

## Chair's Bulletin – April 2007

It is with great regret that I have to open this month's bulletin by announcing the death of **David Sparks**. David died on April 16<sup>th</sup>. He was a member of the Department of History from 1948-1968. He was an historian of the civil war and a very popular teacher. The last twenty years of his career were spent in administration. He served as Dean of the Graduate School from 1968-77, and then Vice President of Graduate Affairs and Vice President of Academic Affairs for the University of Maryland System before retiring in 2000.

**Bob Zieger**, an alumnus of our graduate program who is now a Professor of History at the University of Florida, recently sent us a document of historical importance to this Department. Bob is a distinguished historian of American labor who received his PhD in 1965 after studying with Sam Merrill. Bob is now about to retire, and he thought that we might like to have the original paper that Sam Merrill wrote in graduate school that was the origins of Merrill's famous Rules of Historical Writing. This paper, titled "The Democratic Party in the Old NorthWest, 1854 to 1880" was written in 1938 for Sam's mentor, William Hesselstine at the University of Wisconsin. Hesselstine was not sparing in his criticism of Sam's writing style and suggested a series of improvements. Initially discouraged by the extent of the criticism Sam soon came to see that Hesselstine had done him a favor, and that the rules he suggested were worthy of consideration. This led him to rethink the importance of clarity of expression and style of writing, and ultimately to the formulation of his own rules that generations of his graduate students were schooled in and which are still worthy of consideration today. We are pleased to receive this document and intend to find a place of prominence for it in the Merrill Room where it will sit alongside a copy of Merrill's Rules

Congratulations and kudos to **Robert Friedel** whose nearly 600 page book, [A Culture of Improvement: Technology and the Western Millennium](#) will be issued by MIT Press in May 2007. This is described as an ambitious and sweeping examination of a thousand years of Western experience. Robert argues that technological change comes largely through the pursuit of improvement--the deep-rooted belief that things could be done in a better way. What he calls the "culture of improvement" is manifested every day in the ways people carry out their tasks in life--from tilling fields and raising children to waging war.

**Richard Bell** presented a paper on March 8, titled "In Extremis: The Visual Rhetoric of Slave Suicide" to the Imagery of Violence Conference in Colorado Springs. On March 24, he presented a lecture and workshop on "African-Americans in the American Revolution" to a group of Harford County public school teachers under the auspices of the Teaching American history Grants Program. Also, his review of [New World Orders: Violence, Sanction, and Authority in the Colonial Americas](#) edited by John Smolenski and Thomas J. Humphrey was published in the *Journal of the Early Republic* (Spring 2007): 196-8.

The New Press has just issued a reprint edition of [Free at Last: A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom, and the Civil War](#), by **Ira Berlin, Barbara Fields, Steven Miller, Joseph Reidy, and Leslie Rowland**. The book was initially published in 1992.

**Art Eckstein** published a major interpretative essay, "Conceptualizing Roman Imperial Expansion under the Republic: An Introduction," as a chapter in Nathan Rosenstein and Robert Morstein-Marx, eds., [A Companion to the Roman Republic](#) (Blackwells, Oxford, 2006): pp. 567-89. This comes on top of the publication of [Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome](#) (University of California Press, 2006, 369 pp) last December, and the publication-contract for [Rome Enters the Greek East: From Anarchy to Hierarchy in the Hellenistic Mediterranean](#) (Blackwells, Oxford, due out at the end of 2007 or the beginning of 2008).

**Saverio Giovacchini** will be giving two invited presentations during the month of April: "The Curious Career of Italian Neorealismo" at Fordham University in New York City on April 25th, 2007 and "Fritz Lang: Modernism in Transition" at the Corcoran Gallery of Art Washington, DC, April 19th, 2007.

**Jeffrey Herf** lectured in March, 2007 about his recent book, The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda During World War II and the Holocaust in the History Department at the University of California, Berkeley, as well as at the 29th annual conference on the Holocaust at Millersville University. He also gave a talk on a panel dealing with American-European relations at the Baker Peace Conference at Ohio University in Athens. He will also be giving a lecture April 12, 2007: the annual Lazeroff lecture dealing with scholarship about the Holocaust at Ohio University in Athens.

**Lisa R. Mar** presented an invited talk, "Beyond Being Others: Chinese Canadians' Transpacific Resistance to Exclusion" at the opening plenary of the "Refracting Pacific Canada" Conference at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada on March 15, 2007.

**Sonya Michel** served as an invited "mentor" at the Young Scholars Forum 2007 on "Beyond the Nation--U.S. History in Transnational Perspective" held at the University of Texas-Arlington on March 29-31, 2007. The forum was co-sponsored by the German Historical Institute of Washington, D.C., the University of Texas-Arlington, and the Dallas Goethe Center. Seventeen young scholars from across the U.S. and Germany participated. Dr. Michel also presented her paper "City Center: San Francisco and the Struggle for GLBT Social Citizenship" at a colloquium in the Dept. of Political Science at San Francisco State University on March 19, 2007, and at a joint colloquium of the Dept. of Sociology and the Gender Studies program at the University of California at Berkeley on March 22, 2007.

**Robyn Muncy** won a fellowship from the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars for 2007-08. The Center awards approximately 20-25 residential fellowships annually to individuals with outstanding project proposals in a broad range of the social sciences and humanities on national and/or international issues. While in residence at the Center, Robyn will be working on her book, Progressivism And The Great Society: Josephine Roche And The Reform Tradition In Twentieth-Century America, which is under contract to Princeton University Press. She also delivered a paper at Catholic University in March titled "Social Citizenship, Private Welfare Provision, and the Great Society: The United Mine Workers Welfare and Retirement Fund, 1946-1971."

**Peter Wien** has two recent publications: "Iraq," in Encyclopedia of Western colonialism since 1450, ed. Thomas Benjamin (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), 641-646; and "'Sherifian' Officers in Interwar Iraq and 'Germanophilia'. A Heritage of the German-Ottoman Military Partnership? The Case of Ja'far al-'Askari," in The First World War as Remembered in the Countries of the Eastern Mediterranean, ed. Olaf Farschid, Manfred Kropp and Stephan Dähne (Beirut: Ergon Verlag, 2006), 375-87. He also will be in Syria and France over the summer with a GRB stipend, doing research in the Damascus Center for Historical Records and the Assad Library, as well as in the French Diplomatic Archives in Nantes.

**Richard Price** gave the plenary address to the Mid Atlantic Conference on British Studies at UMBC on April 14<sup>th</sup>. He spoke on "Empire and its Encounters: the British and the Xhosa Peoples of South Africa, 1820-1860."

**Thomas Zeller** will spend the fall semester 2007 as a Kluge Fellow at the John W. Kluge Center of the Library of Congress. Also, How Green Were the Nazis? Nature, Environment, and Nation in the Third Reich, edited by Thomas Zeller, Franz-Josef Brüggemeier, and Mark Cioc has been nominated as one of the ten best books of 2005 in German history on the academic mailing list H-German. A vote by the H-German subscribers is to follow.

The Third Annual *Janus* Conference was held on Thursday, March 29. Fifteen of our undergraduate students presented their work. A group of engaged undergraduate and graduate students and many of our faculty responded to the presentations with questions and comments. The seminar room in 2110 TLF was full. The awards for the three best submissions went to:

- Jordan Ludwig, "The Passage and Events Surrounding the Taft-Hartley Act: An Analysis"
- Adam Spiers, "Trends in Black Homeownership in the United States since World War II"
- Humza Kazmi, "Divide and Conquer: Commonalities in Early Soviet Foreign Policy"

Honorable Mention went to:

- William Vernon, "Angels with a Cause: The Impact of the Emmett Till Murder on African-American Women"
- Ivan Szpakowski, "'Socialism in One Country': Promoting National Identity Based on Class Identification"

Also of note: two of the three selected papers were written for History 208 courses. So kudos too should be in order for Rob Chase and Tom Castillo for their successful guidance of students in those courses. The conference would not have been possible without the efforts of our current *Janus* student editors: Tom Decker, James Poisal, Natasha Raikar, Alison Syring, and Alik Simantov. Thanks to all of them for their hard work!

**Leandro Benmergui**, as member of the Latino Studies Working Group Planning Committee, is co-organizing the Symposium "Disrupting Latinidad: Critical Perspectives on U.S. Latina/o Studies" on Friday, April 20, 10:00-4:00 in the Driskell Center Multipurpose Room, 2214 Tawes Hall. Where he will participate in the roundtable: "Envisioning Latina/o Studies."

**Paula Halperin** won the Rockefeller Grant-in-Aid provided by The Rockefeller Archive Center. It is a grant to do research in those Archives during the summer. The title of her project is: "Modernization and Visual Economy in Brazil and Argentina: Film, Photojournalism, and Transformations in the Public Sphere, 1955-1980".

**Thanayi Jackson** (Ph.D., US; advisor, Rowland) has been awarded an Archie K. Davis Fellowship from the North Caroliniana Society to support research for her dissertation on black officeholders and the political culture of freedom in Wilmington, North Carolina, during Reconstruction.

**Katarina Keane** (Ph.D., US; advisor, Rowland) has been awarded an Archie K. Davis Fellowship from the North Caroliniana Society to support research for her dissertation on second-wave feminism in the US South.

**Jeremy Hayhoe** (Ph.D., 2000) book Enlightened feudalism: Seigneurial justice and village society in Northern Burgundy will be published by Rochester University Press by the end of this year. Rochester has taken over the highly acclaimed early modern Europe series from Cambridge UP. Dr. Hayhoe's volume will appear in the Changing Perspectives on Early Modern Europe series which is edited by James Collins, Mack Holt, Sally Nelle, and others. Dr Hayhoe is currently assistant professor at the Université de Moncton in New Brunswick. He did his research at Maryland under the direction of Donald Sutherland