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### **Roundtable: Tim Tackett as a Mentor**

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**Robert Blackman, Hampden-Sydney College**  
**Elizabeth Bond, Ohio State University**  
**Patricia Goldsworthy-Bishop, University of Western Oregon**  
**Kate Marsden, Wofford College**  
**Glen Porter-Pineda, Independent Scholar**  
**Laura Sextro, University of Dayton**

Beyond his achievements as a scholar, Tim Tackett has deeply impacted generations of students as teacher, advisor and friend. Building from two roundtables at the “Becoming Revolutionaries” conference, this contribution explores the many facets of working with Tim, and the many ways he influenced the careers and lives of those who studied with him.

### **What brought you to study with Tim Tackett?**

Marsden: When I was an undergrad in Laura Mason’s French Revolution class, we read an excerpt from Tim’s *Religion, Revolution, and Regional Culture*. Of all of the great material we read in that class, I really connected with Tim’s approach that seemed very scientific and clear. Checking this book out in the library made clear its importance; the due date sheet in the back had a ton of stamps and extended to its second page. It felt canonical and important; even today the elegance of this book still impresses me.

Shopping around for grad programs in the French Revolution while I was a teaching assistant in France, Laura Mason suggested that I contact Tim. For me, that felt like applying to work with a rock star. Tim promptly replied to my message and suggested that we meet in Toulouse where he was then lecturing. Despite my nervousness at this meeting, Tim and Helen welcomed me with open arms, taking me to a family-style fondue restaurant where they appeared to be regulars. After plying me with wine and hot cheese, the interrogation began. This seems to be a format that Tim and Helen have perfected over many years of academic study: set your subject at ease and then ask the hard questions. Tim and Helen treated me as family and student, a person to be respected and corrected with equal amounts respect and empathy. Despite my reservations about moving to Irvine, California, I knew when this meeting was over that there was no one else I would rather work with.

Alpaugh: Tim recruited me to Irvine with his friendliness, genuineness and scholarly track record. Whereas most of the professors in programs I’d been admitted to barely bothered to write (if at all) to recruit, Tim both showed enthusiasm for his program and his subject. If an awkward phone conversant (I was doing a final undergraduate semester abroad in France and thus missed

the Irvine recruitment weekend) Tim seemed a real and genuine person in a way unlike more distant and hard-to-contact professors. From our first meeting at his Paris apartment in June 2004, it was clear we had shared passions for history, France and the Revolution.

Blackman: In 1992 I was happily studying modern European intellectual history with Mark Poster at the University of California, Irvine. Wolfgang Iser had sponsored me into the Critical Theory Institute there and I was casting about for a topic. I had really enjoyed studying the utopian socialists in France, Charles Fourier, Henri de Saint-Simon, Etienne Cabet and so on. I had noticed that again and again these authors brought up the French Revolution as the reason they wanted a peaceful, voluntary form of socialism. They opposed people like Louis Blanqui and other conspiratorial thinkers specifically because they wanted to avoid violence. I did not understand why. I decided that to understand why, I would have to look into the French Revolution. In the fall of 1991 I had told friends that if I ever had to read another book about the French Revolution, I was just going to die. Reading *Interpreting the French Revolution* had almost killed me. But Mark had introduced me to the work of Jürgen Habermas, and Marjorie Beale had had me read Keith Michael Baker's *Inventing the French Revolution* and Roger Chartier's *Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*. I decided I wanted to look at the summer of 1789 and see how the public sphere had developed in France during the early Revolution. When I ran happily to Mark to tell him about my new topic, he looked up from his computer and said that I was in luck. While he was happy to keep working with me – he made that very clear – he wanted me to know that one of the world's experts on the summer of 1789 was at Irvine, just down the hall. He told me that I needed to go speak with Timothy Tackett.

I already knew Tim at this point. He had helped to recruit me to the department, explaining the fellowship UCI had offered me. He had stayed in touch after we met and we had lunch the week before my first quarter of graduate school. He impressed on me the importance of taking the French history seminar UCI had back then. He stayed in touch after that, too, even though I showed little interest in the eighteenth century or the French Revolution. When I turned up on his doorstep, he was happy to see me, it seemed. I explained my interest in Habermas, Baker, and Chartier and how I wanted to read deputy speeches, newspaper accounts and so on. He said he would be happy to help with my project and encouraged me to look at the context in which the debates took place.

After about a year, I was so interested in the deputies and their speeches that I stopped looking at Habermas, and within another year, I had asked Tim to be my dissertation advisor. I still value all that early training in modern European intellectual history – it certainly comes up in my teaching. Still, I do not think I had really found my passion there, and it was only once I was working with Tim on the deputies and their political speech that I really flourished in graduate school.

Bond: I applied to study with Tim because I was interested in questions of political and intellectual culture that were at the heart of his work in *Becoming a Revolutionary*. My visit to UC Irvine as a prospective graduate student confirmed my decision to study with Tim. In addition to meeting with prospective students individually on campus during that visit, Tim also coordinated a reception at his home in University Hills so that we prospective students could meet all of the faculty and current graduate students at UCI working on the history of France and its empire. I remember what a welcoming environment that was. It also seemed like it was very much a part of the rhythm of Tim and Helen's life to encourage conversations between graduate

students, faculty, and visiting scholars. Over the years when I was in Irvine, Tim and Helen routinely invited French historians from around the world to give talks at UCI and held receptions at their home. The intellectual community they fostered made Irvine an exciting place to be.

Goldsworthy-Bishop: I met Tim after I had been admitted to the PhD program at Irvine. I came to Irvine to work on 20<sup>th</sup>-century France, so Tim was not my advisor, but he was a critical part of my experience at Irvine. I had courses with both Tim and Helen my first term, and they helped me transition into graduate school and remained important throughout my graduate school experience. Although I was not a Revolutionary scholar, Tim kept up to date in my field and provided me with regular, thoughtful feedback on my work. In many ways, the fact that Tim and I worked in different eras and fields connected to French history made my own work stronger – Tim would never let me present anything as a given of colonial history, but instead pushed me to consider, and reconsider, my assumptions about French history in the colonies vs. the metropole. While Tim pushed his students, and maintained high expectations, it was clear he did so because he believed in his students, and these expectations forced me to push myself in ways I didn't think possible. Most importantly, his door was always open to me for anything professional or personal that I wished to discuss.

### **In what respects was Tim a distinctive mentor?**

Bond: There were ways in which I was a bit behind when I began graduate school, and Tim was willing to spend the time to help me catch up and become a historian. As a mentor, he not only encouraged my research interests, but also helped guide me through the research steps of writing the dissertation. In meetings about my work, he would end discussions by asking when I would have a draft to him and when we would meet to discuss it. While I was the one to set the next meeting, knowing that I had an upcoming appointment helped me to privilege my work and meet deadlines. What I learned through our meetings in those early years of graduate school was how to break down a research question or idea into its component parts and develop a work plan.

I was always struck by how my own efforts were met with Tim's dedication to his students. At our meetings, we would sit in his office and go over printed copies of my work, now filled with his comments in the margins. He would explain what worked, and what needed work. He expected my work to improve and gave concrete advice about how to work toward that improvement. The time he spent commenting on my fellowship applications, seminar papers, and dissertation chapters was invaluable.

Tim's continued mentorship since completing the PhD and getting a job means a great deal to me. I now see Tim at conferences; his attendance at his students' panels and his continued interest in our new research underscore for me Tim's care for the work we do and for those he has mentored.

Marsden: My experiences in Irvine were very similar to that first meeting in Toulouse. Tim and Helen regularly opened their home to salon-like meetings of their graduate students and visiting scholars. These gatherings fostered open discourse and scholarly exchange in a convivial environment. Cheese, wine, laughter and serious discussion were never in short supply. These informal events encouraged faculty members, graduate students, and burgeoning scholars alike

not just to see each other as colleagues but also as “friends” – Tim’s preferred salutation for his invitations.

Tim doesn’t just bring people together, his mentorship style demonstrates he truly cares about the people he works with. When I was teaching classes, working on my prospectus, applying for grants and just generally feeling overwhelmed, at our regularly scheduled meeting, I walked into his office and Tim looked me in the eye, in his perspicacious fashion and asked: “Kate, how are you?” I burst into tears under his scrutiny, not just because I was stressed, but because Tim was *genuinely* asking. He passed the tissue box, reassured me that he understood, while reminding me that Helen was probably better at these types of things. That last part still makes me laugh.

What I think that these stories illustrate is Tim’s profound humanity. Not only is he an excellent scholar but he’s also an excellent teacher and human being. Other members of this community will speak to his academic accomplishments and contributions, which are truly impressive. However, I’m impressed that over such a long career Tim has taken the time to mentor and advance his students in such a way that we have a name for our special circle of friends: Tackettians. In this family, our emails are often signed “salut et fraternité.”

Alpaugh: “Taquetian” was a respected and sometimes-notorious designation among other UCI graduate students. Taquetians were researching in France their first graduate summer – while many other students postponed until they passed their comprehensive exams. Taquetians, if off to a bad start, were told by their advisor that they simply needed to re-write their work. My default in writing articles and chapters is still the basic method Tim instilled. If falling outside the UCI’s ruling departmental orthodoxies – first celebrating postmodernist theory and then world history – Tim’s success cultivating students for major grants and tenure-track jobs perpetuated his share of the program.

Goldsworthy-Bishop: Tim provided guidance and support through every step of graduate school and the process of getting a tenure-track job. His door was always open to discuss classes, grants, drafts, and jobs. Tim and Helen also worked to cultivate a French history cohort at Irvine by inviting French historians from all over the world to their home and including graduate students in the events. In my third year of grad school, Tim organized a year-long French Colonial History seminar that traced French colonial regimes from the *ancien régime* through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. To me, this was indicative of Tim’s mentorship as well as his generosity – while his own research interests were not in the colonies, he saw the importance of colonial history for French history (and French history for colonial history), and worked to provide opportunities for the growing number of students working on French history and on the empire. Tim taught the first term, where we focused on French colonialism during the *ancien régime* and the Revolutionary era. The course was instrumental for me in thinking about the larger trends in colonial history and the lasting impact of the Revolution on the colonial empire. The course also helped to create a community of French scholars of the colonies and the metropole and foster a sense of comradery across our different research interests and our cohort years.

In addition to the professional support he provided, it was evident that Tim always cared about his students not just as students or scholars, but as people. At a time when many of us felt stressed, overwhelmed, or inadequate during grad school, Tim always checked in on us to ensure that we were doing OK, to provide support and encouragement.

Sextro: Tim has worn various hats in my life, as professor, mentor, and friend. From UC Irvine where I took various classes with him, to Paris where he gave me my first tour of the French National Archives, the support he has shown me has been inexhaustible and global. He was on my dissertation committee, read my dissertation with a fine-tooth comb, and to this day he generously provides feedback on my work. In multiple ways, Tim contributed significantly to my professional growth and my career, and continues to do so.

For the purposes of my reflections I'll focus on Tim's influence on my scholarship of Greater France by discussing the formative nature of the UCI History Department's French Seminar and how some of Tim's research methodologies have shaped some of my own. But as a quick aside and personal note, Tim, Helen Chenut, and the larger academic family they cultivated equally nourished my soul. The tenacity of Tim's intellectual expectations paralleled the attentive care that Tim and Helen provided for me and my cohort of graduate students. Belonging to the extended Tackett/Chenut intellectual community was like being part of a family, for which I am extremely grateful.

### **How did Tim change the way you looked at history?**

Bond: One of the ways that Tim has shaped the way I look at history was through his approach toward the people that he studies. His books and seminar discussions foreground the humanity of the people we study. He encouraged his students to try to understand their outlook and choices. In his studies of the *mentalités* of revolutionaries, Tim's approach has been to take seriously what they had to say about the optimism and anxieties they felt. His work on rumor and communication was foundational to my own understanding of how those who lived during the Revolution processed information.

He also challenged me to think more critically about sources and whether an author's claim was fully supported by the evidence they presented. One of the questions that continues to resonate for me from seminar discussions and workshops with Tim was his response to the generalization I would draw: how can you demonstrate that? What he encouraged instead was a careful precision about the arguments that I was making and the conclusions I was drawing. To paraphrase from *Becoming a Revolutionary*, had I gathered all the relevant evidence and heard all the pertinent testimony?

Blackman: In 1992–3, when I started working with Tim and before I took my degree exams, I was one hundred per cent an intellectual historian. Mark Poster was my advisor, Wolfgang Iser had sponsored me into the Critical Theory Institute. I spent my hours down in the basement of the UCI library in the Critical Theory Collection (where, it happens, Tim's son Nick Tackett worked the desk). I dreamed dreams of Habermas and Foucault, Fourier and Saint-Simon, Horkheimer and Adorno. I was more interested in Sartre than in Robespierre and I intended to write about historical theory.

Working with Tim changed all of that. It is not that he pushed me to stop thinking about theory or even writing about theory. He encouraged me to keep up my interest, in fact. What he changed was the focus of my research. He taught me that intellectual historians of the Revolution needed to go beyond looking at the polished speeches and treatises published in the late eighteenth century in order to understand what was happening in the Estates General, the National Assembly, and the Constitutional Convention. Where before I had looked at the speeches under the influence of Keith Michael Baker's *Inventing the French Revolution*, I began

asking what the deputies had said and what had been heard. This was partly due to working with Wolfgang Iser, who had fairly pickled me in reader-reception sauce. It was mainly, though, due to Tim's insistence that I looked beyond the published versions of the deputies' speeches. He cautioned me that what appeared in the *Archives Parlementaires* was not entirely reliable. He urged me to look at contemporary records of the deputy speeches and above all to look at how the deputies reacted to each other's speeches. This meant looking at deputy letters and diaries, and looking at contemporary newspapers and how they recorded the debates. This was a much more ambitious project than I had originally anticipated – frankly, I had little time to keep up with the latest books on historical theory while I tracked down the sources that would let me explore the summer of 1789 in the kind of depth necessary to see how the deputies' speeches interacted in the early assemblies, how the deputies reacted to each other's claims and how they responded to the events taking place outside of the assembly hall. I used the tools I had acquired in intellectual history to examine the debates, but Tim had taught me that I needed to reconstruct the debates before I could analyze them, and he taught me how to find the texts I needed to do it.

Sextro: The French Seminar graduate-level classes at UCI shaped my research interests and research questions. Having previously been trained in undergraduate and graduate programs in French Studies, the UCI History Department's French Seminar – whose theme was “Identity and Diversity in Modern France” – helped me explore in deeper ways the various sets of contradictions and exclusions that shaped French and French colonial history. Tim's thoughtful selection of readings, speakers, and facilitated discussions revealed how central the French colonies were to a sense of French national identity. My research builds on discussions from the French Seminar and contributes to these newer currents in European history that situate Europe in a transnational and global context. Not only did the French Seminar shape the scope of my research, it has also influenced how I teach world, French, women's, and gender history classes.

Goldsworthy-Bishop: As a historian of French Morocco, my research is not directly connected to Tim's work on the Revolution, however his methodology has influenced the way I approach colonial history. In many of his works, Tim highlights the ways in which history is a process – the process of the historians, in conducting archival research, carrying out close readings of these materials, looking for patterns, and thinking about how to piece these together, as well as the process by which historical events unfold based upon circumstances. To quote Tim in his work *The Coming of the Terror*:

in the exploration of the origins of a political culture of violence, considerable emphasis is placed on the *process* of the Revolution. Part of the difficulty in understanding the Revolutionaries is that theirs was a moving reality in which values, perceptions, and ideologies were continually developing and transforming, often in a quite unpredictable manner (p.3).

This quote captures where Tim's research is imperative for colonial studies – the importance of the process and the constantly shifting reality. This was particularly significant for me when struggling with my work on the Moroccan Sultan Abd al-Aziz, whose reign in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked by the increasing encroachment of European powers, civil strife, and environmental and financial disasters, and whose failures as a leader dominate the existing historiography. While it is easy to focus on the failures of individuals like Abd al-Aziz, who abdicated his throne to his brother and appears to have set the stage for the French conquest of Morocco, a closer examination of the sultan's political and cultural actions during his reign

offered me the opportunity to focus on the *process* of the sultan's actions and politics rather than just the outcome of his reign. Such an approach, inspired by Tim's work, provided a more thorough understanding of his ruling era, clarified how the sultan fell out of favor with the Moroccan peoples, and highlighted the twists and turns of the sultan's downfall rather than dismissing or downplaying it as a foregone conclusion.

Alpaugh: Like a lot of undergrads, I enjoyed the romance and grand scale of history without having learnt much about how to develop a methodology. Tim demanded explicit reflection about what we were trying to do and how we were trying to do it. While keeping himself arm's length from the "History and Theory" courses required in the UCI grad program, his empiricism and work ethic were rigorous, and deeply influenced each of us. My wide-ranging archival tours – 137 European archives and libraries for my first book, plus countless days working through full runs of French Revolutionary newspapers, pamphlets and correspondence sets – were very much done in imitation of Tim's legendary groundwork.

Porter-Pineda: Tim was meticulous about his research, and he insisted that his graduate students conduct their research with the same integrity that he applied to his own. I remember being dumbfounded the first time Tim insisted that I spend as much time and effort searching for evidence that did *not* support one of my fledgling theories as I did searching for evidence that supported it. Tim's commitment to the veracity of his research was complete.

Marsden: Tim has changed the way I look at history by continually reminding me to pay attention to the details as well as the big picture. He's meticulous in his own research and understanding and he will gently correct others who attempt short cuts. While this has sometimes been frustrating, it's also been an important lesson in accuracy. No, you cannot talk about the *cahiers de doléances* like it's a monolithic document; you cannot just call the Legislative Assembly the National Assembly, because these important details do contribute to a broader understanding. If you're willing to fudge in one or two details, where else are you going wrong? While there may not be one Historical Truth, there are certainly some things that are untrue and historians have a duty to avoid stating or restating them.

He's encouraged me to use an eclectic toolbox when interpreting my documents, to use theory when it is helpful, but never let theory dictate conclusions. First and foremost he's taught me to be respectful of the people I study. After all, Tim said, they're not here to defend themselves. One of the most important things Tim has reminded me is that historical actors sometimes changed their minds over the course of their lives. Putting human beings and human nature at the center of historical inquiry – and supporting this study with careful empirical evidence – I think is the key to creating the most accurate portrait of the past possible.

### **How did Tim's research help shape your own?**

Alpaugh: Tim showed how great archival legwork could pay off in print. *Becoming a Revolutionary* particularly inspired what kind of historian I wanted to be: rigorous in argumentation, challenging of received knowledge, and better read than one's competitors. Tramping between provincial archives became a righteous quest. Tim helped show me that the truth (or at least a closer approximation of it) was out there – possibly at the end of a TER line in

the Massif Central or some similarly remote location. To make a new argument, it helped to have new, more, and better sources.

Blackman: When I started working with Tim I had just read Jacques Derrida's *Spurs/Éperons* and I guess you could say I was deeply skeptical of any attempt to find out what had really been said during a debate, the equivalent of finding a definitive version of a text. At first, I thought that was what Tim was up to. He appeared to me to be taking part in the classic historian's project of looking at more sources in order to build a better narrative, one that showed what had really happened. When I began working with him I asked him about this and he assured me that he, too, was skeptical about any truth to be found searching in the archive. We could never, he assured me, reach a "real" account of what happened. So far we were in perfect step. Then he noted that while we could not prove the positive case, we could certainly make an effort to debunk claims that had been made about the historical record. If the documents themselves, the physical traces we have of an inaccessible past, cannot support an argument then we can put that argument aside. He taught me that the texts we can discover set up a kind of field of possibilities. I think he put it more along the lines that we should find an argument that best fits the available evidence. I preferred to rephrase this as, "When exploring the traces left to us by the past we can sketch the boundaries of possibilities, letting us know what things were even thinkable for the deputies." (I was strongly under the influence of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* back then.) And so, under Tim's guidance, I moved from examining just the deputies' words as recounted in their speeches and trying to fit them into specific discourses to looking at how those speeches were part of broader political, social, and cultural events. I came to see how the choices the deputies made in their speeches made a difference. Yes, the speeches arose out of the context in which they were given, intellectual, social and cultural. But they were not mere emanations of a discursive field. It became my task to take discourse analysis further than the printed speeches themselves and frame those speeches in the events that caused them, and that arose out of them. Without Tim, I would have remained in a world of strict intellectual filiation. Thanks to Tim, I now have a much richer seam of evidence to mine as I seek out explanations for the events of the long summer of 1789.

Marsden: The aspect of Tim's work that first struck me as an undergraduate continues to fascinate and inspire me in my own work today. He combines a well-structured development of his argument with both elegant and precise language and sentence structure as well as a keen sensitivity to the lived reality of his historical subjects. He balances humanity with fact. He seeks the closest thing we can get to truth in history and in this he's aided by a truly profound understanding of human nature. Just as he respects the people he works with, he respects and critiques, and empathizes with his historical subjects. I still aspire to these standards of production in my own work.

Bond: Tim's approach to archival research has inspired my own. Spending time researching not only in Parisian collections but also in departmental archives and municipal libraries enabled me to hone my research questions and gain a fuller picture of my sources. I was also influenced by Tim's openness to new methods and creativity when it comes to new research in other disciplines, especially the social sciences.

My current book project is an effort to understand some of the questions posed in Tim's research on the origins of the Revolution and the Terror: What was going on in people's minds?



How was their outlook shaped by their material and emotional lives? What did they read, and how did they make sense of it? What sources allow the historian to get at these questions? My own effort to examine these questions has led me to work with thousands of letters to the editor published in French newspapers of the 1770s–1790s. My book project explores the way that the Enlightenment was consumed and practised by the French reading public, and it foregrounds the thousands of individual readers who constituted that community of reader-writers. In both its prosopographical approach and its focus on the link between Enlightenment and Revolution, my first book reflects upon the enduring questions that Tim has underscored.

Sextro: While Tim and the French Seminar provided an environment for my development as a scholar of Greater France, Tim's scholarship has also had an impact on the theories and methodologies I use in my own work. Tim modeled how to be a cultural historian and how to dig deeply into a variety of sources for assessing how people understood events or processes.

Tim's use of social statistical analysis to determine political awareness and demonstrate cultural change has influenced my own methodology. To investigate how people caused and experienced political change, Tim mines a wide array of sources to gain a broader understanding of everyday attitudes and political consciousness. Similarly, my work seeks to comprehend a colonial consciousness by examining the myriad ways people talked about the needs, justifications, and acquisition of hardwood from the colonies. My research focuses on the French exploitation of colonial timber in the twentieth-century interwar period and expands on the idea that the justifications and processes were more than economic. Inspired by the ways Tim constructs deep cultural understandings about the French Revolution, Louis XVI, or the Terror, I extrapolate the everyday awareness of empire from discussions about colonial wood. Subsequently, I show that the appropriation of colonial wood had cultural meaning, emblematic of the unique set of values that characterized French imperial national identity.

Another influential facet of Tim's cultural historical methodology is tracing discursive shifts to reveal aspects of the nature and experiences of political and social revolution. The changes in terminology and definitions to describe revolution, radicalism, republicanism, and terror carried political and cultural meaning and indicated important underlying cultural shifts. I've found this methodology useful: through printed materials and speeches produced by woodworkers, engineers, scientists, forestry experts, and decorative arts instructors I examine the discussions about labeling wood as either "exotic" or "colonial" and evaluate the connections to the larger everyday politics of the French imperial project. In other words, I trace the shifts in the way people talked about provenance and exploitation to construct a broader material and cultural understanding of a geopolitical awareness.

Lastly, Tim's work and the level of detail he brings to the biographical backgrounds of the subjects of his research is impressive, inspirational, and maybe even a little intimidating. But his perfected technique of weaving biographical backgrounds into historical narrative to better understand the Revolutionary environment is also a technique that I am now striving to use in my own work. Although beyond the research scope when I was writing my dissertation, I am now revisiting Tim's suggestions to think about my actors and their milieu, rather than just their actions. In my new work I am finding that by understanding the lives of mid-level actors of imperialism in the colonies and *métropole*, a more complex but interconnected understanding of empire emerges. In fact, my study of materials of empire is becoming more deeply rooted in the lives and careers of survivors of WWI and the studies they created to mitigate postwar resource shortages where wood and colonies carried the weight of postwar reconstruction.

### **How did Tim help during your research time in France?**

Blackman: Tim helped me in three important ways. First, he helped me identify sources for funding. In 1994, when I first planned to go to France, I had no idea how to actually pay for my trip. With Tim's help, I got grants from UCI that covered the entire cost of my summer research. Second, Tim prepared me for what I would find in Paris. He walked me through the interview I would have to survive in order to get access to the old Bibliothèque nationale de France (the one we now call the Richelieu site). Those reading this may not remember that in the 1990s one had to pitch one's research project, in French, to a library bureaucrat who could let you in, or not, depending on your pitch. My French was not great – Tim's help was invaluable. Similarly, he walked me through the old procedures there. It used to be a wonderful ballet of plaques in order to get a seat. If one wished to keep a book over to the next day, one had to have a book strap. Does anyone even know about book straps anymore? Tim had an extra one that he lent me. Third, Tim generously allowed me to kip on the sofa in his apartment on the rue des Tanneries. I had been to Paris before, but had never really lived there. Tim introduced me to his neighborhood, gave me advice about how to interact with the neighborhood residents, and taught me what I needed to know to flourish in Paris as well as in the archives.

One should not underestimate the value of kipping on the sofa at one's dissertation advisor's Paris flat. First, it shapes ambition. In 1994 and 1996, I dreamed of someday having my own flat in Paris. All I had to do was finish my project, get a job, and save my money (or so it seemed at the time). Second, it allowed me to ask Tim questions. As I ran into obstacles, bureaucratic or archival, Tim always had answers and advice. He taught me how to craft a strategy for how to approach research when one has only limited time. He gave me advice about how to maximize my output while still enjoying the fact that I was in Paris. Most of all, though, he set a good example. I have told the story many times: since I was sleeping on the couch in the living room, every night as I got ready for bed I could hear Tim typing away in his bedroom. I would fall asleep late at night to the comforting sound of typing. Then, I would awaken early in the morning to the comforting sound of typing. Tim encouraged me to be at the library early, to get a good seat, and he would always stay late, much later than I did. Given that he could observe my work habits just as much as I could his, I found myself shaping my work routine under his gaze into one I imagined he would find more acceptable. It was my very own Panopticon! Living and working in Tim's shadow helped me think my way through my work habits and, in the end, develop the skills and habits I needed to finish my dissertation.

Alpaugh: Tim led by example, showing me the finer (though still confused) workings of the Archives Nationales and Bibliothèque nationale. Most days he could be found in Salle K of the Mitterrand Branch of the BNF, staring over old pamphlets placed atop a sheet-music holder, then typing notes onto his retrofitted blue-screen computer. We typically had lunch in the cramped *Café du temps*, conversing over the day's events. Whereas most of my Paris friends' advisors rarely left their well-appointed British and American seats, Tim showed a commitment towards detailed primary source research I greatly wanted to emulate.

Tim also, as a seasoned scholar, helped show his students how the "soft power" of academia works as well. At the *Café du temps*, Tim showed how to be a gracious scholar to the many who approached the tiny lunch-table (though he was always ready to say he was ready to "get back to work" if things droned on too long). At his and Helen's apartment in the Fourteenth

Arrondissement, I and Tim's other students were treated not just to excellent *kirs*, but periodic "salons" featuring both visiting American scholars and leading French academics. Tim showed great patience, even with those he theoretically disagreed with, usually encouraging them to do more empirical research in hopes they might be led back onto the right track.

Marsden: Both in Irvine and in France, Tim has brought together a consortium of both like- and unlike-minded folk to discuss, in Enlightenment fashion, our shared passion for history. Untold amounts of fruitful exchanges have come from Tim's persistence in making connections between French and international scholars. The international turnout of the 2017 Tackettfest retrospective conference speaks not only to his scholarship but also to his friendship and his ability to make connections between people.

Tim has an unusually hands-on approach to mentoring his students even in the archives. He gave me tips for navigating provincial archives and took the time to personally show me important resources in the BNF. He was standing by on my first foray into the Archives Nationales and was the first to tell me: "Yes, there's something here," when I found an interesting letter in Cardinal Caprara's collection. He was always available for a coffee or mediocre lunch at the BNF to keep your spirits up. All of these experiences were essential for building my confidence as a researcher.

Bond: During an early visit to the BNF, Tim met me and offered an orientation to the library. He also introduced me to the historians at the Institut d'histoire de la Révolution française and to their wonderful library. While I was in France for a year doing dissertation research, Helen and Tim invited me to their apartment in Paris from time to time for dinner and to meet their friends. Tim also encouraged me to expand the scope of my dissertation work outside of Paris and put me in touch with French scholars. When we discussed my upcoming research trips, Tim would say, "why don't you contact my friend?" so I would, and they wrote back and took the time to meet with me and talk about my work. On research trips throughout France, historians of the Revolution invited me over for lunch in Aix-en-Provence, drove through very snowy conditions to meet with me in Poitiers and take me to the local antiquarian society, welcomed me into their seminars, and offered their hospitality and advice over coffees and in libraries. I have always found the field of French history to be an intellectually rich community, and also a very inviting, supportive environment, and I believe that is in no small part a result of the kindness and generosity that Tim and his many friends have encouraged.

Goldsworthy-Bishop: Tim and Helen provided me with invaluable aid during my research trips to France. On my very first research trip to Paris at the beginning of graduate school, Tim and Helen generously allowed me to stay in their apartment while they were traveling. In addition, Tim took me through the BNF on my first visit, despite the fact that he had just arrived in Paris, providing me with details on the computer system, where to take coffee breaks, and tips on which *salle* was the best for getting work done. I found the BNF overwhelming on my first few visits, and Tim's thoughtful guidance allowed me to focus on the research instead of spending time figuring out how to order books. When I was in Paris for a year, they helped me find a place to rent through one of Helen's friends. Whenever our time in Paris overlapped, Tim and Helen made sure that we connected in order to check in on my research and introduce me to other scholars.

In addition, when Adam Guerin and I were both in Morocco for a year conducting research, Tim, Helen, and Helen's daughter Maria came to visit. At the time, I was having difficulties accessing certain materials in the archives, and Tim helped me think about strategies for using the materials that were available and approaching my topic through a variety of different angles in order to use different types of materials from other archives and libraries.

### **How did Tim help shape your teaching and advising of students?**

Goldsworthy-Bishop: I was a teaching assistant for Tim, so was able to witness his teaching at both an undergraduate and graduate level. Just as Tim does in his writing, when teaching he engages his audience by establishing an accessible and relatable narrative. I have attempted to implement this technique in my own teaching by incorporating people's experiences and actions rather than just abstract concepts. This framing gets students involved and interested in the events we're discussing.

The most important thing that I learned from Tim in teaching and advising is to remember that students are people, not just exams or research projects. Tim cared deeply for his students, and I try to show that same attention and thoughtfulness to my own students.

Bond: During my time in Irvine, I worked as a teaching assistant for Tim in his undergraduate course on the French Revolution. Each week, he presented a vivid narrative to his students; he conveyed with empathy the rich, multilayered lives of the revolutionaries. His use of film, images, and primary source texts all made his course an immersive experience. At the same time, he introduced students to major historiographical debates, and he invited students to evaluate competing interpretations. His approach is one I try to emulate in the courses I teach.

The publication of Tim's *The Coming of the Terror in the French Revolution* a couple years after I worked as a teaching assistant in that course underscored for me the impact of his research on his teaching. Threads of his most recent book were woven through the lecture notes I had taken in that course. I revisit my notes from that quarter each year when I teach my own French Revolution course. I am so appreciative of the foundation that working with Tim provided for me. His example challenges me each year to bring new research into the classroom.

Marsden: Seeing Tim teach was a rewarding experience. It gave me a healthy disregard for complicated teaching methods or gimmicks. Using a traditional lecture format, Tim still fascinated his audience because he knows how to tell a good story and choose compelling sources. These bare bones are often the most important aspects of a classroom experience. I think, however, that the most important aspect of being a teacher I learned from Tim is simply respecting and listening to my students.

Tim's empathy and compassion extend to the students, colleagues, *people* he encounters on a daily basis. This has been one of the most important imprints of Tim's mentorship for me: humanity. Empathy, compassion, understanding should not be divorced from the highest standards of academic production. One can and should be a good scholar, good friend, and a good human. While few of us can equal Tim's contributions in publications, service, or number of students taught, his mentorship continues to serve as an example for me in my professional life. Now that I have students of my own, a tissue box sits ready on the corner of my desk for a student's crisis. I gently assure them it's going to be ok, even if they might fail my class. After all, you can be sympathetic but also hold your students to high standards.

Porter-Pineda: Tim's passion for the French Revolution was evident in his teaching. During one lecture, when I was serving as a teaching assistant for Tim's History of the French Revolution class, Tim was describing the final events leading up to the fall of Robespierre. He was gesticulating and pacing across the front of the classroom, obviously caught up in the events he was recounting. The class was captivated and completely immersed in the drama – in fact so much so that when Tim got to the part about Robespierre shooting himself in the jaw, one of the undergraduate women actually screamed in horror! That broke the spell and the class burst out laughing – as did Tim. It was obvious that Tim really enjoyed teaching.

Alpaugh: Tim showed me how to push students with kindness, while still insisting on rigor. *Taquetians* knew that they would be held to a high standard – and that under-substantiated critiques would not fly. With a fake-gruff – that wasn't always fake – Tim would push us further. It's very difficult for me not to fall into "Tackett mode," especially in challenging academic situations.

Micah Alpaugh, University of Central Missouri  
Robert Blackman, Hampden-Sydney College  
Elizabeth Bond, Ohio State University  
Patricia Goldsworthy-Bishop, University of Western Oregon  
Kate Marsden, Wofford College  
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