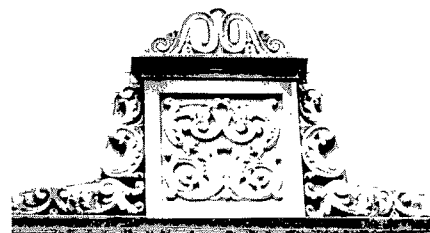


NEWS



of the History Department at Boston University

November 1997

Search for historian of the Middle East begins

With the recent announcement from Professor Norman Bennett that he would be retiring at the end of the current academic year, the department obtained approval from the Dean's office to begin a search for his successor. Or, to be more precise, for a faculty member with the expertise to teach his two-semester course in World History. To define the position further, the members of the faculty examined remaining gaps in the department's curriculum and decided to seek a candidate who specializes in the history of the Middle East and North Africa. Not since Professor Irene Gendzier transferred to the Political Science Department in 1994 has the department had a full-time specialist in the Middle East—although Professor Herbert Mason has for the past four years taught what was Professor Gendzier's "Introduction to the Middle East" (HI 392).

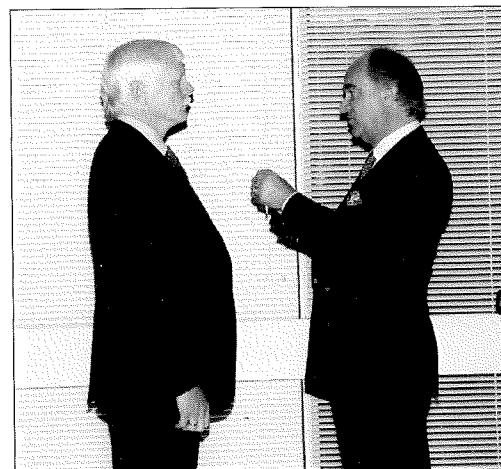
Advertisements for the tenure-track position have been placed in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, in *Perspectives* (the newsletter of the American Historical Association), and on the H-net Web site; the closing date is December 31.

Members of the search committee are Professors Thomas Glick (chairman), Irene Gendzier, Marilyn Halter, and Diana Wylie, with Professor Herbert Mason as a consultant to the committee. The department expects campus visits by finalists early in 1998. ♦

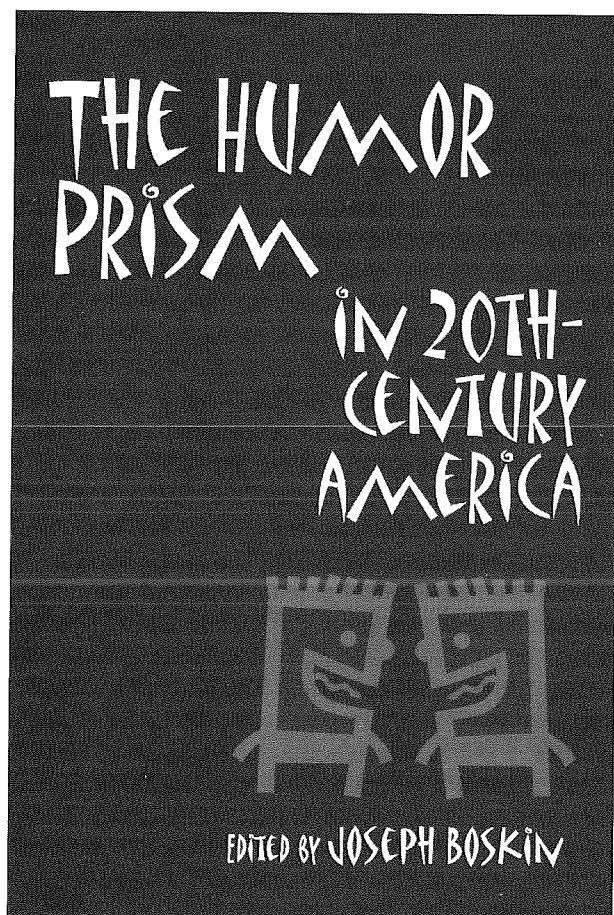
William Keylor receives honor from France

On September 27 François Bujon de l'Estang, Ambassador of France to the United States, presented Department Chairman William Keylor with a medal designating him Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite. In making the award, the Ambassador explained the criteria for the award: "The French Republic, in naming you to this prestigious order, recognizes the exceptional quality of your career as a teacher, a researcher, and a writer." He went on to say, "You are truly one of the intellectuals who have contributed to a deeper knowledge of our two countries, and of what unites them and of what occasionally separates them. In the Franco-American family, as in all families, there are, from time to time, misunderstandings. The vocation of the historian is to explain them and, at the same time, to overcome them. Your role is therefore not only academic but also to a certain extent political and diplomatic. The professional diplomat needs to understand history, but the historian is, in a certain way, entrusted with a diplomatic mission. And it is to render homage to the lucidity, the tact, and the finesse with which you have been able to fulfil yours, in complete intellectual independence, that the French government has decided...to designate you as Knight of the National Order of Merit."

In his acceptance speech, Professor Keylor spoke of his love for things French—"the culture, the cuisine, the wine, the literature, the land, and, last and certainly not least, the history." He attributed his interest to a succession of teachers "who passed along to me, their student, the interest in France that they had earlier acquired" and said that his interest "developed into a veritable passion during a six-month sojourn at the Stanford overseas campus in Tours, amid the chateaux of the Loire, near Balzac's house and the foundry where Jeanne d'Arc had obtained her armor. Hitchhiking to Paris every weekend, sharing a room with three of my classmates in a little hotel in the *quatrième arrondissement* for four francs a night, I fell under the spell of the so-called 'city of light.'" Later in his life his wife Rheta became part of his love for France: "Whether hiking or skiing in the Alps, exploring the thatched-roof cottages of a little village in Brittany, cavorting on the beaches of



François Bujon de l'Estang, Ambassador of France to the U.S., prepares to pin the National Order of Merit on Professor William Keylor.

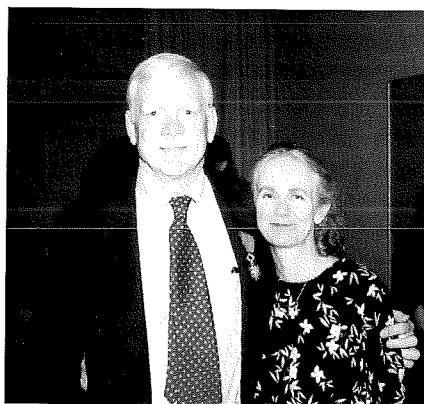


***Human Prism* edited by Joseph Boskin**

Wayne State University Press has recently published *The Humor Prism in 20th-Century America*, edited by Professor Joseph Boskin. The volume also includes several chapters by Boskin: the Introduction ("History and Humor"), "American Political Humor: Touchables and Taboos," "The Urban Landscape," "Saloons and Burlesques," "African-American Humor: Resistance and Retaliation," and "The Giant and the Child: 'Cruel' Humor in American Culture."

Prof. Boskin explains the focus of the book in his introductory essay: "Exploring the dynamics and disguised messages behind humor, especially people's humor, is the overall thrust of this volume. Of all humor's characteristics the correlation between an event and its comedic expression is surely one of the most intriguing. Presented here are diverse essays that analyze the social and intellectual function of humor framed by the question: to what extent and in what ways does humor reflect moments small and circumstances large? These pieces also explore the character and major influences on American humor in the present century, tracing the relationship between social change and conflict as they were reflected and transformed in the national humor." ♦

the Côte d'Azur, tasting the wines of Bordeaux and Burgundy, or attending the sometimes-puzzling lectures of the psychologist Jacques Lacan in Paris, we shared the enjoyment, excitement, and the sense of wonder that so much of the French landscape—physical as well as intellectual—evokes." At the conclusion of his remarks, Professor Keylor alluded to the French Ambassador's comments on the relationship between France and the United States, which, he asserted, "has not always been an entirely congenial one." He expressed the hope that as France becomes a member of the new Europe of the twenty-first century, "the French people will never forget their longstanding affiliation of friendship and mutual respect with their oldest ally, whose citizens wish them well as they embark on their bold European adventure." ♦



Professor William Keylor and his wife Rheta at the reception following the awarding of the medal. The ceremony was held in Barristers Hall of the Boston University School of Law. L'Ordre National du Mérite was established by President Charles de Gaulle in 1963 to honor individuals in politics or the military as well as those who have distinguished themselves in the private sector. Another recent recipient is Prof. Robert Paxton, who taught Prof. Keylor at Columbia University.

The following students received the B.A. in history in September 1997:

Matthew Fiorillo (*cum Laude*)
Jessica Rae Fuoco (*Magna cum Laude*), with a Bachelor's degree from the School of Education
Andrew Joseph Gorenstein
Stefan Carum Grovit
Charles M.A. Guido
Jebadiah Rex Holbrook
Stephanie Gallant Leonardi
Philip Charles Williams
Albert Leland Wing

Research in Venice

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

To get to the Venetian State Archives from our apartment I went left on the Strada Nuova, crossed the Cannaregio canal in the direction of the train station, traversed the Grand Canal on the arching stone bridge, and then began a series of turns that took me past crumbling *palazzi* and hidden gardens—left, right, right, left, right, right, right—across four more foot-bridges, past a sleeping cat or two, suddenly into a deserted *campo*, and just as suddenly back into a narrow alley where all is dark again, across one last bridge to come gloriously upon the wide square before the towering façade of the Frari and, in its shadow to the right, the humble doors of the place. That labyrinthine route is what the Venetians would call “*Sempre diretto*” if asked directions, which means “Straight ahead.”

In Paris such a response would be clever, but the Venetian mind, by nature private and a touch sullen, is seldom given to irony. And through the summer, walking the daily route with my head bent over a newspaper, I came to see the truth in their “*Sempre diretto*.” More complicated itineraries deserve—and receive—more complicated instructions, involving boats (either human or petrol powered, and sometimes both), many more bridges, and, in the worst case, negotiating the clogged warren of streets near San Marco. (I devised four separate routes to the National Library in the Piazza San Marco to try to avoid the arteries choked with tourists, all equally defeating.)

The Venetian State Archives are housed in a big monastic building, formerly home to the city’s Franciscan monks. You read your crumbling documents in the monastery’s vaulted assembly-hall which opens out into the cloister with its flamboyant baroque sculptures of saints about to leave the earth for other destinations. The church of the Frari reminds you of its proximity every half hour with explosive swinging peals that can shatter the most absorbed concentration. The Archives constitute by legend one of the largest manuscript collections in the world. Travelers to the city have tried to calculate the extent of its holdings. The nineteenth-century geographer Andrea Balbi estimated that there were 693,176,720 separate pages in its documents and books, and that if one placed them end to end they would encircle the globe eleven times, with a surface area large enough for the entire human race to stand on. The secrecy of the Venetian state led earlier inquirers to imagine what was behind its unassuming doors: some said it housed 14 millions volumes, others that it had 1,000 rooms. In fact it has 280, and contains roughly 250,000 books. The earliest document dates from 883.

One’s first impression working there is that the stereotypes of Italian inefficiency are gross distortions. I introduce myself and present my passport to a man I call in my mind the President of the Room. He sits at a massive wooden desk on a small raised platform in the center of the room against one wall, watching all before him with an eagle eye. He inspects my passport cursorily, stamps his approval, and points me toward the manuscript request bulletins. No photos, no special identification cards, no proof demanded that I was who I claimed to be. In an hour’s time a small red light flashes at my desk, the signal that the summer’s first box of documents awaits me, and soon I am transcribing more or less legible reports from police spies monitoring masked Venetians at balls, during carnival, in hushed conversations on some deserted alley, at formal diplomatic events. Working in the archives has a curious effect on the experience of time. Individual days may pass slowly, but because the days so resemble one another you do not notice that weeks have passed, that there are still as many boxes to see as there were at the outset, and that you really should devise a strategy for getting through what you must see. Months pass thus.

In summers the Archives are filled with foreign graduate students and professors—many of them Americans—and fewer local scholars. We all follow an unspoken code of work, which entails minimal conversation with others once inside the reading room. This does not preclude an expatriate community of restaurant-goers after-hours, but inside it is all business, which pleases the President of the Room. He is a squat, bespectacled man with thin hair and no neck. He takes care not to smile, except, I notice, when talking to one American graduate student who speaks flawless Italian and is very pretty. Some days he



The knowledgeable cook will undoubtedly recognize, in this photo of Venice, the doorway at the left—none other than that of Marcella Hazan, perhaps the pre-eminent authority on Italian cuisine.

paces between the tables with his hands clasped behind him, watching, watching, and then all at once he swoops down to chide a scholar for resting his oily fingers on a manuscript, or failing to align a book properly on its pulpit. He seems to enjoy his job.

One day a scholar catches my eye for what even I, a newcomer to the Archives, sense as a breach of the code. It is a rather well-known professor from California, a bushy-bearded fellow who has written on pugilism in Venice. In his mouth is an unlit cigar and he stares you full in the face as he unpacks his belongings. His shorts, however, are incongruous, more Venice Beach than Venice. He plugs his laptop into the socket in front of him, and into another he plugs a small electric fan. I glance uneasily toward the President of the Room.

When the scholar returns from his two-hour lunch the fan is gone. The researcher next to him points to the President of the Room, who is indeed watching with a Cheshire smile. He waits for the scholar to approach, and now that the cigar has been smoked, the shorts become his defining feature, which is puerile. He is told that the fan will not be returned until the end of the day, to which he responds with appropriate childishness by slamming his notebook on the desk.

Doing research in Venice requires flexibility and a willingness always to tolerate distractions. The manuscript room of the National Library is next to the city's largest accumulation of T-shirt vendors and gondola barkers, and on hot days when the windows are open they are there with you. Working at the Museo Correr, also on the Piazza San Marco, means that the Hungarian waltzes of the caffè orchestras below sometimes waft up to serenade you. When I was told that bookworms had infested large portions of the books I needed at the National Library, I gritted my teeth and shifted my sights. The sign, dated April, said it would be three months. When I asked about it in July, three months after April, the bibliographer said, "The fumigation will be completed by Christmas." "By next summer?" I then asked. "We hope so," she

replied.

But nowhere is one more willingly distracted from work than in Venice. Being delayed by traffic does not mean sitting in a car on I-93 but waiting for the two-man boat called a *traghetto* to come back from the other side of the Grand Canal to ferry you and twelve others across. Behind the cry of "*Gondola, Gondola!*" that interrupts your concentration there is the regular gentle lapping of the water against the quayside. And should the bells of the Frari grow too clangorous at noon you can always put down your pen, nod pleasantly for good measure to the President of the Room as you slip past him, and sit quietly in the vast, vaulting church next door, where the shades of Titian, Monteverdi, and a dozen doges slumber, to put the bookworms and the tourists and the petty tyrants who after all are only doing their job in their proper perspective. ♦

in brief

EVENTS OF NOTE!

Professor **Norman Bennett** has published an article, "O vinho do Porto na diplomacia anglo-portuguesa durante o século XIX," in *Douro: Estudos e Documentos*.....On October 8 a camera crew and interviewer from the Arts and Entertainment channel visited the department to do a filming session with Prof. Bennett for an upcoming program in their Biography series. The program will discuss the careers of David Livingstone and Henry M. Stanley, their famous meeting—"Dr. Livingstone I Presume?"—and the impact of such men on Africa. The feature has been scheduled for viewing on December 7.

On October 26 Professor **Thomas Glick** was elected president of the Northeast Chapter of the Society for the Preservation of Old Mills at its inaugural meeting at Old Sturbridge Village. SPOOM is a national organization dedicated to the preservation of historic wind- and watermills. The Northeast Chapter, which Glick founded, comprises New York and the New England states and has 100 mem-

bers. On October 25 Glick addressed the third annual South Tide Mills Preservation Symposium in Quincy on the topic "New Visions: A Northeast Regional Chapter for SPOOM."

Professor **Fred Leventhal** was interviewed about the death of the Princess of Wales and the future of the British monarchy by Channel 4 News, WBZ radio, the *Boston Globe*, the *Boston Herald*, and the *Middlesex News*....He served as commentator at a session on "Politics and Policy in Twentieth Century Britain" at the Northeast Conference on British Studies, held at Dartmouth College September 26-27.

Professor **Saul Engelbourg** received a grant of \$2000 from the National Italian American Foundation to support a conference entitled "From Science to Philosophy: The Legacy of Primo Levi."...On October 18 Prof. Engelbourg chaired and delivered a comment at the fall meeting of the New England Historical Association held at the University of Connecticut at Storrs; the session was entitled "Education, Liberalism, and the State in Comparative Perspective: The United States, Germany, and Brazil, 1930-1950."

Graduate student **April Burgos** has had a paper proposal accepted for presentation at the Thirty-Third International Congress on Medieval Studies to be held May 7-10, 1998, at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. Her paper, "Vestiges of Al-Andalus in the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada," will compare and contrast the Caliphate of Córdoba in 959 AD with the Nasrid ruler Muhammad V in the Kingdom of Granada 400 years later, in 1359 AD. ♦

NEWS

of the History Department at Boston University

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Editor: James T. Dutton, Department Administrator

The History of the Western World, According to the Undergraduates of HI 101

The following is a summary of HI 101—Western history from its origins to the start of the Renaissance—according to excerpted sentences from students' papers and exams. Spelling and syntax remain exactly as the students themselves wrote. I've stitched these little gems together to provide a roughly continuous chronology. I hope (if that's the right word) to offer a follow-up, based on exams and papers in HI 102. In any case, this is offered in a spirit of good fun, and I hope that's how you will read it.

Clifford Backman

The people that believed in Yahwah were desperate. The Hebrew god was powerful and sent profits to deliver His message. In order to please the Hebrew god the only thing man had to sacrifice was a life of sin. The Old Testament covers approximately two thousand years, from 1800 BC to 1600 BC; yet the text itself was written about 90 AD. Abraham was a wandering tribe. Here again, we have the same situation as with epic poetry. The main event in the development of Christianity was the crucifixion of Jesus. On Judgment Day the Christian God will reward the righteous with happiness and immortality in heaven.

Mesopotamia was located at the bottom of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. These rivers would often flood erotically and cause great havoc. In Sumer, dying was unattractive. Flooding was a more pleasant experience in Egypt than in Sumer. Dying obviously was pleasant to the Egyptians, and a way for humans to relate to one another. But nature sort of bored the Egyptians and caused them to form a firm government.

Entering the Greeks, we find that their structure is a little different. Greeks gods participated deeply in human lives. The *polis* rulers were considered half-gods who resulted from many erotic sexual affairs to produce these half-breads. In Athens girls were only taught how to make love and clothing. The Spartan *gerousia* was a council of 28 men who were over the age of sixty for

the rest of their lives. At the beginning of the play Oedipus' happiness is based upon the simple pleasures in life such as wealth, title, and power. But Aristotle believed that reality is on earth, and I'm most comfortable with this view.

It was the era of the Pox Romana. For most of the time of the Republic, Rome was located in Italy. But Rome was not practiced at agricultural technology; its farmers did not rotate crops or employ animal laborers. Slavery provided a place to put unhappy conquered peoples. But with the end of Roman expansion in the third century, the Empire's slaves began to dry up.

Throughout Europe there were many factions of tribes who feared other tribes along with full moons and just about anything that moved—it was like a birthpain to nationalism. Because of the movements starting mainly in France, education was the key to break down the fragmentation. St. Augustine was a great philosopher and Catholic theologian. He wrote over 80,000 books. He wrote the book *Confessions* about his ordeal with Christianity. Arianism was the belief that Christ was not divine within the Holy Triangle. Arians were unclean cannibals with beards. In the Middle Ages men even treated *prostitutes* as nothing more than sex objects! In addition, Charlemagne's reign brought Europe the closest it has ever been since the Middle Ages. An example of a vassal's service to his lord is when Roland says to Charlemagne, "If it be your command, I will go and protect your rear, and you will not be ashamed." The conflict between Church and State erupted after the papacy climaxed in the High Middle Ages. Lay investiture is when amateurs perform Church rites. Meanwhile, the crusaders were not faithful to their Christian beliefs: they did not pay their Church dues properly and they allowed their womenfolk to stay out late at night at wild parties. In 1084 Robert Guiscard sacked Rome, like totally. Philip IV saw himself and his ancestors as sent from God, for the Capetians had experienced 300 years of direct decadence. The pope encouraged King John and Otto of Brunswick to make a sandwich out of Philip. Philip fought

King John of England and won him. Magna Carta was signed when the barons caught King John abusing himself in his office. Henry I took full control of the Church, then Henry died and became King Stephen for 19 chaotic years. In the 1300s Dante produced some masterful Italian verse. Perhaps his being from Italy accounts for this. The scholastic philosophers can be blamed for Gothic architecture. Medieval philosophers reasoned that since Socrates had had a less-than-heavenly marriage, they too would have lousy relationships with their wives.

Wrapping it all up, the bubonic plague made the world as we see it today. ♦

Graduate Research Papers

Both M.A. and Ph.D. students should take note of the department's research paper requirement. Several have recently approached graduation (in the case of Master's students) or qualifying orals (in the case of those in the doctoral program) without being aware of this requirement. The department's Graduate Student Handbook, its Web site, and the Graduate School Bulletin describe the paper thus:

Each year of full-time residence, every student must write at least one major research paper between 25 and 40 pages in length: the equivalent of a publishable journal article, based on primary sources, and meeting professional standards of documentation, argument, and literary structure. This paper may be developed in a research seminar or in directed research with a faculty member. It will be graded in the normal way by the instructor of the course for which it was written, after which a copy of the paper must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee; judgment as to whether it fulfills the research requirement rests solely with the committee. A paper accepted as fulfilling the requirement remains in the student's file.

The phrase "each year of full-time residence" requires some elucidation: In practice, it means that for every eight semester courses a student takes, he or she must submit a research paper—that is, all M.A. students and those Ph.D. students entering with a Master's degree must submit one paper, whereas post-B.A. doctoral students must submit two. Students should consult the Director of Graduate Studies (Professor Fred Leventhal) for guidance in making sure their proposed papers will fulfil the requirement. ♦

Web Hint

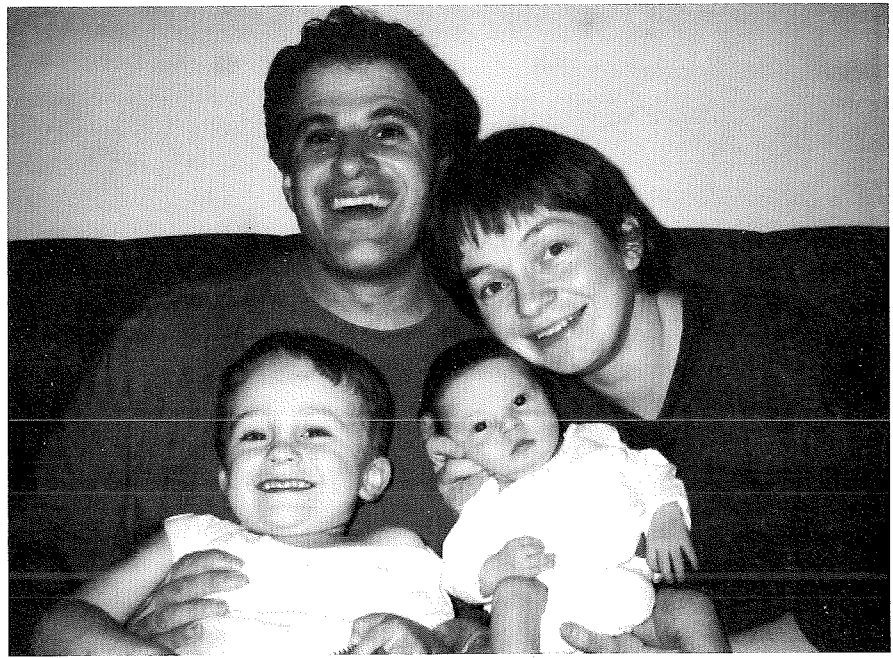
With this issue of the newsletter we begin a new feature which will present hints for making better use of the World Wide Web. As the Web becomes an *assumed* feature of daily life and of scholarly endeavors, it is ever more important that users learn how to find the information they need. We invite all our readers to send in their Web hints—shortcuts, sites worth a visit from a student of history, useful sources of information—to the editor's e-mail address: jtdutton@bu.edu.

This month's first hint comes from Rick Massel, an undergraduate history major. Rick, the designer of the Web site of the College of General Studies at BU, calls our attention to a guide to citing electronic sources in papers: *Electronic Sources: MLA Style of Citation*. To consult this guide, go to <http://www.uvm.edu/~xli/reference/mla.html>.

Another hint is from Professor Regina Blaszczyk: "It would be good to alert members of the department to H-net, a humanities and social science Web page at <http://www.h-net.msu.edu>. It has by far the most comprehensive listing of jobs, fellowships, grants, and lists—it's a site worth visting at least once a week for updates on all of the above."

And a contribution from my own Web experiences: One of the simplest ways for those new to the Web to begin a search for information is to click on Netscape's "Directory" menu option, then on "Internet Search" (or in Internet Explorer, click on "Search"). Links to major search engines will be displayed; each of these will include instructions on how to conduct a search.

Finally, from the October 23 *Boston Globe* come three sites of potential usefulness: <http://www.switchboard.com> can provide addresses and phone numbers (I found my own, my parents', and several faculty members' with no trou-



Professor Bruce Schulman with his wife Alice Killian, their older son Jeffrey, and the newest arrival, William Henry, born September 9.

ble) and <http://www.four11.com> or <http://www.whowhere.com> for locating e-mail addresses (I didn't have luck with these services, but they are worth a try).

Boston University faculty members are now able to access student records via the Web; those interested in this information received the capability immediately before the early advising period in October. One needs Netscape 3.0 for access. And, by the way, anyone at Boston University can download Netscape 3.0 free from the university's FTP site (check in the department office for instructions).

James T. Dutton

Graduate Student Milestones

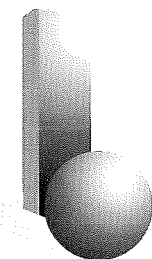
The following students passed foreign language examinations:

Wendi Kern: French
Benjamin Varat: German

The following students had research papers approved:

April Burgos, "Al-Andalus in the *Mugaddimah* of Ibn Khaldun: Sojourn to Granada"

Ruth Gallagher, "Vannevar Bush: Of Science and Democracy"



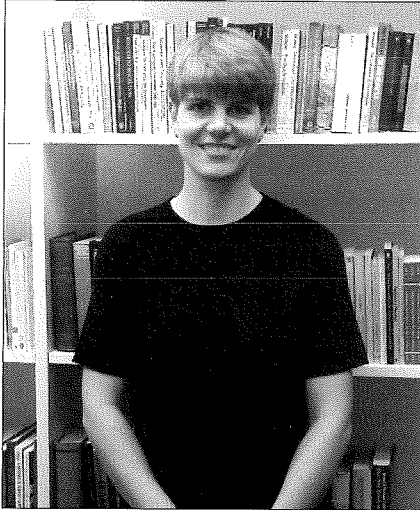
The Interdisciplinary Italian Studies Program presents a lecture by

Giovanni Boniolo

Professor of the Philosophy of Science, University of Padua

"Aristotelian Phronesis [Practical Wisdom] as a Way Out for the Philosophy of Science"

Wednesday, November 12, 7:30 P.M., CAS 211, 725 Commonwealth Ave.



Katharine Jackson Lualdi

Conversion at Chartres

BY KATHARINE JACKSON LUALDI

It all began at Chartres Cathedral. Gazing at its windows and tympani, I had a conversion of sorts, not to religion per se, but to the study of its place in European society and culture. I left Chartres with a strong urge to understand the meanings and motivations behind the glorious glass and stone.

When I started college a few years later, I majored in European history largely because of what I had seen at Chartres. My undergraduate studies focused on the causal relationship between religious beliefs and church architecture in the Middle Ages. Through my research and courses, I explored the complexity and dynamism of religion as a fundamental structure of thought and belief in the period.

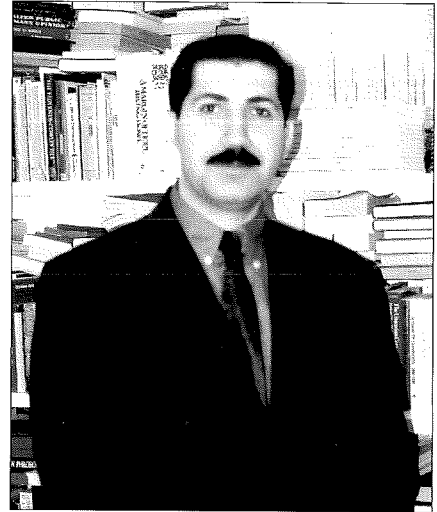
I decided to take my interests a step

During Semester 1 Katharine Lualdi is teaching Professor John Gagliardo's lecture course in early modern European history.

further and enrolled in the doctoral program in history at the University of Pennsylvania. Originally, I had intended to remain rooted in the Middle Ages, but gravitated towards the sixteenth century instead. The reason I found the early modern period so alluring was because much of what I saw before me looked remarkably "medieval."

So where then was the "modern" in early modern Europe? In reply, many scholars point to emerging notions of the self as an inner, private entity in sixteenth-century religion and culture. For them, "medieval" is synonymous with community and "modern" with individuality. In devising a dissertation topic, I decided to pursue this question further by examining sacramental confession and parish worship in late medieval and Reformation France. Five dioceses in Provence formed the geographic focus of my project, for they offered a unique array of sources documenting religious dissent and reform in the period. As I wandered from town to town and delved into the archives, I discovered that notions of the individual and notions of the community were often inextricably linked in their meaning and expression.

Currently, I am revising my dissertation for publication and soon will begin my next project, a comparative study of the historicization of the self in Protestant and Catholic worship in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe. I am also busy here at Boston University teaching a lecture course on early modern Europe. I have used changing notions of the individual as the central theme of the class, and have been pleased with the students' response. My ties to Boston go back to high school, and I am grateful to have the opportunity to join the History Department at Boston University this semester. Thank you to all who have helped me to feel at home. ♦



Shahram Shadbash

Approaches to Middle Eastern history

BY SHAHRAM SHADBASH

My name is Shahram Shadbash, a visiting faculty member at the Department of History, currently teaching the Introduction to the Middle East course (CAS HI 392/GRS HI 892). I offered the course this past summer (Session II) and found it to be a very good and positive experience. I am also teaching the Middle East in the Twentieth Century (MET HI 333) in Metropolitan College this fall, a course I have been teaching for the last three years. In addition, I have been offering other courses such as Islamic History at Clark University, Political Communication at Salem State College, Human Relations at Newbury College,

This fall Shahram Shadbash has been teaching Professor Herbert Mason's HI 392, the introduction to Middle East history, during Prof. Mason's recovery from heart surgery.

and World History in the Boston Public Schools.

I graduated from Boston University's University Professors in 1994 with a Ph.D. in International Relations and History. The study of relations among societies at the present and in the past has been my interest since the beginning of high school.

In conjunction with the aforementioned fields of study, I have always been fascinated to learn more of man's mind and the factors that shape his personality and behavior. I believe our understanding of other fields of study in the areas of human sciences and social sciences may not be comprehensive if the element (man) itself that makes them possible is not studied in depth. In order to understand issues confronting us in life, we should be able to know who we are individually and collectively. In other words, we should be able to understand the factors shaping our minds and feelings which are the formulators and generators of our actions.

I believe psychology (for study of the individual) and sociology (for study of a group of individuals) are the cornerstones, essential for any understanding in the areas of humanities. To this end, the study of sociology and psychology has always interested me. I received a B.A. in sociology (minor in psychology) in 1982.

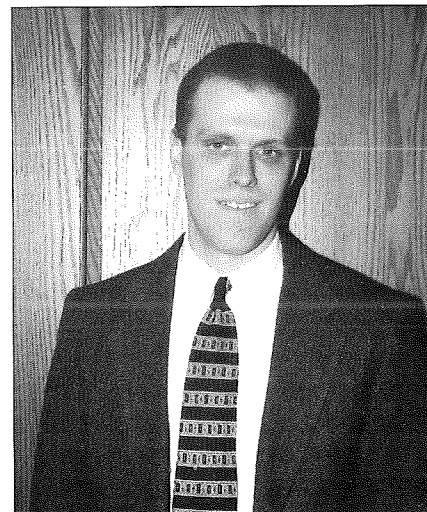
I pursued my graduate work in International Relations and History. My graduate work here at Boston University was full of positive, successful, and rewarding experiences. I became acquainted with distinguished members of the institution (namely Professors Hermann Eilts, Herbert Mason, Farhang Mehr, Charles Lindholm) who were familiar with and had a great knowledge of the culture, history, and society of the region (the Middle East) I am from. Eager to learn about the re-

gion, its long history, to make sense out of unending conflicts and issues, on the one hand, and to be psychologically (if not physically) present and in touch with the past at home and in the region, on the other hand, I gravitated toward the Middle East as my area of concentration without much control or previous planning.

My goal for the future is to find a full-time teaching position in the area of my concentration. I enjoy teaching the subject matters of the courses I teach. My teaching philosophy is to educate students with the following objectives in mind:

I believe that teachers should have an acute sense of responsibility and commitment to educate students in a manner that enhances the general quality of their education and broadens their experiences. I utilize positive and successful techniques in the classroom to stimulate and increase students' enthusiasm in a course's subject matter by encouraging and rewarding them to become active participants. I believe that engaging students in an atmosphere that encourages them to express their thoughts, feelings, and views of the issues at hand greatly serves to clarify the subject matter as well as to build their self-confidence. I feel it is particularly important to provide students with a well-thought-out exposition and to impart to them a clearly defined sense of purpose in learning the subject matter.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to introduce myself. I look forward to meeting you and invite anyone to stop by my office (Room 206 in the department) during my office hours. ♦



Gary Miller

California to Boston (via Mecklenburg): My true story, in my own words

BY GARY MILLER

When I first came to New England to pursue my graduate career, I assumed that I would often visit Boston—that cultural mecca that I had heard so much about growing up on the West Coast, but that I only visited once as a twelve-year old (my tour of the *U.S.S. Constitution* being my only clear memory). But as anyone who has lived in New Haven will tell you, the bright lights of Manhattan beckon—and the train to New York is both cheaper and quicker than a trip to Boston. I think I

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VISITING FACULTY (continued)

made only three trips north to Boston during my years at Yale, three semi-obligatory pilgrimages for any thinking man: Harvard, the MFA, and a Red Sox game at Fenway Park. Thus I was doubly delighted when the opportunity arose to spend a year teaching in the History Department at BU. In addition to gaining valuable teaching experience at an excellent university, and meeting colleagues both erudite and amiable, I am also finally getting to know Boston. And the city has not disappointed—it is everything I had hoped for and more, though the local accent still perplexes (the pronunciation of the names of towns like Quincy and Woburn seems to violate numerous principles of language).

The attentive reader will have noted that I am from the West Coast, which is of course another way of saying California. I was born in the Los Angeles area (the aerospace/defense industry suburb of Torrance), but I have lived in all parts of California—L.A., the Bay Area, and the Central Valley—and have a strong affection for the Golden State in its entirety. I know it is unusual among academics, but I actually like Southern California. There were lemon and orange trees in the backyard of the house I lived in as a boy, and I hope to own a house surrounded by that scent again some day.

I received my B.A., however, from U.C. Davis, where citrus trees are rare but agriculture in all its other forms plays a dominant role on campus. The best-known faculty or staff member at Davis when I was there was the famous cow with a window in its stomach (so that the digestive process might be observed directly). The History Department is not very large at Davis (and has, alas, shrunk with the tight budgets of recent years), but I thrived in the small classes and benefited from close contact with the professors. (A professor, whom I will not name, frequently invited his students to sit in his backyard sweat-hut, which he boasted he had built himself using the architectural

techniques of the Miwok tribe.) It was at Davis that I discovered more or less by accident my love of early modern European history: I needed a paper topic for my modern German history class, I chanced upon a Lutheran prayer book sent to German POWs in America during World War Two, and I was so intrigued by the mixture of political and religious ideas I found in this book that I decided to do an independent study project the next semester, pursuing the history of Lutheranism back into the early modern period.

I did my graduate work at Yale University, where my dissertation was advised by Professor Lee Palmer Wandel. My dissertation is a study of the interaction of religious and political developments in the north German state of Mecklenburg in the century following the Reformation. Specifically, I investigate the question of whether the Lutheran state church served as an agent of social control, disciplining the common people and creating conditions favorable for the growth of modern state structures.

I chose Mecklenburg for my case study largely because the far northern and eastern parts of Germany have received little attention from early modern historians—partly because the archives of the former East Germany were not easily accessible to Western historians, and partly because most scholars in my field have little interest in Lutheranism after the death of Luther (Calvinism and Counter-Reformation Catholicism being seen as more exciting from the late sixteenth century on). Although Mecklenburg was a fairly large territory, its history is very obscure. In the nineteenth century it was viewed as a complete backwater, a place of no importance whatsoever. Bismarck supposedly predicted that when the world ended, it would end last in Mecklenburg, and Treitschke described the Mecklenburgers as the most passive and unwarlike people of Germany (he meant this as a criticism). But I was actually quite pleased to be working on such an uncrowded topic, looking at documents in many cases that no modern historian had ever seen. I spent the 1991-92 academic year in Germany

as a Fulbright scholar, and though I found Schwerin (the capital of Mecklenburg) charming, working in the former East Germany had its hazards. Reunification had just occurred, and the archive and state library were in turmoil. Many of the collections were still organized according to rigid Marxist schemes (Reformation subjects classified, naturally, under “early capitalism” or “rise of the bourgeoisie”), and the library and archive staff were repeatedly purged when it was discovered that they had been Stasi informers. I had three different contact people assigned to me over the course of the year as a result of this turnover. “Where is Herr Steinbruch?” I asked one morning upon arriving at the archive. “Oh, Herr Miller,” they responded, “he was purged yesterday afternoon. Today is his last day. When you see him in the coffee room, be careful what you say—he is much more sensitive than most about having been purged.” I overcame such obstacles, however, and eventually finished my research—though a second trip in 1993 proved necessary.

I come to BU with a fair amount of teaching experience. In addition to many semesters of working as a teaching assistant at Yale, I taught at several colleges in Connecticut during the past two years. In the spring of 1995 I taught at Wesleyan University (where I spotted William Manchester), during the 1995-96 academic year I taught at the University of New Haven (where I spotted Jack Kemp, evidently seeking votes in the inner city), and last year I was an instructor at Fairfield University (where I saw Cokie Roberts and lots of Jesuits).

I do not know what adventures BU holds in store for me this year, but I am looking forward to them with anticipation. ♦

The Undergraduate History Association has begun activities for the academic year. Members assisted with the open house for prospective freshmen and the open house for majors, both held in late October. History majors interested in the organization should contact the department office.

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