

Update on the search for a new department chairman

On February 1-2 Douglas Brinkley, Professor of History and Director of the Eisenhower Center for American Studies at the University of New Orleans, visited Boston University as the first candidate in the search for a new History Department chairman. The visit included meetings with the search committee, with current chair William Keylor, with graduate students in History and American Studies, and with some individual faculty members; there was also a visit to Special Collections at Mugar Library and interviews with Associate Dean Susan Jackson, Dean Dennis Berkey, and President Jon Westling, not to mention breakfasts, lunches, and dinners. One of the most important events was Professor Brinkley's presentation on February 1, when he spoke to an audience of about 35 people on his work on President Jimmy Carter and civil rights advocate Rosa Parks. Privileged to be granted extensive access to Carter, Brinkley has already published the third volume of a projected three-volume study of the president, and later this year Viking Penguin will publish his biography of Parks.

Brinkley earned his PhD from Georgetown University in 1989, writing a dissertation on "Dean Acheson: Elder Statesman of the Cold War 1953-1971."

See CHAIRMAN, page 6

Letter from Prague: a report on Fulbright adventures

BY NINA SILBER

Greetings from the land of Franz Kafka, Vaclav Havel, and Good King Wenceslaus! We even had snow—at least it was in our backyard about three weeks ago—just like the Good King found it: "deep and crisp and even." Prague is an incredibly beautiful city—even lovelier under a blanket of snow. I think if Disney ever had plans to construct a quaint European city theme park, it would be Prague. But first they would erase the graffiti (which does tend to be an eyesore here) and open up dozens of lunch stands selling "Wenceslaus burgers."

After five months in our foreign home, we've gradually been learning how to live (and even speak a little) like Czechs. Although, compared to most Czechs, I suppose we're living pretty high on the hog (an apt metaphor given the national fondness for pork). Our apartment is on the ground floor of an early twentieth-century Prague "villa"—a large home situated in a lovely garden that is covered with apple trees. Our neighborhood sits on a hill that overlooks the city and is about a

See SILBER, page 4



Prof. Nina Silber (right) with her husband Louis Hutchins and children Benjamin and Franny at the "hunger wall," a 13th-century structure near their house. The wall was a precursor of later welfare projects: the unemployed built it in return for food and money.

Mitchell Allen completes dissertation on Anglo-Hanoverian connection

On February 10 Mitchell Allen successfully defended his dissertation entitled "The Anglo-Hanoverian Connection in the Foreign Policy of George II." His first reader was Professor John Gagliardo, and the second was Professor Fred Leventhal; other members of the examining committee were Professors Barbara Diefendorf, Cathal Nolan, and James Schmidt (of Political Science). We are pleased to reprint the dissertation abstract:

Great Britain and the German Electorate of Hanover were linked by a common sovereign between 1714 and 1837. These nations had no institutional link between them other than this dynastic connection, yet each government was forced to take the other into account in the formulation of foreign policy. The practical workings of this dynastic link can be best seen in the reign of the seldom-studied King-Elector, George II (r. 1727-1760), due to the fact that the foreign policies of both states were more closely integrated than at any other point.

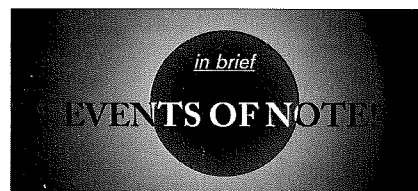
The study of King George II presents several problems. George II left little in English-language records, distorting the picture of his reign. The Hanoverian archives contain a larger written record, but it consists primarily of instructions to his Hanoverian ministers. Only a comparison of these records with the correspondence of key British ministers over his whole reign can yield an accurate picture of the foreign policy issues and solutions for both states.

The work habits of the King-Elector dictate the method of study necessary to understand these issues. George II gave verbal direction to his ministers when he was present, through written correspondence by attending ministers when absent. The result is that the clearest written record of his activities and agenda remains away from the center of his activity, and in the hand of others. Thus, a case study approach will yield a distorted picture. Only a long-term study, over his whole reign, can reveal the patterns to the decision-making process.

The study of his foreign policy reveals that Hanover played a greater role than has been credited in most English-language historiography, as did the monarch himself. George II and his ministers, both Hanoverian and British, worked together through extra-institutional *ad hoc* and cooperative arrangements, dependent upon domestic and foreign political circumstance. From a 'war scare' with Austria and Prussia in 1727 through the Seven Years' War in 1760 and numerous crises in between, both sets of ministers accepted and worked within the framework of a fully functioning dynastic link, with the King-Elector at its center. ♦



Mitch Allen and his dissertation advisor, Prof. John Gagliardo



Angel Amy-Moreno (PhD from the department in 1999) is now a member of the Boston School Committee.

Graduate student **April Burgos** has received a 1999 Bernadotte E. Schmitt Grant for Research in European, African, or Asian History from the American Historical Association for her continuing dissertation research in Granada, Spain.

Professor **Merle Goldman** has been named member of a Task Force on America's Role in Asia, sponsored by the Asia Foundation.

Ronald Wells (BA 1963, MA 1964, PhD 1967, all in history from Boston University) has been on the faculty of Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for thirty years. He has recently co-authored *Ulster-American Religion: The History of a Cultural Connection* (published both in hardcover and paper by the University of Notre Dame Press), a cultural history of Irish-American Presbyterianism, 1860-1940.

Last November's annual meeting of the African Studies Association in Philadelphia included departmental representation: graduate student **Peter Alegi**; graduates **Jane Parpart** (now at Dalhousie University), **Barbara Cooper** (New York University-Gallatin), **Erik Gilbert** (Arkansas State University); and **Konrad Tuchscherer** (now a lecturer in the department).

Professor **James Johnson's** review of Ruth Harris's *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* was published in the December 26 issue of *The Boston Sunday Globe*.

Professor **William R. Keylor** has been awarded the Marion and Jasper Whiting Foundation Fellowship for the 2000-01 academic year. This fellowship will enable him to consult archival sources in France and the United Kingdom in preparation for a study entitled "The Legacy of Versailles: An Inquiry into the Long-Term Consequences of the Peace Settlement of 1919." ♦

Accessing the Web: A question of bandwidth

BY JAMES T. DUTTON

“Bandwidth” is one of the buzzwords of the computer world. What is it? How do you get it? Can you afford it? These are some questions worth considering for those who connect to the Internet from their homes.

First, one might ask, why specify “from their homes”? For the simple reason that most people at work these days have high-speed connections to the Internet, that is, special telephone lines that carry a large amount of information at high speeds (theoretically up to 10 Mbps)—for a large amount of money. Boston University has such a connection, as do other universities and major businesses; in our case, the cost is borne by the university.

The great majority of home computer users have modems for Internet connections, and the highest speed available (for now and for the foreseeable future, because of telephone line limitations) is 56 Kbps—notice the difference between Kbps (1,000 bits per second) and Mbps (1,000,000 bits per second). Modems are slow, and, to make matters worse, the advertised “56 Kbps” actually refers to download speed (uploading is slower), and few phone lines actually achieve 56 Kbps. When I am visiting people who look at the departmental Web site via modem and see how slowly those pictures take shape on the computer screen, I almost always return to my office and make the images smaller. There is nothing in the Web experience more annoying than having to wait for pictures to appear. On the other hand, the cost of accessing the Web by modem is very low: nothing if you live close enough to BU and use *bu.edu* for access, about \$20 per month if you use another Internet service provider.

Which brings us to “bandwidth.” There are five or six ways to obtain high-speed Internet access from home, but only two of those are relevant for most people. You will sometimes hear mention of Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN), which attains speeds of 64 or 128 Kbps (not that much faster than a modem), but it has not caught on. The two technologies that are very much in the air now are DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) and cable.

DSL is attractive because it uses existing telephone lines for Internet access through a technology that crams more information into present-day copper wiring—and allows a user to speak on the telephone and use a computer at the same time. In addition, the DSL connection is “always on”—that is, there is no dialing up, the computer is always connected to the Internet (just as computers at BU are). Downstream speeds for DSL range between 500 Kbps and 8.1 Mbps and upstream channels from 100 to 200 Kbps. To obtain DSL, a user must be within 20,000 feet of a telephone central office. To find out if they can have DSL installed, Bell Atlantic customers can go to www.bellatlantic.com and enter their phone number. The monthly cost varies, depending on the connection speed, between \$49.95 and \$189.95; this substantial cost is likely to drop in the near future since Bell Atlantic has been forced to open its phone lines for other DSL suppliers to utilize. A DSL user cannot connect to the Internet via Boston University because the university has no DSL capabilities; thus a subscription to an Internet service provider is re-

quired (Bell Atlantic has a package deal).

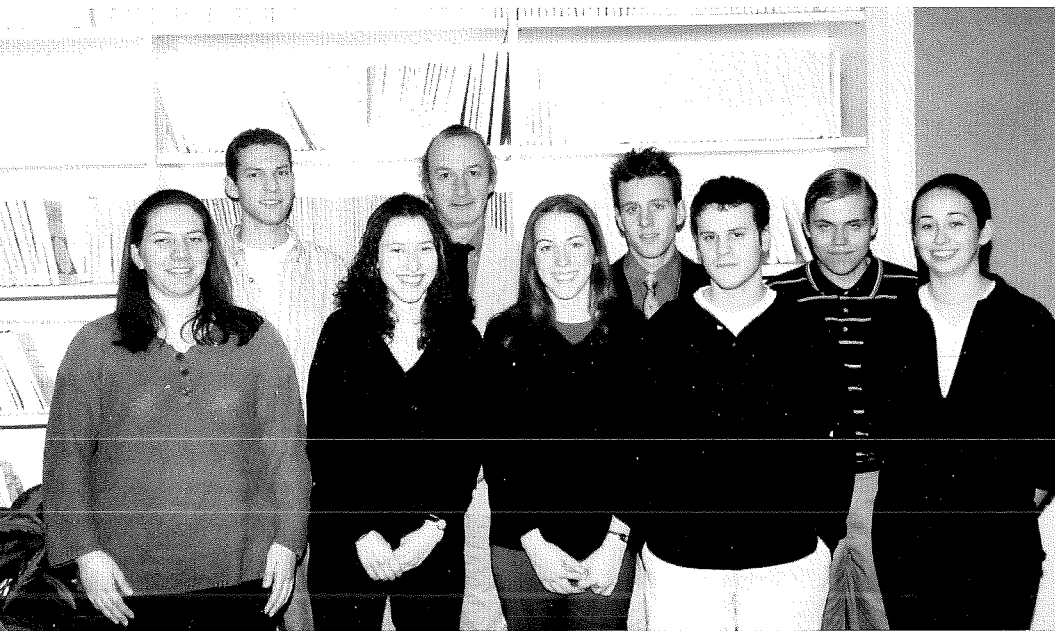
Cable connections can achieve speeds between 384 Kbps and 4 Mbps and cost in the neighborhood of \$39 to \$49 monthly. Like DSL, cable is “always on.” Much less expensive than DSL for equivalent speeds, cable seems clearly the choice, but there are several caveats: All the homes in a given neighborhood share a single cable, and when many people are connected, the speed can decrease dramatically. There are often complications with installation and some complaints about customer service provided by the cable companies (what else is new?). And there is the issue of availability: Unbelievable as it may be, the city of Boston (Cablevision holds the franchise) does not have cable Internet access—though some suburbs have been wired for some time (MediaOne is a leading provider).

One important piece of information for both DSL and cable: A computer that is always connected to the Internet is open to intruders, mischief-makers, and worse. Recent issues of *PC Magazine* have repeatedly warned such users to install “firewall” software that can keep such intrusions from happening. ♦

Did you know?

Many faculty members and students are not aware of the fact that each of them has an “account” for printing with Information Technology (111 Cummington Street). You can take a diskette there (it’s first come, first served) and print out a document—without charge. So if your printer isn’t working or if it’s just a case of needing to print a long document that would be costly to print, you can take it to IT instead. (Thanks to Cheryl Boots for this tip.)

There is also a new computer lab for CAS students (in CAS 330) with both Macs and PCs, run by the CAS Computing Services Group—full information on this College service in next month’s newsletter.



On February 16 Prof. Thomas Glick inducted eight new members into Phi Alpha Theta, the history honorary society. Pictured in the photo are (front row) Rebecca Moss, Lisa Sopher, Kim Weiss, Sam Zaganjori, Tanya Shnaydman and (back row) Dan Seidman, Prof. Glick, Jay Wischerath, Charles Kilb. Membership requires an overall GPA of 3.3 or above and a GPA of 3.5 or above for history courses taken at Boston University. Members must have completed 12 credit hours in history courses.

Graduate Student

MILESTONES



The following students recently passed language examinations:

- Oyeshiku Carr: *French*
- James Fox: *Italian*
- William Leeman: *French*
- Michael McGuire: *French*
- Jocelyn Ullrich: *Spanish*

In addition, Zbysek Brezina was given credit for English as his foreign language, and Bryan Thrift was given credit for French, which he passed for the Master's degree at the University of North Carolina.

Jocelyn Ullrich was awarded the MA degree in January.

Jennifer Alpert's dissertation prospectus was approved: "Medicine, Politics, and Consumption: The Experience of Henry I. Bowditch, M.D., 1832-1892"

SILBER (cont. from page 1)

40-minute walk from the venerable twelfth-century castle. We go everywhere via the extremely efficient system of public transportation—a boon for our son Benjamin (age 7½) who has become especially enamored of the city's trams and has memorized the routes of (practically) all of them. Our main problem, as for many Czechs, is grocery shopping. The city has only a few well-stocked supermarkets which are usually annoyingly overcrowded and where a desperate scramble for shopping carts generally ensues. And, because the stores aren't close to our house, we're often schlepping groceries on the bus. Water, too, tends to be a problem—especially in terms of getting it to come out of our faucets. The old water pipes seem to be constantly breaking down, leaving us waterless for several hours (sometimes more than 24!) at a time. All the locals, however, take this in stride, apparently used to constant break-downs—and delayed repairs—from the old regime. Like them, we also now keep lots of large bottles ready for the next emergency.

By now, we have all become pretty well established in our routines. Our daughter, Franny (age 3), has been attending a Czech nursery, or "Jesle," where she wears a cute overall and flannel shirt uniform and where none of her teachers speaks any English. Somehow we all manage to communicate with the appropriate body language (although Louis manages, better than the rest of us, to speak some Czech, even in whole sentences). Franny herself seems to understand the language—and can also sing what we are told is a Czech nursery song about a dog.

Benjamin has been having a different sort of international experience. He's been going to the British International School of Prague and, although he doesn't learn Czech, he has been learning to use words like "mum," "rubbish," "crisps," and "torch" (that's "flashlight" to you Yanks). In November we all attended his school's celebration of "Guy Fawkes Day." The fireworks were great but Benjamin may have gotten the wrong idea about the holiday. "Does this mean," he asked us when the celebration was over, "that Catholics are bad?" Well, I suppose from a historical perspective, he got the right idea.

I suppose the prize for the one who has best adapted to Czech life should go to

See SILBER, page 5

Early Registration

Fall 2000

The early registration period for fall 2000 courses begins for undergraduate students on April 2. The department will offer special advising hours for all concentrators between March 20 and April 7. All undergraduates who are not seniors and all graduate students still engaged in coursework should call the office (353-2551) or stop in Room 308 at 226 Bay State Road to make an advising appointment. After April 7 students may see a faculty member during regular office hours (these are posted on the departmental Web site). After a student meets with an advisor, he or she goes to the department office to obtain the TelReg code for telephone registration. For HI 301 (the core course for all undergraduate majors), a student goes to the department office. For colloquia (400-level courses), students first see the instructor and then visit the office, where the registration is handled by computer.

Below we provide information on new or changed fall courses. All courses (and the latest changes) are posted on the History Web site: www.bu.edu/history.

- ☞ CAS HI 281 ("Introduction to Latin American History"), to be taught by Professor Claudio Véliz, has been added to the schedule since the printed booklet was distributed. It meets Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30-5 p.m. Note that CAS HI 386 ("Modern Latin America") has been deleted from the schedule. If the search for a Latin American historian, now in progress, is successful, "Modern Latin America" will be taught in the spring semester.
- ☞ Professor Fred Leventhal has given a different emphasis to CAS HI 434; under its new title, "War and Society in Modern Britain," it deals with the social and cultural impact of the two World Wars on Britain, utilizing literature, films, and primary sources to analyze such topics as the myth of war experience, women and work, social reform, literary responses, and military and civilian life. The course meets Wednesdays 3-6 p.m.
- ☞ Professor Louis Ferleger will be offering a colloquium on "Technology in American Society" (CAS HI 476), meeting Tuesdays 3:30-6:30 p.m. Course topics, spanning the colonial era to the present, include industrialization, scientific management, household technologies, the auto age, and computers.
- ☞ Professor Ronald Richardson plans a new course, still in the approval process, entitled "The History of Racial Thought." It will study racial thinking and feeling in Europe and the United States since the fifteenth century, placing racial thinking in the context of Western encounters with non-European people and Jews, while relating it to social, economic, cultural, and political trends. European and American racial thinking will be studied in world historical context by comparing it to racial thought in China, Japan, and India in order to determine what is unique to it, what it has shared with racism elsewhere, and how racial thinking and feeling has interacted globally. Check the Web site for information on when this course will be available for registration. ♦

SILBER (cont. from page 4)

my husband Louis, who has now successfully completed Czech I and is already on to Czech II. He can carry on simple phone conversations, ask for meat at the butcher's, and buy tickets at the theater. When he's not taking Czech (or watching the kids), he volunteers at the National Technical Museum and edits their English translations. He has also been told by various locals that he bears an uncanny resemblance to a popular Czech singer, Ondrej Havelka. The other evening, at a museum reception, we met Havelka. He really could pass for Louis' Czech twin—and the similarity is enhanced by the 1940s style of dress which Havelka tends to favor (complete with bow-tie!). Havelka spotted Louis in the crowd and insisted they have their picture taken together. We'll be sure to bring autographed copies (Louis'? Havelka's?) of these photos when we return.

And, just in case any of you out there are worried, I, too, am keeping myself gainfully employed. My Fulbright appointment here at Charles University, especially the teaching, has been quite an experience. The university certainly lacks the luxuries and amenities of U.S. schools (e.g., a functioning Xerox machine or more than one computer to serve a department with 20 or so instructors), but the students are extremely bright and sophisticated. Interest in the Civil War hasn't been as great as I would have liked (only three students took that class), but our discussions have, nonetheless, been noteworthy. When we read the "Gettysburg Address," the students pronounced it a quintessentially American document, citing its distinctive and upbeat emphasis on a national vision and national progress. When I elaborated on the various measures enacted in the Reconstruction era to curtail the power of former Confederates, one student immediately made the comparison with the Czech Republic's actions towards the leaders of the pre-1989 government. My women's history class also elicited interesting discussions—and drew out significantly more stu-



Prof. Nina Silber with Benjamin and Franny in front of a Czech St. Mikulas display outside Prague. These are the typical Christmas figures who visit people on December 6 (St. Mikulas Day)—devils, an angel, and St. Mik.

dents. I would say many are curious about—but certainly not committed to—ideas about feminism. Some, though, are openly skeptical about what they see as an unnecessary and overly boisterous political movement from the “West.”

In general, skepticism and disillusionment seem to be running pretty high in the Czech Republic these days. Students, and older folks, are visibly disturbed by the way a few have profited, enormously and often corruptly, from the opening of markets in the former Soviet bloc while the rest of the country has not shared all the benefits. Indeed, as we’ve become aware, salaries for most people in this country are extremely low (most apparently not making much more than about \$350 a month), and while there are more consumer goods available, many can’t afford what’s being offered. I do think, however, that Czech students might be somewhat less apathetic than their American counterparts. Perhaps this is because they, and their parents, have witnessed, first hand, the ability of ordinary people to bring about change. Many students at Charles University have been participating in a new political movement in the country (loosely translated as the “Thank You—Now Leave” movement) aimed at bringing

new, and younger, people to power. I attended a meeting, too, of hundreds of students who came to listen to the U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic; in the discussion which followed, many raised pointed arguments and challenged the Ambassador’s optimistic picture of Czech democracy.

In class, and out, perhaps the most intense discussions have focused on race—in the U.S. and in the Czech Republic (with the Czech focus being on relations with the Gypsy, or “Roma,” population). Although I try to steer clear of simplistic comparisons, I do find that my own elaboration on American race relations often prompts comments about the Czech situation, and clearly it is an issue on the minds of many. Indeed, as recent events in this country and Europe are showing, people across the continent are thinking about how (or, unfortunately, for many the more appropriate word would be “whether”) to create a society that is more tolerant of cultural and ethnic diversity.

For the spring term, I will be teaching a continuation of the women’s history class, building on the initial interest of students from the fall. I’ll also see how many participants I can lure into a class on the history and culture of the American South. Regardless of how many participate, I’m sure we will again be absorbed with questions of race in different national settings. This term I will also return to Pilsen (perhaps best known as the birthplace, sort of, of beer) to give a lecture there (as I did last fall) to students at West Bohemia University on the Civil War. At some point, too, I expect to be in Italy, as part of a Fulbright lecture program in American history.

All told, the experience has been, and continues to be, incredibly educational. Which is not to say that we don’t think fondly of home. It will be nice being close again to friends and family after our return in late July, and it will be a huge relief once again to be near to a good research library where most of the materials are in a language I can decipher.

So, for now, I bid you “na shledano” from Prague. ♦

CHAIRMAN (cont. from page 1)

He has been on the faculty of Hofstra University and, since 1993, the University of New Orleans. In addition to edited works, he is the co-author of *Driven Patriot: The Life and Times of James Forrestal* (1992), *FDR and the Creation of the United Nations* (1997), and *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy Since 1939* (1997) and author of *Dean Acheson: The Cold War Years, 1953-1971* (1992), *The Majic Bus: An American Odyssey* (1993), and the *American Heritage History of the United States* (1998).

The next candidate to visit will be Professor Gordon Martel, currently chair of the History Program at the University of Northern British Columbia. He received his PhD from the University of Toronto in 1977 (preceded by an MA from the Fletcher School at Tufts University). He held posts at Trent University and Royal Roads Military College before moving to Northern British Columbia in 1995; during the current academic year he is a Visiting Fellow at Nuffield College, Oxford. In addition to several edited works, including *The Origins of the Second World War: The AJP Taylor Debate after Twenty-Five Years* (1986, revised 1999), Martel is the author of *The Origins of the First World War* (1986) and *Imperial Diplomacy: Rosebery and the Failure of Foreign Policy* (1986). He will be on campus on March 14-15, with a talk scheduled for March 14 at 4:30 p.m. in CAS 202 and a meeting with graduate students on March 15 at 9 a.m. in Room 304 of the History Department. ♦

NEWS

of the History Department at Boston University

is published monthly September through May at the department office, 226 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215.

Editor: James T. Dutton, Department Administrator

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



The Annual Merle Goldman Lecture

"Mao Zedong: A Reprise"

by

Jonathan Spence

Professor of History
Yale University

Author of many books on China,
including a new biography of Mao Zedong

Tuesday, March 28, 4:30 P.M.
CAS 326, 725 Commonwealth Avenue

The Goldman Lecture is endowed in honor of Merle Goldman, Professor of Chinese History at Boston University. Other sponsors for this year's lecture include the East Asian Interdisciplinary Studies Program and the Symposium on Confounding Autocracy (sponsored by the Anthropology Department and funded by the Boston University Humanities Foundation).

Department of History
Boston University
226 Bay State Road
Boston, MA 02215



New fund to assist doctoral students

I am pleased to announce that Patricia Cadigan Armstrong, an alumna of Boston University (class of 1942), has made a bequest that will establish the Patricia Cadigan Armstrong Fund. This fund will provide grants to graduate students enrolled in the PhD program of the History Department to enable them to travel to archives and libraries to conduct dissertation research.

In her conversations with me, Mrs. Armstrong expressed her gratitude to the professors that she had encountered at Boston University, singling out Professor Warren Ault, who served as the first chairman of this department for many years while serving as teacher

and mentor to generations of history concentrators at this university.

On graduating from Boston University, Mrs. Armstrong combined her role as wife and mother with a varied and eventful career. She studied with C. Vann Woodward at Johns Hopkins University and later worked at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington as well as at the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council. Along the way, she had a brief internship in the Documents Division of the Library of Congress, where she organized the papers of Senator Bronson Cutting. Mrs. Armstrong earned an MA in history at The American University, writing a master's thesis that was later published as a monograph.

As I indicated to Mrs. Armstrong in my letter expressing the gratitude of the History Department for her generosity, future PhD students in this department will be indebted to her for having facilitated their scholarly work toward the end of their graduate career.

William R. Keylor
Department Chairman

Greig Scholarship

The Herbert and Mary Greig Scholarship is available to undergraduate students studying in the Department of History or in related departments, with a significant focus on U.S. history. Applicants (1) must be juniors or seniors in the 2000-01 academic year, (2) must have at least a 3.5 grade point average, and (3) must take a minimum of four courses in or related to American history. Applications are available in CAS 105; for more information, call 353-2400.