisa has served several terms as an Executive Council member and went on to take on the roles of Vice President and eventually President, of which she served to two terms. We thank her for her energy and leadership, especially during the pandemic! Joe Martin retires from the Executive Council this year after serving several terms. He will continue contributing as a member of the Outreach Committee and we appreciate all of his contributions and insights!

We also wish to welcome our incoming Members of the Executive Council
We welcome Ronald Hoy (Neurobiology and Behavior) to the Executive Council this year. Lorraine Maxwell (Human Centered Design) is incoming President and Joe Thomas (Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management) is incoming Vice President. Other members to the council are Cathy Klimaszewski (Johnson Museum of Art); Ronald Ehrenberg (Industrial and Labor Relations and Economics); Kent Hubbell (Architecture Art and Planning); Elaine Engst (Libraries); Christina Stark (Nutritional Sciences); Mary Katzenstein (Government); Timothy Mount (Systems Engineering).

FALL CAPE LECTURE SERIES
The lecture series will be hybrid:
in person lectures hosted by Kendal of Ithaca

Sandra Greene, Stephen '59 and Madeline '60 Anbinder Professor of African History
Biography and the Challenge of Writing Contentious Histories
Thursday, December 8th 2:00pm to 3:00pm
Kendal Of Ithaca, Auditorium
[come anytime after 1:30 for refreshments]

In the last few years, the writing and teaching of history in the United States has become especially contested. Most recently, for example, a question has emerged about how one should characterize the history of slavery in this country. In Texas, legislators are engaged in on-going efforts to block the teaching of certain well known facts:

- The celebrated and honored figures associated with the Alamo complex in San Antonio in the Texas Revolution were slave traders.
- The Texas Revolution (a six-month rebellion that ended in 1836) to free Texas from Mexican rule was also an effort to maintain the existence of slavery after Mexico abolished seven years earlier. The Texas constitution then was written to explicitly legalize slavery.
- The white American settlers settled in what was then northern Mexican territory did so illegally. They were illegal immigrants.
- The heralded Texas Rangers were actively involved in the extra-judicial killing (lynching) of people of Mexican descent.

A bill introduced into the Texas legislature sought to define all these individuals as heroes, to be uncritically praised and emulated.
More importantly, Texas legislators are not alone in trying to hide these facts. Other states have sought to censure the teaching of American history on other issues and specifically (in Iowa, Arkansas, Mississippi, Missouri, and South Dakota) to ban the teaching about race in America as discussed in the New York Times 1619 project. Even more telling is the fact that these efforts to focus on “feel-good” history rather than the more ugly side of people’s actions is not unique to the United States. In addressing this phenomenon, however, this talk will not be about history in the United States. Rather it takes note of these contentious debates because they illustrate the larger issues that historians in every country must face in writing history. How do we portray the past? How should we portray the past? To serve what purpose? To emphasize just the facts? But then how do we reconstruct the past from the inevitably incomplete records? How much interpretation, how much speculation is acceptable? With decisions made, what is gained, what is lost?

Biography is a particularly popular form of history as it allows one to identify with a specific person. When contextualized within the times in which they lived, one can better understand the decisions individuals made, and even perhaps why they did what they did? Their lives can inspire, but they can also be cautionary tales. That then returns us to the question of what do we include and exclude when writing about individuals from the past? These are individuals who have clearly made a name for themselves or who should be better known. At the same time as Individuals, they are also complex, having done some good things, but they could also have been involved in some pretty horrific acts.

How do we write such biographies? I address these questions by drawing on examples from my research in West Africa. There, the discussion of slavery and the biographies of famous West African individuals (who were also slave owners) can indeed be quite contentious. I will argue that it is, in fact, possible to navigate these murky and sensitive waters when the larger society and individuals are prepared to embrace a history that focuses on nuance, shades of gray rather than on the more simplistic, yet deeply satisfying black and white images of entities (whether countries, communities or individuals) as either good or bad.

**Webinar Link:**
[https://cornell.zoom.us/j/96522197995?pwd=VlIvMGw1OTdKSTNtWjIyit0dkJkQT09](https://cornell.zoom.us/j/96522197995?pwd=VlIvMGw1OTdKSTNtWjIyit0dkJkQT09)

**Coming Up for 2023 – Hold These Dates!**

- February 16th at 2:00 – 3:00pm
- March 16th at 2:00 – 3:00pm
- April 20th at 10:30 – 11:30am
- May 18th at 10:30 – 11:30am

**A Sampling of Upcoming Speakers**

- **Michael Lynn**, Michael D Johnson and Family Professor of Services Marketing at the Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration
- **Donald Greenberg**, the Jacob Gould Schurman Professor of Computer Graphics
- **Andy Zepp**, Executive Director at Finger Lakes Land Trust
- **Tom Seeley**, the Horace White Professor in Biology at Cornell University. He is based in the Department of Neurobiology and Behavior

Look for updates on the Lecture Series schedule in the new year. Happy New Year!
Kudos! Tour of the Asian art galleries and special exhibition Xu Bing: Background Story

The tour was a wonderful success! We thank the Outreach Chairs (Cathy Klimaszewski and Elaine Engst) for arranging such a lovely time, hosted by Ellen Avril. You’ll see more events like this coming up soon!

The Times They Are A-Changin’

Dear CAPE members - As Bob Dylan once sang, “The Times They Are A-Changin’”. They certainly are. I have had a wonderful time providing support and guidance to CAPE for nearly fifteen years, but I think it’s time to retire. I have never had so much fun in my life and I want to thank you for making this such a rich, busy endeavor. I’ll send you all a big thank you when I have a moment to do that just right. My goodness, you are fabulous! Thank you for a wonderful time! Warm regards, Cindy