

NEWS



of the History Department at Boston University

April 2009

Simon Rabinovitch recommended for Jewish history position

To begin appointment in fall

Concluding the search for a new faculty member in the field of modern Jewish history, the department has recommended Simon Rabinovitch for appointment as Assistant Professor of History, effective September 2009. Rabinovitch is currently Alexander Grass Post-Doctoral Research Associate in Jewish History at the University of Florida.

He received his BA in history and Jewish Studies from McGill University in 2002 and his MA and PhD from Brandeis University, the latter in 2007. He is currently revising his dissertation for publication under the title "Jewish Nationalism and Autonomy in Late Imperial and Revolutionary Russia"; it traces the development, in theory and practice, of non-territorial Jewish autonomy for Russian Jewry, from the turn of the twentieth century to the creation of the Soviet Union. In addition, he has two other books under contract: "Diasporic Nationalism in Modern Jewish Thought" (Brandeis University Press) and "Modern Jewish Politics: Ideologies, Identities, and the Jewish Question" (a co-edited volume, University of Wisconsin Press).

At the University of Florida, Rabinovitch has taught courses in the history of the Jews in Russia and Eastern Europe and the history of modern Jewish political movements. At Boston University, in the fall semester he will offer HI 223 ("Jews in the Modern World") and HI 552 ("Topics in Jewish History"). For the latter course, which carries colloquium credit toward the undergraduate major and also carries credit as a graduate-level course, Professor Rabinovitch will cover the topic "Jewish Political Movements and Ideologies." This course introduces students to the broad array of Jewish political ideologies, groups, movements, and parties in the modern world. It uses readings in political theory to discuss the process of Jewish politicization and its implication for modern Jewish history. Rabinovitch will also be teaching broader courses in modern European history and expects to play an important role in the Judaic Studies Program at Boston University.

Members of the search committee for this position were Professors Thomas Glick (chair), Marilyn Halter, and James Johnson.

The department looks forward to welcoming Simon Rabinovitch to the faculty next fall.

in brief

EVENTS OF NOTE!

Graduate student **Michael McGuire** has been notified by Haverford College that he has won a Gest Fellowship at the school. The award for \$2,000 will support Michael's research in Haverford's Quaker Collection. "Your project on Quaker NGOs that offered humanitarian aid to France during and after World War I," a Haverford official stated, "is one that will surely be of great use to future scholars and it is clear that our collection will offer you many resources."

In late February graduate student **David Mislin** presented the paper "One as the Sea': Protestants, Catholics, and the Politics of American Temperance Reform, 1875-1900" at the Graduate Symposium in Religious Studies at Florida State University.

Professor **Simon Payaslian** participated on a panel entitled "The State of Armenian Studies Chairs and Programs in the United States" at the 35th Anniversary Conference of the Society for Armenian Studies, March 26-28, held at UCLA.

In early March Professor **Marilyn**

Halter gave an invited lecture, "Shopping for Identity: The Marketing of Ethnicity," for the Center for Hispanic Marketing Communication, Florida State University.

On February 27 Professor **Jon Roberts** gave a plenary address on "Changing Protestant Responses to Darwinism, 1859-1900" at a symposium entitled "War and Peace: 150 Years of Christian Encounters with Darwin" at Bryan College in Dayton, Tenn. In addition, his essay attacking the myth "That Darwin Destroyed Natural Theology" has been published in *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion*, ed. Ronald L. Numbers (Harvard University Press, 2009).

Professor **Houchang Chehabi** attended the biennial conference of the Association for the Study of Persianate Societies in Lahore, where he presented a paper titled "Kushti and Pahlavan as Markers of the Persianate World." He then traveled through Pakistan for two weeks—sometimes with bodyguards provided by helpful university administrators.

On March 26 graduate student **David Atkinson** presented a paper at the meeting of the Organization of American Historians in Seattle. The paper, entitled "Whiteness, the British Empire, and Roosevelt's 'Great White Fleet,' 1908," was part of a panel sponsored by the Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era.

Graduate student **Kathryn Lamontagne** presented her paper "I brought this from São Miguel': Notions of Identity and *Saudade* for Azorean Women in Southeastern New England" at the University of Rhode Island's Third Annual Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference, March 28.

The Constitution and Public Policy, an anthology of essays edited with an introduction by Professors **Bruce Schulman** and Julian Zelizer has just been published by Penn State University Press. The volume collects the papers delivered at the first international American Political History Conference at Boston University in March 2006.

Professor **Nina Silber** delivered two public lectures in March: One was a presentation given on March 12 to the

Treasury Executive Institute (no, she was not asked to solve the current economic crisis), a book group that draws together government executives from various departments. She discussed her recent book, *Gender and the Sectional Conflict*. On March 14 she spoke at the "Lincoln and the South" Conference sponsored by the American Civil War Center in Richmond, Virginia, where she addressed the question of "Lincoln in Memory."

Professor **Andrew Bacevich** has published two book reviews: *The Gamble: General Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq* by Thomas E. Ricks (in the *London Review of Books*) and *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* by David Kilcullen (appearing in *The National Interest*).

Professor **Thomas Glick** attended a colloquium at Cambridge University on February 26 in honor of the publication of *The Reception of Charles Darwin in Europe* (see January 2009 issue of this newsletter), which he edited along with Eve-Marie Engels of Tübingen. The meeting was held at Christ's College, where Darwin's rooms (as an undergraduate) have been newly restored for the Darwin Bicentennial. The subject of his talk was "The Reception of Darwin: Protestants and Catholics." He then went to the University of Santiago de Compostela to initiate the Darwin Bicentennial program there. His talk (delivered on March 3 at the university's satellite campus in Lugo and on March 5 at the main campus) was on "Evolution in Galicia. Darwinism in the Work of Roberto Nóvoa Santos," a great Spanish pathologist whose work was suffused with Darwinian tropes.

Professor **Jeffrey Rubin** and his daughter Emma co-authored an op-ed piece in the *Christian Science Monitor* about the March 14 meeting between President Lula of Brazil and President Obama.

Professor **Cathal Nolan** has agreed to serve as International Relations Editor-in-Chief for *Oxford Bibliographies Online*, a multi-year online research database to be published by Oxford University Press starting in 2010. This will be Oxford's main reference publication

venue going forward. Multi-disciplinary and comprehensive, it will serve advanced researchers, graduate students, and undergraduates. Nolan is writing the model entry for the IR module, on "War." He will head the IR Advisory Board, choose contributors, and edit and approve all articles.

Professor **Betty Anderson** conducted a workshop with elementary and high school teachers on "Gender in the Muslim World" at Primary Source, a resource for teachers in Watertown, Mass.

Professor **Allison Blakely** delivered a paper entitled "The Influence of Afro-America on Emerging Afro-Europe" at a conference called "Evolutionary Momentum in African American Studies: Legacy and Future Directions," held at Clark University February 28, and another on "Blacks in Early Modern Europe: Image vs. Reality?" at a conference titled "Black Diaspora and Germany Across the Centuries," held at the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C., March 19-21.

Alumnus **Jesse D. Rodgers** (BA in history and international relations 2007) of Northfield, N.J., will be working as a summer judicial extern for The Honorable Katharine S. Hayden, US District Judge for the District of New Jersey. Jesse is finishing his first year of law school at Seton Hall University School of Law in Newark. ◆

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of the History Department at Boston University

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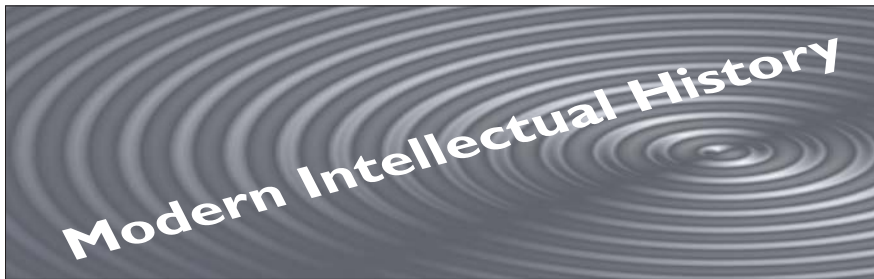
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Editor: James T. Dutton, Department Administrator

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



During spring break, Professor Diana Wylie visited South Africa to see Johannesburg Art Gallery's show—"Thami Mnyeale and Medu Art Ensemble"—that derived from her most recent book *Art + Revolution*. She stands here in the gallery with Jeanine Howse, left, and Khwezi Gule, curator of the exhibit.



Publication of the April 2009 issue of *Modern Intellectual History* (a journal co-edited by Professor Charles Capper) has been announced. The table of contents is as follows:

Articles

- Jacob Jost, "Hume's Four Philosophers. Recasting the Treatise of Human Nature"
- Jason Frank, "Sympathy and Separation: Benjamin Rush and the Contagious Public"
- Charles Thorpe, "Community and Market in Michael Polanyi's Philosophy of Science"
- Matthew Specter, "Habermas's Political Thought, 1984-1996. A Historical Interpretation"

Essays

- Michael Sonenscher, "'The Moment of Social Science': The Decade Philosophique and Late Eighteenth-Century French Thought"
- Mary O. Furner, "Inquiring Minds: Social Investigation in History and Theory"
- Benjamin Lazier, "Natural Right and Liberalism: Leo Strauss in Our Time"

Review Essays

- Alfred von Frank, "On Transcendentalism: Its History and Uses"
- Lewis Perry, "Scriptures and Slaughter: The American Civil War as a Theological and Moral Crisis"
- Siegfried Mattl, "The Ambivalence of Modernism from the Weimar Republic to Red Vienna"



On March 5 graduate student Darcy Pratt was married to Jason Jacobsen. She will be known as Darcy Pratt Jacobsen.

Darcy is a PhD student working with Professor Clifford Backman in medieval history.

History Department Seminar

On Wednesday, April 22, at 12 noon in Room 504, Franziska Seraphim, Associate Professor of History at Boston College, will speak on "After the Trials: War Criminals and Social Integration in 1950s Japan and Germany."

This presentation lays out the contours of Professor Seraphim's current book project that looks comparatively at the "war criminals problem" in 1950s Japan and Germany as it wove itself in and out of international relations and domestic politics, public debate and social protest, and relates it to concurrent processes of professional rehabilitation and social integration.



Commencement 2009



Friday-Sunday, May 15-17, is commencement weekend at Boston University. This year the History Department ceremony will be held in the College of General Studies, 871 Commonwealth Avenue.

The all-university commencement is held at Nickerson Field beginning at 1 p.m. Detailed information is available on the website www.bu.edu/commencement. At various times on May 17 the CAS departments will hold individual convocations, at which diplomas and senior prizes are awarded. The History Department ceremony begins at 4 p.m. in Jacob Sleeper Hall in CGS (there are two entrances to the auditorium: on the main floor and on the lower level of the building). Department chair Charles Dellheim will preside at the convocation, which is expected to last approximately an hour. Graduates sit in the front rows of the auditorium; each student's name will be on a seat. Two winners of senior prizes will give brief talks, after which diplomas will be handed out. There is no limit (within reason) to the number of guests graduates may invite to the convocation; no tickets are required.

Following the convocation a reception will be held in the Gilbane Lounge (located adjacent to the auditorium on the lower level of CGS).

The department asks that all graduates call the office to let us know whether they will be attending the History convocation. The auditorium is easily accessible for wheelchairs; students may phone the department with questions about accessibility.

For more information, visit the department's website, www.bu.edu/history/commencement.html or phone 617-353-2555.



Graduate Student Milestones

These students had research papers approved for the degree:

Jonathan Koefoed, "Bildung and the Republic: Intellectuals and Education in the Life and Thought of James Marsh"

Jolanta Komornicka, "The Construction of Identity: Fourteenth-Cen-

ture England's Aristocracy"

Susan Walker, "Inventing the Jet Engine: The Trans-Atlantic Transfer during World War II"

William McCoy's dissertation prospectus was approved: "To Heal the Leper: The Umbuluzi Leprosy Hospital in Swaziland, 1948 to 1981." The first reader will be Professor Diana Wylie, and the second will be Professor James McCann.

Into the archives

Graduate student Michael McGuire is currently in France conducting research on his dissertation funded by a Boston University Graduate Research Abroad Fellowship. He wrote to the department administrator recently:

My research progress all depends on what's in a box. The French subject headings are rather opaque, and they never really convey how much information can be found. Their publicly published guides (there is a difference between the publicly and the privately published guides in the Archives Nationales) will simply tell you that files 271-384 deal with topic X. The privately published ones will offer more pertinent information. However, it's still rather spartan. For instance, I went through nine boxes in the first four days, but then spent three days going through one box. The latter had lists of French refugees listed by the departments (states) in which they were staying. Let's just say that the lists were extensive, and I've seen only half of them. One of the archivists was worried I was going to contort my neck because of the positions I have had to assume to take digital photos.

You, incidentally, would approve of the French archivists. They take their tasks very seriously. They patrol the room the way proctors are supposed to patrol students during an exam. They even search your papers when you leave, to make certain you don't take anything with you, à la Sandy Berger. Normally, you wouldn't expect to see academics do this, but every now and then it happens. For example, today I witnessed one researcher get caught taking out a typed note card that apparently came from the file she was examining. Mea culpas were intoned.

The strike cost me a day. C'est la France. However, there were no massive disturbances on the street, and I took advantage of the time to learn how to do laundry in a foreign language (the apartment I've rented has a washer/

dryer combo). It sounds convenient, except that for a single, European-sized (must everything be small over here?) load, it takes about 110 minutes from start to finish.

I have a kitchenette. Everything minus an oven. How many men can say that they have cooked in Paris? Sadly, it is not as impressive over here as it will be in Boston.

In many ways, Paris is a great deal like Boston. It has an above- and below-ground transit system, fancy restaurants I cannot afford to dine in regularly, a 57 bus route that goes by where I live, and pictures of Jennifer Aniston that can be found everywhere. Boston wins, though, on the running paths. The Seine is rather nasty for a jog (the French call it “faire du footing”), so I have taken to the Jardin des Plantes. That sounds rather fancy, except that nothing is blooming over here. ♦



Michael Lienesch

Professor of Political Science,
University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill

“Why We’re Stuck
With the Scopes Trial”

Monday, May 4, 5 P.M.
Stone B50 (675 Commonwealth Avenue)

American political history conferences held at BU

The fourth annual International Conference in American Political History, held at the Boston University Castle on March 19 and 20, showed the central role of the BU History Department in reviving the field of American political history. The annual conference rotates each year among BU, Princeton, and Cambridge University. Four years ago, BU began the conferences, and the yearly publications that arise from each meeting and the high caliber of scholars who participated in this year’s conference reveal just how central the BU American Political History Institute has been in reinvigorating political history. This year’s conference, “Rethinking American Liberalism: Progressive Politics in the Public Sphere,” challenged the conventional narrative of conservative political dominance in modern politics. Over two days, Bruce Schulman, Julian Zelizer, Anthony Badger, Tim Stanley, and Jonathan Bell led discussions and debates about the various definitions of liberalism and its often-contradictory implications in American politics.

On the following days, March 21 and 22, the first BU Graduate Student Political History Conference took place. Over the course of the weekend, graduate students from across the country and the UK joined in vibrant discussions about the 1972 election, expertise in foreign policy, sexual politics, New England colonial structures, and the questions of race in politics from the Civil War to the present. Experts in each field served as commentators to enrich the conference experience and to bring the graduate student community closer to professionals in political history. Matthew Lassiter of the University of Michigan gave the keynote address, “Political History Beyond the Red-Blue Divide.” This inspiring address motivated students to pursue new angles in political history and warned students to avoid the trappings of contemporary scholarship. Professor Lassiter urged students to avoid always “ending with Reagan” and relying only on electoral results to tell the narrative of politics. The panels of the weekend demonstrated how graduate students have already begun to take Lassiter’s advice as panelists explored the rich political history of urban structures, race relations, and cultural forms.

Kathryn Brownell



Anthony Badger, Timothy Thurber, and Matthew Lassiter participate in a panel at the American Political History Conference

Photos by Katie Brownell



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**Scenes from the Conference on American
Political History and from the Graduate
Student Political History Conference**



At the grad student conference: Lily Geismer (University of Michigan), Anne Blaschke, Kate Jewell, David Atkinson, and Katie Brownell



Timothy Stanley, Charles Capper (moderator of the session), and Bruce Miroff



The conclusion of the faculty conference: Anthony Badger, Timothy Stanley, Jonathan Bell, Julian Zelizer, and Bruce Schulman