

# NEWS



*of the History Department at Boston University*

March 2008

## Jonathan Zatlin awarded ACLS fellowship

In February Professor Jonathan Zatlin learned from the American Council of Learned Societies that he had won a Charles A. Ryskamp Research Fellowship. This highly competitive award is a very generous and flexible grant that will allow him to take next year off to work on



his new book project.

Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in honor of Charles A. Ryskamp, literary scholar, distinguished library and museum director, and long-serving trustee of the Foundation, these fellowships support advanced assistant professors and untenured associate professors in the humanities and related social sciences whose scholarly contributions have advanced their fields and who have well-designed and carefully developed plans for new research. The fellowships are intended to provide time and resources to enable these faculty members to conduct their research under optimal conditions. The ultimate goal of the project should be a major piece of scholarly work by the applicant that

*See ZATLIN, page 3*



## Harvard University Press publishes essays on rise of the Right in America

In February Harvard University Press published *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, edited by Professor Bruce Schulman and former Boston University faculty member Julian Zelizer, now at Princeton. Authors of the essays collected in the volume include leading figures in American political history,

many of whom have delivered lectures at BU in recent years. We are pleased to reprint a section of the editors' Introduction:

**M**ost Americans have failed to recognize the importance of the 1970s to today's confusing political universe. They regard the decade as a national joke—an era of outrageous fashions, vapid music, and cultural excess. Iconic images of the period—a paralyzed Jimmy Carter unable to resolve the crisis in Iran while TV newsmen counted the days of “America Held Hostage,” the deranged veteran-turned-vigilante Travis Bickle stalking the menacing streets of New York in Martin Scorsese’s *Taxi Driver*, glittering disco balls and yellow Smiley faces—capture the conventional portrait of the 1970s as a decade when the country was frozen between the 1960s and 1980s, waiting to find itself and reestablish a national direction.

This book corrects that mistaken impression by showing that the seventies con-

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**A quarter century after the fact, historians have finally, albeit slowly, started to recognize the centrality of the 1970s to modern U.S. history.**

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stituted a turning point. The 1970s transformed American politics as much as the more famous 1960s. In race, ethnic, and gender relations, political economy, international relations, moral and cultural politics, and much more, America changed in the 1970s. A quarter century after the fact, historians have finally, albeit slowly, started to recognize the centrality of the 1970s to modern U.S. history. By assembling the most innovative new scholarship about this decade, these essays unearth the sources of the nation's present dilemmas and advance bold scholarly reinterpretations of the lost decade in America's recent past.

Remarkably, despite the varied topics and approaches of the new scholarship, there have emerged areas of consensus that highlight crucial shifts in the 1970s that have exerted enduring impact on contemporary American life. Although modern American conservatism took shape in the 1950s and 1960s, it never cohered as a full-scale political movement. After 1970 the conservative movement completed its organizational infrastructure—the political action committees, the volunteer operations, the radio talk shows, the think tanks, and the direct mail network. The movement developed a post-Vietnam foreign policy agenda that would define America's position through the end of the Cold War and after, establishing the foundation for the war against terrorism. Mobilizing previously quiescent evangelical Christians, the conservative movement also framed a new domestic agenda around cultural issues that would attract millions of voters into a reconstructed Republican Party. The conservative movement of the 1970s would become the motive force driving American politics for the next three decades. ♦

*in brief*

## EVENTS OF NOTE!

Professor Emerita **Merle Goldman** writes: "I just returned from a conference on a comparison of, and the relations between, China and India. Despite the similarities in population density and ratio of urban to rural sectors, the countries are quite different. Reasons for the differences provided much for the participants to talk about."

Graduate student **Michael McGuire** has been awarded the Margaret Grierson Scholar-in-residence fellowship at Smith College for the 2008-09 year. He will also be presenting a paper entitled "Ladies and Gentlemen?: Gender and American Humanitarian Aid in France, 1914-1919" at the graduate-student Conference on International History in March at Harvard.

Professor **Andrew Bacevich** reports the following publications: "NATO at Twilight," *Los Angeles Times* (February 11) and "Surge to Nowhere," *The Washington Post* (January 20). On February 8 he gave the keynote address at the Boston Model United Nations, attended by 1200 high school student-delegates.

Visiting Professor **Kathleen Dalton** had a chapter entitled "Teaching the History of American Reform in International Context" published in the volume *America on the World Stage: A Global Approach to U.S. History* (published by the Organization of American Historians). In February she was the featured speaker at the "Great Lives" lecture series sponsored by the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia. She has also been appointed to the Board of Editors of the *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*.

In February Professor **Thomas Glick** attended a meeting on "Darwin

Industries, Inc.: Getting in Gear for 2009" at Aarhus University, Denmark. The title of his paper was "Slicing the Pie: The Reception of Darwinism at the Sub-National Level," in which he described his current project on the reception of Darwinism in Boston from Asa Gray to Henry Adams and made a plea for studies of the reception of Darwin in specific cities.

Professor **Clifford Backman** reports that Cambridge University Press and the Officina di studi medievali in Palermo recently published an Italian translation of his first book (*Decline and Fall of Medieval Sicily*), *Declino e caduta di Sicilia medievale*. They are also publishing the proceedings of a conference they held on the book. "My contribution to the volume is a 220-page response to the other speakers at the conference, which was then jokingly entitled 'I miei pensieri corretti per tutto quanto' (My Correct Thoughts on Everything). It should appear this year." In addition, Oxford University Press is publishing a heavily revised second edition of Backman's *The Worlds of Medieval Europe*, due to be published in March. The book will include about 100 pages of new text and more than double the maps and pictures.

Professor **Jonathan Zatin** was interviewed for a PBS film entitled "The Weimar Republic" by Vincent Bagnall in January. He chaired a roundtable discussion on "Waiting for Political Transformation in the Former East" sponsored by the Center for European Studies at Harvard and the Hertie School of Management at the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung on January 14.

Professor **James McCann** is engaged in a busy spring. In February he was invited to the University of Wisconsin-Madison for three lectures on public health, food history, and forest ecology respectively. His visit was sponsored by the Nelson Institute for Culture, History, and Environment, the UW African Studies Program, and the Department of Geography. In late March he has been invited to his alma mater, Northwestern University, to serve as the primary discussant for the 2008 Seminar on Environmental His-

tory (Environmental historian Richard White will be the keynote speaker). In April he will travel north to Colby College to do a public lecture "Unintended Consequences: The Effect of Maize Cultivation on Malaria Transmission and Global Disease" sponsored by the Department of History and the Committee on Science, Technology, and Society. In April he will serve as the senior respondent for the Radcliffe Institute's Conference on Cultural Creativity in the Ethiopian America Diaspora. That conference will bring together scholars on musicology, the arts, history, and religion in the Ethiopian diasporic community. In January, McCann began the third year as principal investigator of a four-year grant from the Rockefeller Foundation for research on malaria and maize in Ethiopia; he is the director of this joint project with the Harvard School of Public Health, the World Health Organization, and the Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research. In March McCann will travel to Ethiopia to design a new phase of research that links malaria to patterns of historical change in climate, disease, and local agriculture. The Rockefeller-funded project has provided travel/research grants for students in History, Geography, Economics, Botany, Medical Entomology, and Environmental Studies at BU, Harvard, and Addis Ababa University. His next book will draw on this field work

to focus on the topic "Disease on Two Landscapes: Local Lives, Science, and Global Ecology." History undergraduate students Caroline Smartt (History/Pre-med) and Molly Williams (History/Photojournalism) traveled to Ethiopia in summer 2007 to participate in the Rockefeller project.

Professor **Eugenio Menegon** delivered a talk at the Harvard University Fairbank Center's "Seminar on Chinese Religions" on February 22. The talk, entitled "A Moving Target: European Students, Confucian School Masters, and Jesuit Emblematica in 17th-Century China," focused on the use of images in moral education in early modern Europe and late Ming China. The talk was also a tribute in memory of Erik Zürcher (1928-2008), professor of East Asian History and long-time director of the Sinological Institute at the University of Leiden (the Netherlands). Professor Zürcher, who died on February 7, was a source of inspiration for a generation of scholars of Chinese-Western relations and a towering figure in the fields of Chinese religions and Buddhism. Menegon collaborated last year with Zürcher by supplying the iconographic materials discussed in the Harvard talk for Zürcher's recently published English translation of the *Diary of Oral Admonitions* (1640s), a Chinese-language record of moral conversations between Chinese literati and Jesuit missionaries.

Professor **Simon Payaslian** published two articles in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Women in World History* (4 vols., Oxford University Press, 2008). The first article covers diaspora and women and consists of (1) an overview of the concept of "diaspora" and diasporization and (2) a comparative history. The second article is on genocide and women. It focuses on a number of cases in the twentieth century, including the Armenian genocide in the Ottoman Empire during World War I, the Jewish Holocaust and World War II, and the genocides in Cambodia (1975-79) and Rwanda (1994). In addition, Payaslian was appointed to the Editorial Board of the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*, one of the most prestigious journals in Armenian studies. ♦

ZATLIN (cont. from page 1)

will take the form of a monograph or other equally substantial form of scholarship.

Professor Zatlín's project, which has the working title "Jews and Money. Economic Change and Cultural Anxiety in Germany, 1870-1990," will ask a basic question: Why has the claim that Jews possess an innate affinity for money proven so durable? Where scholars have previously offered political or social explanations of anti-Jewish resentment in German history, "Jews and Money" will argue that German anti-Semitism is based on a confusion of money with the market, and Jews with money. This double confusion was brought about by Germany's rapid industrialization, which triggered a widespread anxiety that market-oriented practices were reducing spiritual to financial value. Informed by religious associations of Jews with money, many Germans equated Jews with the morally indifferent economic rationality at the heart of capitalism, thereby giving a face to the otherwise anonymous forces of modernization. But the identification of Jews with money did not simply give expression to elite mistrust or popular resentment of capitalism; economic anti-Semitism encouraged Germans on the right as well as the left to develop an illiberal approach to citizenship—a legacy that has continued to complicate German approaches to European identity and political integration. Through demographic studies of Jewish occupational distribution, biographies of Jewish economists and entrepreneurs, accounts of anti-Semitic trials, political scandals, and the history of an SS economic institute, "Jews and Money" will tell the story of the fortunes and misfortunes of Jews as well as their detractors in modern Germany.

Jonathan Zatlín currently holds the title of assistant professor and is in the process of being reviewed for tenure and promotion at Boston University; the department is seeking a replacement to teach his 2008-09 courses. ♦

## NEWS

### of the History Department at Boston University

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Editor: James T. Dutton, Department Administrator

*Items of interest for publication and changes of address should be sent to the editor.*

## ***In memoriam:*** **Robert V. Bruce**

We are pleased to present these tributes to the late Professor Robert Bruce, who died January 15:

*From Professor William R. Keylor:*

**R**obert V. Bruce entered the history graduate program at Boston University on the GI Bill in 1946. One of his professors was Warren Ault, who had founded the department of history in 1913 and would serve as its chair through the 1950s. After taking his MA and PhD degrees, Bob's request to Ault for a letter of recommendation as he prepared to face what was even then a challenging job market resulted in the unusual offer to teach in the department from which he had recently received his graduate degrees. He would remain at 226 Bay State Road for the rest of his career. In this way he represented something of an anomaly in the world of higher education in America. The humanities and social science departments of the country's major research universities are filled with faculty members trained in a very small number of elite graduate programs—the Ivy League, Stanford, Chicago, and a few select public institutions such as Berkeley, UCLA, Michigan, and Wisconsin. With the excellence of his written work—the only member of this department and one of the few members of this university to win a Pulitzer Prize—Bob Bruce demonstrated that training in one of the elite graduate programs is not the only pathway to academic distinction and a productive career as a historian.

Nina Silber has written about his path-breaking scholarship and writing in the field of nineteenth-century American history. Peter Holloran and Eric Schneider have recalled his role as a mentor of graduate students. I will confine my comments to the part of Bob's legacy that I know best: the important contributions that he made to

this department over the years. When Sidney Burrell, a Europeanist, began to build the history department of Boston University into a first-rate collection of teacher-scholars in the late 1960s and early 1970s, he did so with the behind-the-scenes support of his senior Americanist colleague who knew the field and who the outstanding prospects were. Shortly after I began my first year as chair of the department, Bob won the Pulitzer Prize in History in 1988 for his book, *The Launching of Modern American Science, 1846-1876*. At the reception the university held in his honor, I recalled that "Bob Bruce—in his customarily quiet, wry, self-effacing manner—was the History Department's head-hunter, always on the prowl for promising prospects for recruitment and appointment, always ready to employ his powers of persuasion to induce them to join up." These skills as talent scout and recruiting sergeant helped to bring to the department a long list of distinguished historians of American history: Joseph Boskin, Richard Bushman, David Hall, James Henretta, Aileen Kraditor, Arnold A. Offner, Alan Taylor, Sam Bass Warner, Jr., among others.

He served as a mentor and advisor to many of these Americanists. But he also found time to give encouragement and advice to colleagues in other fields. As someone whose scholarly interests were far removed from the American Civil War and Reconstruction, I can remember many an early evening in the BU pub—over countless cups of coffee and the occasional glass of something stronger—listening intently to his acute observations about scholarly issues of particular interest to me as well as about a broad range of topics on university or world affairs. These conversations were always punctuated by his dry but biting sense of humor. Bob was a kind and gentle man. A bachelor without children of his own, he lavished much love and affection on his niece, who cared for him in his final years, and on a dog whose antics he would recount to his bemused colleagues. But he would not hesitate to deliver a mordant judgment of this dean or that political leader when he thought the occasion called

for it. He exhibited an interesting combination of asceticism and gregariousness. He was someone who could closet himself in the library or the archive for long periods of time, and then turn up at the faculty club with an endearing smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye, with a glass of beer in one hand and a cigarette (more often than not begged from a colleague) in the other, holding forth on some topic that, as in the old E.F. Hutton ad, caused everyone nearby to drop what they were doing, cock their ears, and lean in his direction.

*From Professor Nina Silber:*

**B**ob Bruce had retired just as I began teaching at BU in 1990. I knew about him, of course, because of his impressive book on *Lincoln and the Tools of War*, a study of the extraordinary measures taken by Abraham Lincoln to advance the technology of war—the cannons and ironclads and minie balls—that had revolutionary consequences for the way the Civil War, and all subsequent wars, were fought. Certainly, as Bob Bruce's book suggested, Lincoln's ability to advance Union military technology had played a profound role in establishing the Northern victory. In any event, although I knew about this impressive scholarship, I never really got to know the scholar. I met him once, and saw some of his sharp wit first-hand, at a dinner party at Saul Engelbourg's home. I'd also heard some fond reminiscences about him from his former student, and now eminent Civil War scholar, Gabor Boritt. And then once, when I had moved into his former office, I opened a file cabinet drawer, only to discover a copy of Bob Bruce's Pulitzer Prize certificate (I assume it wasn't the original) that he had received for his book, *The Launching of Modern American Science*. I always hoped that my discovery of that certificate might be like a passing of the torch, a harbinger of the award that I, too, would one day receive. Well, needless to say, I'm still waiting. And I'm sorry that Robert Bruce isn't around to share

his wit and his scholarship, as well as his advice about how to win a Pulitzer Prize.

*From Peter Holloran* (PhD in 1982, now Associate Professor of History at Worcester State College; he is the author of *Boston's Wayward Children* [1989] and the *Historical Dictionary of New England* [2003]):

**T**he 1970s were a hectic time at BU, but when I returned to graduate school after two semesters in the Vietnam war there was one professor who took time to understand me. Bob Bruce was a WW II combat veteran, partly deaf as a result, but a kind, gentle, witty man. He offered his students much more than a stimulating lecture. He accepted his teaching fellows as colleagues and often as friends.

A talented scholar and lucid writer, he produced eight books despite a heavy teaching and advising schedule year after year. His courses attracted eager undergraduates and all the canny grad students. How many have modeled their teaching and writing careers on Bob Bruce? I certainly have. Everytime I teach the Civil War or 19th-century American history the memory of how the erudite Bruce taught this or that subject comes to mind. He was simply the most unforgettable teacher I ever met.

Long before the VCR arrived he used Hollywood movies to illustrate his courses, scheduling them in the evening, and usually appearing at the film with several grad students. Many times he could be found in the faculty pub across from 226 Bay State Road talking with colleagues and even some lucky teaching fellows. Then he'd hurry home; "have to feed Friday," he announced. He loved that dog! Offering his house in New Hampshire to dissertation writers looking for a week or two of isolation, he claimed it had the second-best history collection in Durham, after the UNH library. A frugal Scot and Yankee, he bought a new stereo but only hooked up one speaker because, he said, he was deaf in one ear.

Most of all, he was a remarkable

scholar whose professional life included mentorship and life outside the campus. Nobody was more pleased when we discovered the priest at my wedding in Marsh Chapel was a Civil War reenactor. He and Bob spent the afternoon in deep conversation on Gettysburg. I will miss his Christmas card with the clear but very small script inquiring how things are going in Boston.

*From Eric Schneider* (PhD in 1980, now Associate Director for Academic Affairs in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania; his latest book, *The Golden Spike: Heroin and the American City*, will be published by Penn Press in the fall):

**M**y first introduction to Bob Bruce occurred when I was a TF for the US history survey class. A student had upbraided me for referring to immigrants from northern Ireland as "Scotch-Irish" rather than "Scots-Irish" and I thought I would ask the expert. After all, who would know better than someone named Robert Bruce? Bob's reply, rather typical in my experience, was "well, I'm part Scots and part Scotch." Bob's deadpan humor sometimes went over the heads of his students, who continued to take notes while the TFs sitting in the back of Morse Auditorium chuckled away.

Bob always looked serious and perhaps a bit intimidating even to those of us who should have known better. When studying for orals, several of us were worried about what Bob might ask, and I remember confiding that fear to Joe Boskin, who looked at me as if I were insane. The look said it all. Bob was not someone to be afraid of, but to emulate. And so, I have modeled my teaching on that of others, and my dry sense of humor and dare I say crustiness were nurtured by Bob's.

Bob was an exacting historian, one who expected you to know your stuff and to live up to his standards of evidence and proof. He regaled us with tales of plagiarism, books retracted and careers ruined, from want of ethics, reinforcing with every story the importance of intellectual honesty, of re-

specting one's data, of listening to the evidence and following it where it led, whether one wanted to or not. And of course, of documenting one's sources. My footnote-mania, no doubt, was also due to Bob.

And then there was that wretched dog, a mongrel Bob had saved from the pound. Man's best friend is not mine, but Bob surely loved that dog, which he brought to the office and to class with him. It was not a quiet animal that curled up and went to sleep upon arriving in the office, but one that chewed on everything, slobbered all over you, barking and whining until you paid attention. Bob and that hound were inseparable: after I left Boston and moved to Philadelphia, Bob stayed overnight at my house—with the bloody dog. I couldn't very well ask that he leave it in the car, so we agreed that it could sleep in the enclosed porch in the front of the house, where it barked all night.

Bob had a poster in his office that quoted Eugene V. Debs: "While there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am in it; and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free." Bob Bruce, a kind and gentle man, identified with the underdog (literally) while reminding those of us who sat in his office and wanted to emulate the rigor of his scholarship and the elegance of his prose that there were larger purposes to life than simply scholarship.

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See ROBERT BRUCE, page 8

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## NEWS OF ALUMNI

John R. Willis (MA from Boston University, PhD from the University of London), Professor Emeritus of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton, died on November 25 at age 69, after having spent 35 years on the Princeton faculty. His work centered on Islam in Africa, and he served as director of the Program in African American Studies in 1972 and was the founding editor of *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Comparative Studies*.

## MILESTONES



The following students passed foreign language examinations in January:

Christine Axen: French  
 Beth Forrest: Catalan  
 Patricia Peknik: Spanish  
 Sarah Westwood: French

These students had research papers approved:

Andrew Ballou: "The Great War and the Kingdom of God: Changing Interpretations of International Peace in the Thought of G. Sherwood Eddy and Jane Addams"

Seth Blumenthal: "An Unconventional Truth: Guerilla Television, the 1972 Republican National Convention and Radicals' Search for Transparency in the Post-1968 Period"

An Verscuren: "'Eviter le pire'? The Policy of the United States toward Vichy France, June 1940-November 1942"

On February 25 Robyn Metcalfe passed her qualifying oral examination. Examiners in the major field of early modern European history were Professors Arianne Chernock, Thomas Glick, and Harriet Ritvo (of MIT); examiner in the minor field of nineteenth-century American history was Professor Louis Ferleger.

The following students had the dissertation prospectus approved:

Brian Casady: "An African City's Metabolism: A History of Nairobi's Energy Supply, 1890-2000." The first reader will be Professor Diana Wylie, and the second will be Professor James McCann.

Zachary Smith: "From the Well of the House: The Rise of Conservative Republicans in the United States House of Representatives from 1978 to 1994." The first reader will be Professor Julian Zelizer of Princeton University, and the second will be Professor Bruce Schulman.

# Notes on Registration

Fall 2008

The registration period for fall 2008 classes begins on April 2 for graduate students and on April 6 for undergraduates. The department will have special advising appointments available beginning March 24 and continuing through April 11 (after that period students may see faculty members during their regular office hours). History concentrators and graduate students may call the office (353-2551) or stop in (226 Bay State Road, Room 308) to make an advising appointment. Note that students are expected to see their assigned advisor (the advisor name is available on the Link). After an appointment, a student should go to the department office to obtain the code for Web registration. The procedure for admission to restricted classes will be as follows: For HI 200 (limited to history concentrators and social studies majors in the School of Education) students may register via the Web; students in the College of General Studies who intend to become history majors must contact James Dutton in the department to register for this course. Note that HI 200 is the new number for the previous required course, HI 301; either of these courses will count toward the major. For colloquia (400- and 500-level courses) students first see the instructor and then go to the department office, where the registration is handled by computer. Permission slips for admission to colloquia will be accepted beginning March 3. The department will maintain a waiting list for any of the restricted courses that reach their enrollment limit; students may sign up for waiting lists by calling the office or going to the "Courses" section of the History website.

Below are notes on new or changed courses for fall 2008:

- CAS HI 366: History of American Foreign Relations Since 1898. Analysis of the history of American foreign policy from the perspective of the changing world and regional international systems; emphasis on the effect of these systems and the impact of America on the creation and operation of international systems. *David Mayers*, MWF 12-1. For the first time this course will be taught with discussion sections; students must register for both the lecture and a section.
- CAS HI 589: Nature's Past: Histories of Environment and Society. Historians' approaches to environmental history, including human elements of technology, demography, local knowledge, political ecology, social organization. Geographical foci include North America, Atlantic World, Asia, and Africa. *James McCann*. Wed. 3-6. This new course is still in the approval process.
- CAS HI 595: Morocco: History on the Cusp of Three Continents. Explores the range and limits of social mixture—cultural, political, economic—as three civilizations met at the northwest corner of Africa and influenced one another from the eighth to the twenty-first centuries. *Diana Wylie*. Wed. 12-3.

Among faculty on leave next year will be Professors Charles Capper, Bruce Schulman, and Jonathan Zatin; the department is seeking replacement instructors for their courses.

As usual, check the department website ([www.bu.edu/history/courses.html](http://www.bu.edu/history/courses.html)) for up-to-date information on course additions and changes.

## Number of graduate applications increases

The members of this year's Graduate Studies Committee (Professors Arianne Chernock, James McCann, and Bruce Schulman and graduate student François Lalonde) have "earned their money" as they faced yet another year of increased applications to the graduate program in history. Contrary to predictions, an earlier deadline did not decrease the numbers, which reached 213 by the January 15 cutoff; 145 of those were for the PhD program, with 68 for the master's (the BA/MA program has been eliminated). As far as field is concerned, 103 applied in American history, 74 in European, 15 in African, and the remainder in assorted fields not offered by the department. After several years of minimal applications in the African field, this year's group shows a marked increase and a return to the numbers of previous years. As of the end of February, the admissions committee had acted on 176 applications, had admitted 49 and rejected 127 (the percentage of admissions is several points lower than in most previous

years). The committee has identified approximately 20 applicants as deserving of aid and will spend the next few weeks ranking those "aid pending" applicants and making offers of financial assistance to some of them. With three additional fellowships available for next academic year (for a total of five), the yield of such offers should be greater than in the past.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that although far too many applicants want to pursue fields in which Boston University does not offer graduate history training, most have "done their homework" in trying to match their interests to the strengths of the department, and the fields which the department considers its strongest are attracting more applicants. It is the rare applicant who has not consulted the departmental website; indeed, those who have not done so stand out: "I am applying for a PhD in Latin American history because I see your department's strengths in that field"—the field has one faculty member and a total of two courses carrying graduate credit. Or "I wish to enroll in Boston University's Irish studies program"—the applicant is probably thinking of a different end of Commonwealth Ave-

nue. And this year, among the early modern Europeanists with whom he wanted to work, one applicant mentioned John Gagliardo, who has not been listed among the active faculty since he retired in 1998! But those are the exceptions.

The admissions committee has been particularly strenuous this year in making sure there is a good fit between an applicant's academic interests and what the department can provide in graduate training; a substantial number of otherwise acceptable candidates have been rejected because the fit was not deemed adequate. Since all PhD admits are considered tentative until they are subsequently reviewed by the faculty member most likely to be the applicant's advisor, there is another hurdle in the process; on occasion the potential advisor determines that the applicant's interests are not really close enough so as to make a good match and the applicant is not admitted.

The members of the admissions committee have worked long and hard to assure a good entering class of students in the MA and PhD programs; whether they have reached that goal will become clearer next September.

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## The Hall of Plentiful Shelter (from Pouring Rain!)

On February 13, 13 members of the History 487 colloquium "Continuity and Change in Late Imperial and Modern China," together with instructor Eugenio Menegon, visited the 200-year-old Yin Yu Tang ("Hall of Plentiful Shelter") Chinese House, reconstructed on the grounds of the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem. All those numbers "13" must have been the reason for a day of pouring rain, perfect for visiting a museum and enjoying a nice dinner, but less so for walking on the streets of Salem.

The intrepid students (Stephanie Antoniou, David Brand, Alice Chin I-Hsien, Scott Guo, Hwang Ji Hee, Luke Herman, John Lymberis, Sally Moy, Nam Kimin, Laura Tiemstra, Kevin Tomaszek, Robin Wang, and Anna Watkin) spent one hour exploring the two floors of the Chinese House, accompanied by PEM Associate China Curator Bruce MacLaren. They then watched a short documentary on wedding customs and gender relations in today's Anhui province, the origin of the house. An animated discussion followed on the position of women in late imperial times and the related historiography, the status of Chinese women today, and the structure of the Chinese family. A convivial dinner closed the fieldtrip. And by then, the rain had stopped falling.



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ROBERT BRUCE (cont. from page 5)

*From Gabor Boritt* (PhD in 1967, now Fluhrer Professor of Civil War Studies and Director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College):

**B**ob Bruce has been my oldest friend in academia. I met him in South Dakota in 1963, and the last time I talked to him was two days before he died in Olympia, Washington. I stayed at his home two or three years ago, since my middle son, Jake, a filmmaker, wanted to film him. He was a very funny man, and so he remained to the end of his life. He stayed at my farm many, many times over the years. In the year he won the Pulitzer Prize, he arrived in his old, broken-down car from Massachusetts, about eight hours away, and sure enough he bumped it into my pickup. It did not matter because my car was just as old. For quite a few years, he served as the “historian in residence” at the Gettysburg Civil War Institute’s week-long summer session of 350 people. People loved him. After he was not able to do this, people continue to talk about him to this day. His wry humor was priceless.

Perhaps many of you will talk about his fine work, but many of you may not know that when I helped start the Lincoln Prize, he helped immediately—three years he was on the jury and helped decide who would win the \$50,000 prize. After that no one else worked for the jury for more than one time (except Jim McPherson). If some of the young people reading this may wonder what they may have to do for their first job—after his PhD Bob went to work in a pre-school, and his job included coaching. He did not like it. He is smiling now. ♦

## Coming Events

### Department Seminar

Friday, April 4, 2 P.M., Location to be announced

### Sarah Phillips

Assistant Professor of History, Columbia University,  
Alumna of Boston University

“Supermarket to the World”

### Gaspar Bacon Lecture

Monday, May 5, 5 P.M., Location to be announced

### Stephen Pitti

Professor of History and American Studies,  
Director of the Program in Ethnicity, Race, and Migration,  
Yale University

“The World of César Chávez”