

Faculty Profile: Robert Bauslaugh

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It's cool to study a foreign language, but how many people actually get to study one in a medieval castle?

"When I graduated from undergraduate school and started at the graduate level, I studied German at the Goethe Institute over the summer in a castle, with a moat and everything!" said Professor of Ancient History, Dr. Robert Bauslaugh.

Even before that Bauslaugh had developed an appreciation for travel by going from undergraduate school at University of California, Riverside to Greece. "I got over my senior slump by spending my spring semester excavating in Greece at the Isthmus of Poseidon, and straight from there I went to the Goethe Institute" he said.

Bauslaugh's family has a history in California extending back to the Gold Rush in 1849. He grew up in Orinda, CA before his father picked up a management position in a telephone company in San Diego.

"My dad got the job in 1958, and it was a really different time. We went out to the Coronado beachfront and bought property with a wife who didn't work and three kids," said Bauslaugh. "Coronado was really cool because if something was bothering you at home you could just walk to the beach. There is something therapeutic about the Pacific ocean, and after fifteen minutes you would just think things weren't that bad."

In 1978 Bauslaugh returned to California to pursue a Masters. He took his education further than his masters, and holds a doctorate in Ancient History at University of California, Berkeley. "I had offers of fellowship in the Ivy League, but they were all too far from home and my parents were both Berkeley alumni, so I had a loyalty to it. I was there from 1970 to 1976 and then I went to the American school of Classical Studies in Athens, Greece. I studied Greek, archaeology and things like battlefields there," he said.

Afterward he went to Columbia University in NY to teach students contemporary civilization, Greek history and literary humanities.

"After a year and a half I started teaching at Emory University in Atlanta in the department of modern languages and classics. It had 25 faculty members; they spoke German, Arabic, Hebrew, Russian, or Spanish to name some of them, it was so much fun." said Bauslaugh. He rose through the ranks and eventually became

a full professor with tenure.

In January of 1998 Bauslaugh was accepted to the position of Dean of Academics and chief Academic officer at Brevard College.

"I worked with President Thomas Bertrand until 2001 when he stepped down. President Bill Moncrieff wanted to appoint a different Dean, so I stepped down in 2002. Then I joined Scott Sheffield and Margaret Brown in the History department," said Bauslaugh.

While Bauslaugh is an ancient history professor, his specialty lies in ancient Greece. "I consider myself an ancient Greek historian by training and by research. I wrote one book on Greek history and one book on Greek currency. I did my dissertation on ancient Greek politics and on my archaeological side I focus on Greek coinage."

Bauslaugh also spoke about his relationship with his wife and colleague, Professor of Art History and Archaeology, Anne Chapin.

"Professor Chapin and I share lots of interests especially in Bronze Age history. Her area is art and art history. I'm more focused on politics and archaeology. Sometimes we disagree about historical events. Recently we disagreed about King Tut's death. We had been going back and forth about it, and in retrospect it looks like she is probably right."

It's hard to believe someone so devoted to their work can find time to have hobbies, but Bauslaugh manages. "I spend a lot of time gardening and landscaping since we have two acres in town it requires a lot of work, so it's not so much a hobby, but it is something I spend a lot of time doing." He added, "I've also gotten involved in working on remote controlled aircraft because of my son, Drew. We started with small planes but now we are up to planes with 118 inch wing span that fly with the equivalent of a small motorcycle engine with gasoline. It's interesting to pilot these expensive planes without having them glitch." Bauslaugh also played tennis in college and he continues to play with his wife.

Bauslaugh works a lot with Chapin. They are in there third year of excavating an ancient settlement on the island of Crete. "There is

that project that we are working on actively, and there is a Bronze Age period site in Sparta that we are working on," he said.

Last year Bauslaugh disappeared. We didn't know where exactly, but there were occasional sittings of the elusive history professor on campus. However the question was, "Where were you?"

"I took a sabbatical after teaching seven years. I started by working on Crete in the summer, in the Fall I focused on reading. I was kind of out of date on my ancient Greek history. I found some articles I had written had come into controversy," Bauslaugh said. Some historians had completely discounted his proposals related to ancient Greek history.

"I also worked on just writing," he said. "I'm interested in writing for a popular audience as well as a scholarly audience. I have been focused on writing a historical novel this past winter and spring. It's about a sixteenth century conflict between Christianity and Islam, I guess you could say it's a historical fiction. It's just about done. I'm also working on a murder mystery. Writing is a good discipline to have, it keeps you thinking about how to express yourself and how to create characters."

If you have a chance to sign up for one of Bauslaugh's classes you would be treating yourself to an enlightening and entertaining class.



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