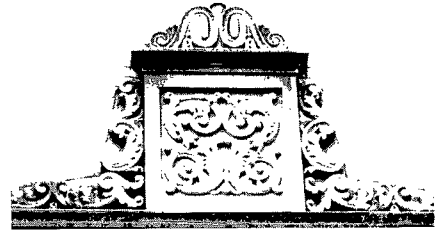


NEWS



of the History Department at Boston University

May 2000



The chairman bids a bitter-sweet adieu

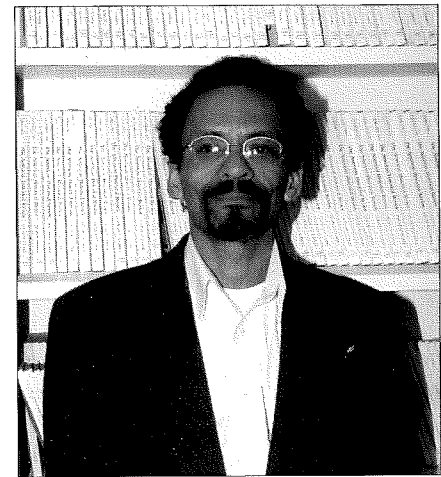
It is with a complex *mélange* of feelings that I contemplate vacating the chairmanship of the Department of History on August 31, 2000, after four consecutive terms in that office. Part of me revels in the prospect of relief from all of the administrative burdens that a department chairman bears, from the heavy ones (such as negotiating with the administration on various contentious issues) to the light ones (such as countersigning each and every change-of-grade form submitted by history faculty to the dean's office). My leave of absence next academic year will enable me to attend to a whole host of matters that I had long put aside: the complete rethinking and restructuring of my two undergraduate lecture courses on the history of international relations, the creation of two new courses that I have been thinking about for years, the completion of a book long overdue, and the beginning of a new one long planned.

Another part of me anticipates a profound sense of loss that will no doubt take me a while to get over. Much of this job has brought me satisfaction, enjoyment, and, above all, a sense of pride in the knowledge that I was contributing to a vigorous, creative intellectual enterprise at 226 Bay State Road. I recall my utter delight in 1988, the year that I first occupied this office as Acting Chair, on learning that our own Robert Bruce had been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his book on the history of modern American science. When the *Boston Globe* reporter called for my reaction, I blurted out that I was "tickled pink" at my colleague's achievement—hardly an eloquent expression with which to launch one's chairmanly career, but precisely evocative of my sentiment. Each time thereafter that a colleague received a teaching award, won a prestigious fellowship, or published a highly acclaimed book, I again felt that sense of pride at being affiliated with a community of scholars and teachers who do their job so well. The other part of the job that I will greatly miss is the excuse to spend a lot of time with our Department Administrator, James Dutton, and to observe him managing the day-to-day affairs of the department with such skill and aplomb.

Unlike in the business world, where a departing chief executive usually descends in a golden parachute in some place far removed from the corporation he or she had led, departing department chairs in academia are customarily kicked upstairs (or wherever else an empty office may be available). When I return from my leave of absence, I very much look forward to playing an active role in the intellectual life of the College of Arts and Sciences in ways that were impossible while I sat in the chair.

William R. Keylor, Chairman

Introduction to New Faculty

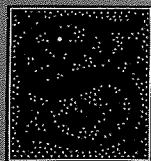
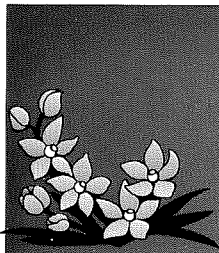


Professor Ronald Richardson

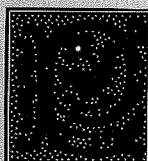
A new director of African American Studies takes the reins

Hello. I just want to take a moment to introduce myself. I am Ronald Richardson and I have the honor of being the new Director of African American Studies here at Boston University. In addition to that, I am an associate professor of history. I come to Boston from Clark University down the Pike in Worcester, Massachusetts. Clark is a

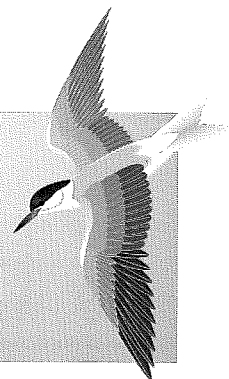
See RICHARDSON, page 8



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FACULTY

Robert Dallek plans to spend the summer doing additional research and writing on his biography of John F. Kennedy.

Houchang Chehabi writes: "At the end of May I plan to attend the biannual meeting of the Society for Iranian Studies in Bethesda, Maryland, where I have organized a panel on 'Female Icons of Popular Culture' and will give a paper on three legendary woman singers of Iran. In late June I plan to be in Aix-en-Provence to participate in the thesis defense of a doctoral student in anthropology whose dissertation, on traditional athletics in Iran, I co-directed. In early August I plan to attend the International Conference on the History of Religion in Durban and present a paper on 'The Myth of Moses in the Islamic Revolution of Iran.' I plan to use my stay in South Africa to do some preliminary research for a future study of South African-Iranian relations, before going to Montreal to attend the International Congress of Asian and North African Studies (ICANAS), for which I have organized a bilingual panel on 'Sports and Games in Ancient and Medieval Iran' that includes a paper by me titled 'La lutte dans l'Iran ancien.'"

Betty Anderson will be in Jordan from May 23 to July 23 on a grant from the American Center for Oriental Research (which is funded by the U.S. Information Agency). While there, she will spend a week in Jerusalem looking at Arab textbooks at various Israeli libraries and will also spend a week in Beirut, Lebanon, at the Arab-American University Graduates Association conference. July 3-5 in Amman, at the Second International Conference on Jordanian Social History, she will give a paper on "Socio-Economic Catalysts for Political Change in Jordan."

James McCann has been granted permission to conduct research at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew (in leafy suburban London) on a mysterious fungus (*Polysora piccini*) that threatened West

Africa's food supply in the early 1950s. In addition to Kew Gardens, Prof. McCann will stroll daily to the nearby Public Record Office to examine documents on the colonial government's response to the crisis. This research is part of his book project "Maize and Grace: Corn and the Old World, 1500-1999." His summer research is funded by a Ford Foundation mini-grant. The "fungus" story as a key historical puzzle was passed on to him last year in a conversation with Nobel Prize Laureate Norman Borlaug. After his London-based research, Prof. McCann will take the Eurostar TGV train through the Chunnel (avoiding migrating French foxes) to Paris, where he will meet his family and drive south for a bucolic French vacation in Normandy along the Dronne river (near Bordeaux).

Clifford Backman writes: "My summer plans include hopefully seeing my new book through the press, a trip to Seattle to visit friends who just had their first baby (on our own son Scott's birthday, making remembering it easier), maybe buying a new house, seeing as many baseball games as possible, cooking a lot on the grill, reading Brian Greene's *The Elegant Universe*, re-reading Tolstoy's *Hadji Murad*, and keeping up the garden. I also hope to get some more research done on my two active projects: a biography of James II of Catalonia-Aragon and a study of the religious thought of Arnau de Vilanova. I've also been asked to undertake a critical edition of the crusade handbook written by the Dominican minister-general, Humbert of Romans, in the thirteenth century."

"This summer," **Merle Goldman** says, "I will go to a conference in Shanghai on 'the vitality of Chinese history,' do research in Beijing on the Chinese view of human rights, and work on my new book, 'From Comrade to Citizen in the People's Republic of China.'"

James Johnson writes: "I'll spend most of the summer in Venice, teaching the history of the 'Most Serene Republic' in Boston University's study-abroad pro-

gram. Prof. Jody Cranston of the Art History Department and I will guide twenty students through the city's past, by foot, by boat, and by train. I'll continue my archival research into the Venetians' use of masks in the 17th and 18th centuries and, in the evenings, enjoy the silence of a city without automobiles."

Thomas Glick will serve on a doctoral dissertation defense committee in the History of Science Department at the University of Valencia. On his return, he will teach the eighth edition of his course on "Darwin, Freud, and Einstein" at Harvard Summer School.

Dietrich Orlow's summer plans: "Archival research at the Bundesarchiv in Berlin (the first time I will have been there since reunification), followed by what Maria and I hope will be two delightful weeks in Colonia San Jordi on Mallorca. After that it will be the usual sojourn of a working holiday in Bad Aussee in Austria, with an additional working week in Bonn at the end."

Lori Kenschaft says: "I will spend the summer doing research for my next book project: a cultural/intellectual history of ideas about taxation. Any tidbits or pointers—U.S., any time period—would be most welcome!"

Fred Leventhal states: "I will be enjoying my usual month in London, combining conference participation, editorial board meetings, and some research with seeing friends and as many plays as I can fit in. My son David, a dancer with the Mark Morris Dance Group, will be performing in London while I am there, so I will have the opportunity to see several of his company's performances. After returning from England, I'll spend most of the rest of the summer at our house in the woods near Dublin, New Hampshire, which offers the best contrast to the frenetic pace of London as I can find."

Jill Lepore says her summer plans are three: "write, write, write."

Regina Blaszczyk will spend the summer in Washington, D.C., as a senior fellow at the Smithsonian's Lemelson

Center for the History of Invention and Innovation.

Richard Landes reports: "I will be giving a series of talks and lectures on various aspects of millennialism in Germany, England, France, and at the World Historical Association in Oslo and leading a tour of alumni through France 'In Search of the Year 1000' (perhaps BU history alumni may be interested in signing up—July 15-31). I am writing a book on millennialism from 500 to 2000 (second draft) provisionally entitled 'The Terrible Hopes of the Millennium: Apocalyptic Zeal and Disappointment in the Making of the West.'"

Barbara Diefendorf plans to stay home in Maine and write but may spend a week in Helsinki, where her husband Jeff Diefendorf is attending an Urban Planning Conference, and St. Petersburg.

Diana Wylie writes: "I will be leaving for Rabat, Morocco, on May 8 and I won't return to Boston until August 1. I may be contacted in the meantime via my BU e-mail address, which I will check intermittently from cyber-café's, etc. I will be seeing Madia Thomson and Stacy Holden while in Morocco and learning from them—which will be a nice turn of events."

Cheryl Boots says, "I couldn't get enough of Chicago in January at the AHA convention, so I'm going back May 17-20 for another view of the windy city in the light of spring. Actually, I'll be giving a paper at the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicalism conference at Wheaton on Protestant hymns and American culture. My paper, 'People and Realms of Ev'ry Tongue: Missionary Hymns and Gendered Visions in *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*,' is under consideration for their published conference proceedings. Then, the morning after commencement, I will hop on a plane for Phoenix for a ten-day vacation with my family, including a side trip to the Grand Canyon, which I have not seen previously. I'll return to New England via western Pennsylvania (more family—they're everywhere) in time to finish my paper for the New England Women's Writers Conference June 16-18 in Portland. I'm revisiting one of my earliest graduate student papers on Deborah Davis Millet Taylor, wife of 'Father' Edward Taylor, the minister at Boston's Seamen's Bethel in the mid-nineteenth century. I hope to work in a tour of the MFA's Van Gogh exhibit before starting to teach the Civil War course in Summer Session II. Mid-

July will also find me extolling the remarkable feats of my two Missouri grandchildren who are coming to Boston with their parents for a week's visit. You'd think I'd be ready to settle down by the end of summer school, but no, I'm going back to school myself. August 13-19 is Summer Acoustic Music Workshop II in New Hampshire where I'll be learning new guitar skills, vocal techniques, and song writing approaches. Then, in light of the dearth of academic job offers demanding my attention, you may find me plying my musical trade at a T stop near you. Remember to be generous and I promise not to use your tokens of kindness on demon rum."

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Sarah Phillips: "I plan to dive into the archives at two presidential libraries: the LBJ Library in Austin, Texas, and the FDR Library in Hyde Park, N.Y. In August Tony and I will spend three weeks in Bozeman, Montana. The justification for this trip to the Big Sky country is to have a look at the M.L. Wilson papers at Montana State, but I suspect I'll do more hiking in the Rockies than sifting through dusty documents."

Peter Alegi: "My wife Catherine and I will remain in the Boston area for at least another year since I have accepted an offer to teach African and South African history at Harvard University in 2000-2001. Besides our respective graduations, the South African national soccer team's matches in Washington and New York against Ireland and the United States, and other mundane things, the undisputed highlight of our summer will be a trip to Italy. Family and friends will have us eating and drinking plenty as usual. We'll explore the Eternal City, where I was born and grew up, and revel on the beaches of Sperlonga, an 1100-year-old fishing village built on a rock overlooking the ruins of Emperor Tiberius' beachfront summer villa on the Thyrrhenian sea. If you are passing through Rome this July, please feel free to look us up (tel. 06-44291369) and visit. Ciao!"

Timothy Walker: "This summer I'll be doing revisions on the text of my dissertation, beginning the long process of preparing it for publication. I'll also be in Lisbon teaching an American history and historiography survey for Portuguese MA candidates in the Universidade Aberta

American Studies program. While there, I'll be preparing two papers, one placing Lisbon in the context of a network of early-modern Atlantic world seaports (to be given at the University of Southern Maine on October 2) and another comparing disparate punishments meted out by the Portuguese Inquisition to free blacks and slaves during the 17th and 18th centuries (to be given at the Manumissions in the Atlantic World conference at the College of Charleston, October 5-8). In August, I'll be teaching MET HI 225, Maritime History in the Atlantic World, twice as a two-week intensive course under sail aboard the Tall Ship *Rose*, a replica of an 18th-century Royal Navy frigate; students enrolled in the course will help sail her from Boston to Louisbourg, Nova Scotia, and back."

Amy Kittelson: "This summer will be quite different for me from previous summers during grad school. For one thing, my orals are behind me, and I am finally engaged in reading and researching for my dissertation with a free conscience. As my topic centers on William James, I relish the good fortune of local resources. Another change, one even more consequential than the first, occurs for me this summer. As a result, 'Amy Kittelson' will not be returning to BU in September. I am getting married in June to a splendid man, David Strom, who is merging his surname with mine; hence it is 'Amy Kittelstrom' who will return in the fall. We will spend our hymeneal journey (a phrase whose present irresistibility I can only excuse by my reading Henry James lately) in Spain, where we will take a bike tour among other adventures."

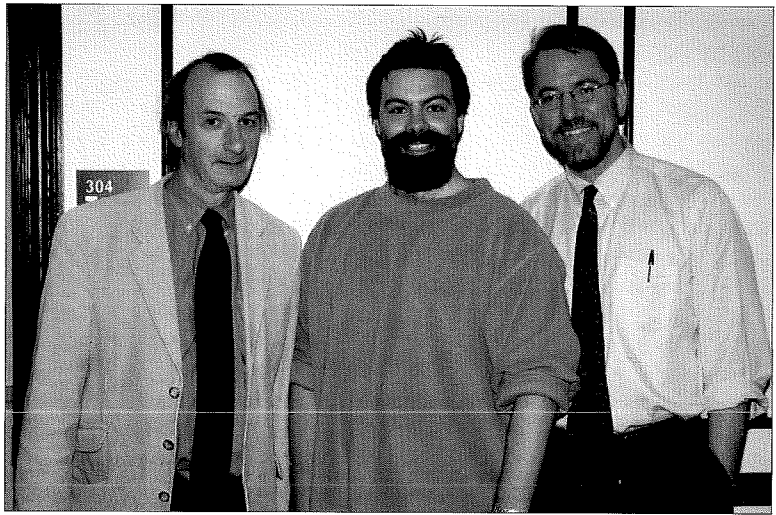
STAFF

Department administrator **James Dutton:** "I will make my usual trip to Staunton, Virginia, to see my parents. Office plans include an overhaul of the departmental Web site, to include more images and an easier way to navigate among the pages. Because the Graduate Studies Committee members had such difficulty reading faculty handwriting on financial aid recommendations this spring, they requested that the process be made more electronic; thus I plan to create a Web-based form that will eliminate paper evaluations next year. Finally, it is not clear as

See *SUMMER PLANS*, page 10

Mark Abate defends dissertation on Roger Bacon

On March 29 Mark Abate successfully defended his dissertation entitled “Roger Bacon and the Rage of Antichrist: The Apocalypse of a Thirteenth Century Natural Philosopher.” The first reader was Professor Clifford Backman, and the second was Professor Thomas Glick; other members of the examining committee were Professors Barbara Diefendorf, Richard Landes, and Michael Weber (of the Department of Religion). We are pleased to reprint the text of the abstract:



Mark Abate (center) with second reader Thomas Glick at left and first reader Clifford Backman at right

This dissertation considers Roger Bacon’s apocalyptic vision from the perspective of his scientific views. It argues that the nature and depth of Bacon’s apocalyptic views have not been properly appreciated because scholarship has not applied his scientific theories to them. Once these two aspects of Bacon’s thought are considered in tandem, his sweeping vision concerning the “physics” of the Apocalypse emerges.

Central to Bacon’s apocalyptic vision was his belief that a secret science was divinely revealed to humanity during the antediluvian period. Due to human abuses it was retracted by God but would reappear in the last days. The apocalyptic *dramatis personae*, all humans, would utilize it to harness hidden natural forces and transform prophetic potentialities into physical realities. Bacon transformed all the figures of the Apocalypse into good or evil natural philosophers. The dissertation argues that the ancient science which all apocalyptic figures would use was a blend of astrology and alchemy that permitted its practitioners to “force nature to obey their will” and that this science was a re-articulation of astral magic purged of demonic incantations.

The conclusion offers two arguments based on the evidence presented. First, it reassesses the question of whether or not Bacon was a Joachite and argues that he was. The reason why scholarship has had such difficulty in detecting Joachite doctrines in Bacon’s work is because they were described through the lexicon of natural philosophy (e.g., the Joachite spiritual intelligence as the active intellect, the *virii spirituales* as natural philosophers illuminated by the Holy Spirit). Second, it argues that the scientific dualism inherent in Bacon’s apocalyptic vision ultimately led him to conclude that science itself was morally neutral. Science could be used to perfect society or destroy it. Cold secondary causes had no ethical dimensions, nor did the sciences that harnessed them. Only individuals utilizing them could be called good or evil. Thus the dissertation concludes that within Bacon’s apocalyptic vision we find the birth pangs of an incipient ethics of science in Western Europe. ♦

Peter Alegi completes dissertation on soccer in South Africa

On April 10 Peter Alegi successfully defended his dissertation, “Keep Your Eye on the Ball: A Social History of Soccer in South Africa, 1910-1976.” The first reader was Professor Diana Wylie, and the second, Professor James McCann; other committee members were Professors Houchang Chehabi, Jean Hay, and Konrad Tuchscherer (Lecturer in History for 1999–2000). We reprint the dissertation abstract below:

This dissertation addresses how and why the influence of football (soccer) stretched beyond the boundaries of the playing fields and created links between people in South Africa’s new industrial society. Based on oral and archival sources, this study covers a period from the formation of the Union in 1910 to the Soweto uprising of 1976. It examines the transformation of the British colonial export of football into a central aspect of black popular culture and social capital; that is, accrued shared practices, values, and social connections enabling coordinated action.

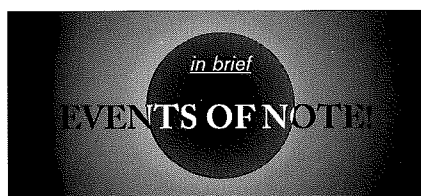
Focusing on the culturally diverse cities of Johannesburg, Durban, and Cape Town, this study analyzes how people denied political rights and subjected to legalized racial discrimination employed football to build alternative institutions on a local, regional, and national scale. The dissertation examines football’s centrality to the social experiences of black workers, entrepreneurs, and political leaders. It investigates the complex relationship between football, the articulation of new group identities, and the formation of patronage networks orchestrated by local powerbrokers.

A process of *Africanization* led to the incorporation of agrarian beliefs and rituals, the adoption of indigenous playing styles,

and teams' engagement with the civic and cultural life of the townships. Football groups' conflicts with white authorities, missionaries, and private companies transformed soccer—numerically the sport with the most participants and spectators—into a key terrain of the anti-apartheid sport movement's domestic and international struggle. The nonracial Soccer Federation formed in the 1950s symbolized the combative stance of soccer against apartheid. Football sanctions were among the first international indictments of the apartheid government. This dissertation demonstrates that soccer was a conduit not only for leisure, but also for political influence and cultural expression in twentieth century South Africa. In so doing, it addresses the oversight that has left sport on the distant fringes of African history. ♦



Peter Alegi and first reader Diana Wylie



On April 7 Professor **Robert Dallek** was a member of a panel at the Gerald Ford Library discussing Vietnam and the American presidency. On April 27 he spoke at the James K. Bolten Civic Journalism Symposium for the Pew Center, held at the BU Law School. On the 28th he lectured on "U.S. Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century" for the University Professors. He also discussed presidential politics at the Brookings Institution, on National Public Radio, and on CNN. On May 3 he will deliver the Gaspar Bacon Lecture for the History Department on "The American Presidency: Twentieth-Century Transformations," and on May 16 he will be on a panel at the John F. Kennedy Library with David Donald of Harvard talking about "The Art of Biography."

Three department members are contributors to the *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance* (6 vols., Macmillan, 1999): **Clifford Backman** ("Sardinia"), **Barbara Diefendorf** ("Paris," "Wars of Religion"), and **Thomas Glick** ("Agriculture").

On April 7 Professor **Cathal Nolan** was commentator on a paper on "The

Vietnam War and the Transformation of America" at a seminar at Providence College. At the University of New Brunswick later in April he chaired a panel on "Peacekeeping and OOTW: A CANUS Partnership?" at the Public Policy Forum: Canada-U.S. Defence Cooperation Consultation, sponsored by the Department of National Defence, Canada.

In late November Professor **Houchang Chehabi** organized a panel on Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan at the annual meeting of the Middle Eastern Studies Association in Washington and presented a paper titled "Re-dressing Muslims: Dress Codes in the Interwar Years." In February he presented a paper on "Jews and Sports in Iran" at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London; gave a talk titled "Iran: between the clash of civilizations and dialogue of civilizations" at Brandeis; and read a forthcoming article, "U.S.-Iranian Sports Diplomacy," at a symposium on "Global Games: Sports, Politics, and Society" at Tufts. In March he attended a conference on the parliamentary elections in Iran at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, where he read a paper titled "Democratization: the Balance Sheet"; he gave a talk titled "Islamic Democracy? Thoughts on the Elections in Iran" at Johns Hopkins. In April he co-organized a conference on Islam and Constitutionalism at the Center for Is-

lamic Legal Studies of the Harvard Law School and presented a paper on the 1979 Constitution of Iran; he also presented a paper on dress codes in Turkey and Iran at BU's Institute for the Study of Economic Culture. This year he published "From Revolutionary *Tasnif* to Patriotic *Sorud*: Music and Nation-Building in Early 20th-Century Iran," "Voices Unveiled: Women Singers in Modern Iran," and a number of book reviews.

Professor **James McCann** will give a paper, "Climate and Class in Highland Ethiopia: Historical Agronomy," at a Yale University conference on May 12-13 celebrating the tenth anniversary of Yale's Program in Agrarian Studies. He has been invited by the Norwegian Human Rights Institute to serve as an election monitor for the May 14 Ethiopian national elections. He will travel to two separate regions of the country to assess the pre-election preparations and then spend the election evening observing the ballot count in a town located at 9000-foot elevation (and very cold). His travels will also take him down to a very hot 5000-foot elevation site in the drought-affected zone in the east where, in addition to assessing farmers' perceptions of the election process, he will determine the present food security conditions. As these areas are quite rural, he will travel by landrover, by foot, and by mule to try and eliminate the dangers of "road bias" (the ten-

dency for social scientists to assume that the rest of a place looks just like what they see from their Toyota's window).

In February Professor **James Johnson** spoke and played the piano at Butler University in Indianapolis. His presentation was entitled "Music and the French Revolution. A Lecture/Performance on the Political Uses of Culture." In March he spoke to the Nineteenth-Century Graduate and Faculty Seminar at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada; his topic was "Carnival Dreams and the Mask of Society: Balzac's 'Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes de Paris' and the Nineteenth Century." In April he participated in a Roundtable Discussion at the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Conference in Philadelphia on "The Tensions of Interdisciplinarity. The Competing Claims of Literature and History."

Professor **Merle Goldman** was the Phi Beta Kappa lecturer at Goucher College on April 12.

On April 26, the Institute for Medieval History (Professor **Thomas Glick**, director), along with the Interdisciplinary Italian Studies Program and the Pirandello Lyceum of Boston, sponsored a one-day symposium on "Literacy and Numeracy in Late Medieval Italy." The keynote speaker was Vincent Ilardi of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, who spoke on "Renaissance Vision with Florentine Eyeglasses: Spectacles and Literacy in the Fifteenth Century."

Professor **Dietrich Orlow's** article "Sozialistische Deutschlandpolitik: SFIO, SPD und die Zukunft Deutschlands 1945-1950" appeared in the April 2000 issue of *Francia*, a journal published by the German Historical Institute in Paris.

On April 29, Professor **Marilyn Halter** was an invited speaker for the plenary session, "Ethnicity, Regionalism, and New England," at the New England American Studies Association annual conference held this year at the University of Southern Maine, Portland. On May 19 she will deliver the comment for the panel, "Creating Communities," at a conference spon-

sored by the Massachusetts Historical Society on "Immigrant Massachusetts, 1840-2000." She has also been invited to speak at a conference on "Diaspora and Diversity: Some Aspects of Identity Within the 'Black' Experience," honoring the retirement of noted sociologist Roy Bryce-Laporte, to be held at Colgate University on June 3.

Although Professor **Mariano Plotkin** will be leaving the faculty of Boston University this summer, he will continue his affiliation with BU's Institute for the Study of Economic Culture. In that connection he is helping to plan a conference in Buenos Aires in December with ISEC's director Peter Berger on "Globalization and Culture in Latin America."

In April, Professor **Reggie Blaszczyk** received a research grant from the Hoover Presidential Library Association in West Branch, Iowa. This award will cover the costs of a trip to the Hoover Library in West Branch, where she will study how Hoover's commerce department supported the standardization and simplification movements of the 1920s. This work is related to her

See EVENTS OF NOTE, page 11

Latin American search concludes successfully

Soon after the visits of three finalists in the search for a Latin American historian, the department faculty met and recommended the appointment of Jeffrey W. Rubin as associate professor of history. This recommendation has been approved by Dean Dennis Berkey; Rubin will also be research associate at the Institute for the Study of Economic Culture.

Because of the lateness of the search, Rubin will teach both of his history courses in the spring 2001 semester: one will be HI 386 ("Modern Latin America"), and the other will be a new colloquium on a topic to be announced later. He will spend the first semester of the 2000-01 academic year chiefly in his research position at the Institute.

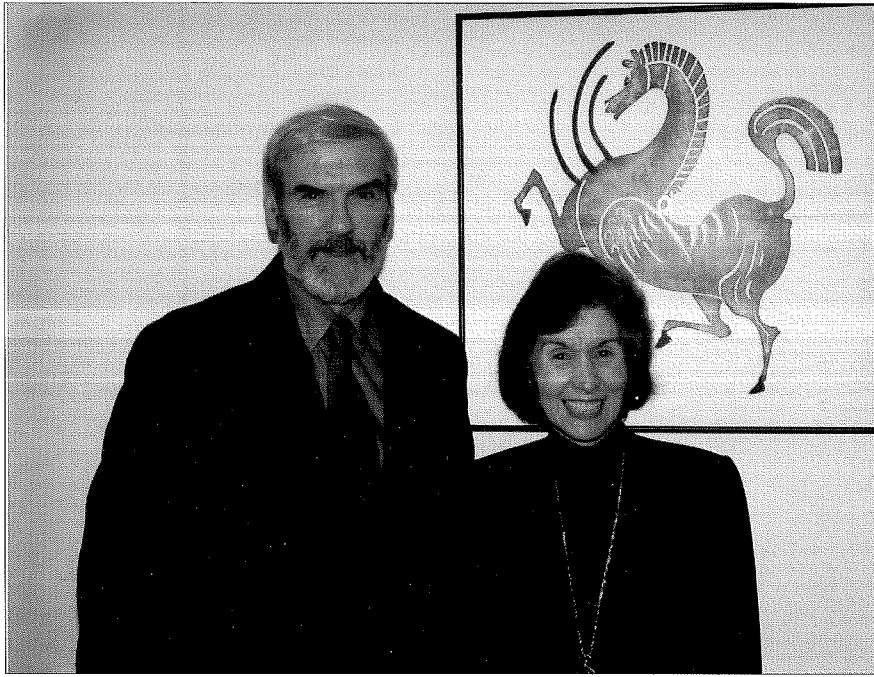
Year-long search for department chairman reaches end

The third candidate for the position of History Department chairman was Peter Coclanis, who currently chairs the Department of History at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Coclanis was on campus April 20 and 21 to make the usual rounds of interviews with administrators, to share lunches with faculty, and to give a presentation on his work.

Coclanis received his PhD in American history from Columbia University in 1984, after which he assumed a position as assistant professor at UNC. Besides holding the job of chair (for the past two years), he was also associate dean for general education at the institution. A specialist in economic history, Coclanis is the author of *The Shadow of a Dream: Economic Life and Death in the South Carolina Low Country, 1670-1920* (Oxford University Press, 1989) and co-editor of *Confronting Southern Poverty in the Great Depression: 'The Report on Economic Conditions of the South' and Supplementary Documents (1996)* and *Ideas, Ideologies, and Social Movements: The U.S. Experience Since 1800* (1999). He is currently involved in a long-term research project on economic aspects of the rice industry which has taken him to rice fields in such disparate places as Arkansas and various countries in the Orient; it was on this subject that he gave his presentation as part of the search process.

The next step in the search is for the search committee (which includes four History Department faculty and faculty from four other departments/institutes) to make its recommendation and consult with the department members.

Given the brief time before the end of the academic year, it is possible that the person selected will not be able to assume his duties in September. In that event an acting chairman will be appointed for the intervening time. ♦



Jonathan Spence with Merle Goldman

When did Mao become evil?

Jonathan Spence delivers the Merle Goldman Lecture

BY STEPHEN SPEAR

On March 28 Yale Professor Jonathan Spence delivered the annual Merle Goldman Lecture on his recent book *Mao Zedong* (New York: Penguin Group, 1999); the audience numbered about 75.

Professor Spence began by describing his recent research tour of China (including a visit to a “Mao café” at which the staff was dressed in military outfits and Mao memorabilia were sold) and then outlined the life of the famous communist revolutionary leader. He devoted the last half hour of his presentation to answering questions from the audience. Professor Spence introduced Mao’s life by broaching the question of who was the most evil: Mao, Adolph Hitler, or Joseph Stalin. Judging solely by the amount of death and suffering he caused, Spence explained, Mao was easily the “most evil.” “He was the strongest and strangest Chinese leader ever.”

Professor Spence went on to explain Mao’s early life as a young middle-class peasant who yearned for little more than to be a local school teacher, but became caught up in the political drama that ensued after the collapse of the Republic in 1912. “The collapse of the Republic caused a profound sense of sadness and disappointment in Mao’s generation,” Spence explained. During that period, Mao became immersed in political theory and scholarship, as he searched for a way to restore China’s political cohesion and greatness. He devoted himself at first to the “cult of physical fitness,” a philosophy intended to restore health and rigor to Chi-

Stephen Spear is a first-year student in the MA program.

nese society through athletics, but, in 1920, turned instead to socialism.

Though it is impossible to pinpoint when exactly Mao “became evil,” Spence explained, it is clear that during the bloody 1926-1928 period Mao became “intoxicated and excited by violence” while observing Kuomintang soldiers massacre communists throughout the countryside. There is, however, no evidence that indicates that Mao himself ever killed anyone.

Sometime between 1936 and 1946, during and after the “Long March” to escape persecution by Chiang Kai-shek, Mao rose to become leader of the Chinese Communist movement. As leader, Mao emphasized a rural persona designed to appeal to peasant followers, surrounded himself with self-aggrandizing people, and tyrannized intellectuals who questioned his authority. This behavior became a trademark and lasted throughout his reign as leader of China. “Mao hated to be questioned but seemed to relish brutality and humiliation, especially later in life,” Spence said.

During the question period several Chinese members of the audience asked Spence to elaborate on his description of Mao as the one of the “strongest and strangest” rulers in Chinese history. Spence explained that any man capable of unifying China would necessarily be described as strange. ♦

Search for American intellectual historian opens

The administration has approved a search for a replacement for Professor Richard Fox, who accepted a position at the University of Southern California a year ago. This appointment in the history of American thought will be at the level of associate or full professor.

Members of the search committee are Professors Louis Ferleger, Bruce Schulman (chair), and Nina Silber. Although electronic and print advertisements will be placed in the near future, the department expects the search to begin in earnest in the fall.

small school of about 2000 undergraduate and graduate students located in a sprawling postindustrial town on the border of the wilderness. Boston University is a major urban institution located on the banks of the Charles River. We had four or five black bears wander into Worcester last fall. The only wildlife I have seen around here are the squirrels on the grass behind Bay State Road.

My graduate training was in European cultural/intellectual history; but I have rarely worked in this field. My major interests have been in the relations between the world and the West and in global intercultural relations.

The new African American studies program I am building reflects these interests. It will be the first global African American studies program that I know of. One of our concerns will be to look at relations between African Americans and other global populations. Next year we will have a visiting professor from Korea who will teach such courses as "Comparative Asian American and African American Women Writers."

As for my own work, my current projects include a study of black/Asian relations in East Asia and a study of racial thought. Next fall I will teach a colloquium on racial thought. I hope to see some of you there.

When I am not working I like to sail, when I get the chance, or hike in the woods around Worcester. I am also an exercise fanatic with a love of martial arts. I have very few dislikes; however, it irritates me to hear parents say "good job" when a kid strikes out at a little league ball game.

Ronald Kent Richardson

Professor Richardson was appointed Director of the African American Studies Program and Associate Professor of History in January 2000.



We asked our May 2000 graduates to let us know what they plan after commencement and received these responses:

Megan Beauregard: I am going to work for an international consulting company called IMS who are based out of Northern Mass. They specialize in trade between the United States and Eastern/Central Europe focusing on the industrial and technical/ecommerce fields.

James Bennett: I have accepted a University Fellowship at the Ohio State University, where I will study Late Medieval English social and cultural history under the direction of Professor Barbara Hanawalt.

Colin Carey: I plan on returning to Connecticut this summer to seek a high school position as a Social Studies teacher but I have also been accepted into the School of Education's graduate degree program (EdM) if I do not find my dream job.

Nicholas David: I am proud to tell the department that I will be teaching as a member of the Teach for America corps for the next two years. Location unknown at this time.

Michael Ellis: I have applied for a few foreign affairs and public policy research positions in Washington, D.C., and New York, N.Y. I'm still waiting to hear from them though.

Kelly Gerstbacher: After graduation I am planning on taking a couple of months to drive cross country to see America.

Sarah Kuhn: I plan on working for a year and then attending graduate school for elementary education.

Danielle Lightburn: I'm still applying for jobs. I'm hoping to find a position in management consulting, but I don't know if I will or not. I will be working with the Historical Society through the second annual conference in June.

Michael Merriman: I will be attending Stanford Law School (I have not yet decided on a specialty).

Rebecca Moss: My plans after graduation include a trip to London in June, and I will be substitute teaching in the San Francisco Bay Area this fall.

Susan Rankin: I'm going to China, but am still in the process of interviewing to find out what I'll be doing July 1.

Henry Rawner: My plans for after graduating are to work for Fidelity (legal department) for a year, in order to gain some law experience. I'm planning on taking the LSATs in October and if everything goes well to be in law school by September 2001. My law school choices will all be in warm places: Florida (Miami), Texas, Hawaii, California, etc., etc.

Jacob Roller: As regards future plans, I hope to work abroad next year; got any leads?

Stephanie Rosander: I will be attending Boston University Law School this fall. Although I am not certain about a concentration yet, I am thinking about pursuing international law.

Daniel Seidman: I actually don't know what I'm going to be doing after graduation, but I would like to work at an archive or a museum, either as an archivist or an educator, and I have applications out, and interviews scheduled, so hopefully something will come of those.

Lisa Sopher: I am planning to go to the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York—I'm going for a Masters in Jewish History.

Mark Weinberg: I will be heading to London to participate in a work program for six months. When I return to the states I will settle in NYC or Boston. I may pursue further studies in American history in the future. ♦

Getting e-mail from a distance

Hints for the summer traveler

BY BETTY ANDERSON

I am planning to spend two months in Jordan this summer so the problem arises, "How will I get my e-mail?" Jordan has two Internet service providers, the housing unit where I will be staying has two phone lines, and I have a laptop computer. However, about 50 people live and work in the building and the phone lines in Jordan do not always function perfectly. I know that I need to find an alternative medium for my e-mail in case this method breaks down.

In the system that most of us use in the Boston area, we have a BU dial-in program or a program like AOL that works the same way. We can then use a program like Eudora to access our e-mail. This approach works in the United States and in some places in Europe because the private companies (although not the BU system) provide local numbers for calling into the service via a laptop. If you are planning to spend time in other places in the world or you do not have a laptop computer, accessing e-mail gets a little trickier.

One solution is to sign up for one of the Web-based services—Yahoo, Hotmail, Excite, etc.—and have your BU e-mail forwarded to that new address. A Web-based e-mail service means that you do not have to have your own computer to check your mail; you can just walk into a "cyber café" or use a friend's computer. As long as the computer you are using has access to the Internet in any way, you can open up Netscape Navigator or Internet Explorer and access your e-mail. You then type the URL (address) of the site, e.g. <http://www.hotmail.com>. You also do not have to pay for this service (but you will have to look at a number of advertisements on the screen).

There is a fairly simply procedure to have your e-mail forwarded; Jim

Dutton has a handout to help with setting this up.

But forwarding your e-mail is convenient only if you are going to be checking your mail from another place for an extended time; otherwise starting and then canceling the forwarding becomes a nuisance. And saving forwarded e-mail for future reference is yet another problem. If you don't want to bother with this process, there is an easier way (though see the warning on security at the end of this article):

You can access your BU e-mail directly through the Web-based services without going through the steps required to have it forwarded. This method allows you to continue to use your *bu.edu* address as your only e-mail address (you don't have to give out your Yahoo or Hotmail address at all).

Here are the steps required to set up this system in Yahoo Mail. I have not looked at the other programs, but I know they offer the same service and the procedure should be similar.

- Go to <http://www.yahoo.com>.
- Click on the hyperlink that says "mail" (this is in a long list of hyperlinks).
- You must then set up a Yahoo account—follow the instructions on the screen.
- When that is done, click on the hyperlink that says "Check Other (Pop) Mail."
- Click on the hyperlink that says "Add Mail Server."
- In the box next to "Mail Account Server," type: *acs-mail.bu.edu*.

You have now successfully ordered Yahoo to check your BU mail automatically. Whenever you log into the Yahoo account, your BU e-mail will be there. If you are using another Web-based server besides Yahoo, the key to the system is typing in the right "Mail Account Server" or "Pop Server." Regardless of what command the program provides, type: *acs-mail.bu.edu*. If that does not work, a variant you could try is to type: *acs-pop.bu.edu*.

Any mail you read via this system will not disappear from the BU e-mail server. When you get back to your computer, you will find that all your mail is still there (and will have to be deleted or

organized again). For the more advanced user, this method will only read the mail slotted for the "Inbox," so if you are filtering any mail to another mailbox, those letters will not appear.

In the interest of full disclosure, Information Technology at BU does not recommend that you use this approach for accessing e-mail because you will be recording your BU password with a private company. ♦

The Web: don't underestimate its reach

Is all the effort expended on constructing, updating, and making people aware of the departmental Web site worth it? If numbers count, here are the statistics for October 1999 (a month chosen because it is one when potential applicants are checking out schools they might attend): During that month approximately 37,000 people visited the History Web site (7,000 of those arrived at the site from within Boston University). All of the principal search engines (Yahoo, Infoseek, Excite, Lycos) now link to the site.

And speaking of search engines, there is another side to one's accessibility on the Web. Professor William Keylor received the following e-mail recently:

Dear Mr. Keylor,

In my search for information on Paris, France, I stumbled onto a page with your photograph and name. I would have ignored it, but I am desperately seeking information for my stepdaughter. She will be 18 this summer and wants to take a two-week vacation to Paris with a friend on July 12th. I am trying to find information about places to stay (that are safe) and the best airlines and rates. I thought I could find a "student fare" or "group fare" or something of that nature, but didn't.

I'm very sorry if this is absurd to you...but if it isn't, please let me know your thoughts. I thought perhaps, due to your knowledge of French and Paris, you might have some tips to share...

To his credit, Prof. Keylor answered the query with enough detail that might get him a job with Garber Travel. It must have been that friendly photo on his Web page that did the trick. ♦

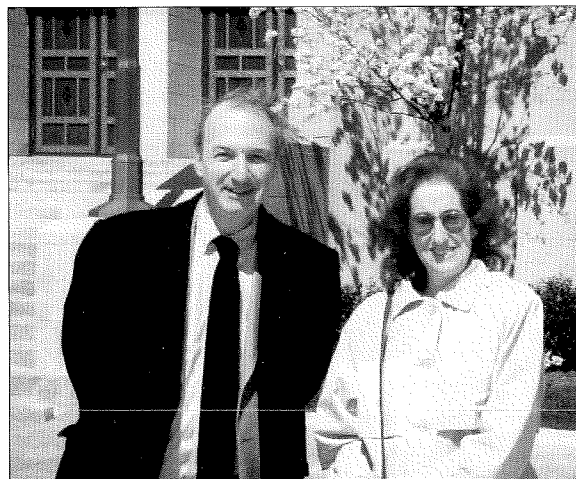
of the newsletter deadline whether I will be preparing to welcome an external chairman or an internal acting chairman, but a new chairman there will be come September. Alas, that probably means clearing off my desk."

Department secretary **Al Sargis**: "I will return to China this summer to further develop several exchange programs and do some interviewing for a research project. Along the way I will give a lecture on 'Marxist Studies in U.S. Higher Education from the 1960s to the 1990s' at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and People's University of China. (The IRS says that's the only way I can write off this trip as something other than a 'hobby.') I hope to visit a few places I missed last time, catch up with some friends, and enjoy the provincial outposts that I found so breathtaking on my first trip. After a couple of weeks in China, I will go to Oakland, California, to visit my son and his latest fiancée, reacquaint myself with other relatives and friends I haven't seen for a couple of years, and check out some 'retirement spreads.' Hope everyone else has a great summer!"

Office assistant **Marc Beard**: "Facing the completion of my MA, the end of my career in the department office, and the beginning of my PhD program at Syracuse University, I am a bit overwhelmed. I am not letting this stop me, though: in May, a friend will visit; later that month I will go to Syracuse to find a new domicile. In June I will attend the wedding of a friend and former BU history student Jocelyn Ullrich. The wedding having been completed (I write in the ablative absolute), I will journey to see family, friends, the cat, and the air conditioner in Arkansas, where two friends have cajoled me into going canoeing and camping. I have heard one too many stories along the lines of 'We floated under a tree branch, and a snake dropped into our canoe.' I feel that if humans were meant to sleep in canvas structures on some god-forsaken rocks, the descendants of Prometheus would not have bestowed electricity, running water, flush toilets, and the like upon us. Assuming I survive, I will return to Boston in early August so that I can move myself into the snow belt. I know that wherever I go, my days in the BU History Department will always be a cherished memory—except for the damned fax machine." ♦

Medieval History Institute sponsors symposium on water

The Institute for Medieval History (Professor Thomas Glick, director) sponsored a symposium on "The Culture of Water: History and Historic Preservation" on April 9 and 10 which united a group of historians and geographers interested both in the history of traditional irrigation and drainage agriculture landscapes and in their preservation. The first day's case studies included two UNESCO "World Heritage Sites," the Beemster Polder (Holland) and the Chinampas ("floating gardens") of Xochimilco (Mexico), and one active World Heritage candidate, the medieval Date Palm Grove of Elche, Spain. The second day of the symposium considered the irrigated landscape of the American southwest: the Spanish Colonial Demonstration Farm planned for the San Antonio (Texas) Missions National Park and the Community Acequias (irrigation canals) of the Upper Rio Grande (New Mexico and Colorado). On April 10, there was a field trip to view the Blackstone Valley National Historic Corridor, from the Slater Mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, to Washington Mills in Grafton, Massachusetts, with an intermediate stop at the Museum of Work and Culture in Woonsocket. The meeting was funded by the Boston University Humanities Foundation.



Prof. Thomas Glick and Rosalind Zichek Rock (BU '66; history) at the Culture of Water Meeting April 10. Dr. Rock is Park Historian at the San Antonio Missions National Park, San Antonio, Texas

Kyri Claflin wins scholarships

Graduate student Kyri Claflin has won a Bourse Chateaubriand for 2000-01. The French Government awards this scholarship to a small number of graduate students to fund nine months of dissertation research in France. She will be in Paris to continue work on her dissertation, tentatively titled "The Fat and the Lean—The Food Crises in Paris during Two World Wars: A comparative study of the social and cultural history of French food in wartime, 1914-1918 and 1940-1941." She is also a 2000 Hoover Scholar, a designation which comes with a travel grant to spend time in the archives in the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library in West Branch, Iowa. Hoover led the American government's relief missions to Europe after both World Wars.



What's on your bedside table?

A look at faculty reading



It was the suggestion of Professor Clifford Backman that we begin this snooping into the bedrooms of the faculty of the department. He wondered "what new things other Europeanists were reading." So we asked, broadening the question a bit, and here are the responses so far (we welcome contributions for future issues of the newsletter):

Fred Leventhal: *Straight Man* by Richard Russo. For fans of academic novels, this is a wonderful satire on American university and departmental politics.

Clifford Backman: There are three books on my bedside table, and I switch back and forth among them. On the medieval side, I'm reading *Charity and Welfare Hospitals and the Poor in Medieval Catalonia* by James Brodman. This is the second volume of a projected trilogy of works on the notion and practice of Christian charity in the medieval Spanish world, and it focuses on the development of ethical and legal distinctions between "charity" (that is, aid given privately, gratuitously, and indiscriminately) and "welfare" (that is, assistance given publicly to specific groups or toward specific ends) and the impact such distinctions had on social practices and public policies.

On the not-related-to-my-job front, I'm also reading Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* and Andrew Motion's *A Writer's Life: A Biography of Philip Larkin*.

James Johnson: My summer reading: Henry James and Edward Gibbon.

Thomas Glick: Gerald Dumas, *An Afternoon in Waterloo Park*. Autobiography in free verse (for the autobiographically inclined, in search of just the right genre).

Thomas Whalen: I just finished reading *Playing for Keeps: Michael Jordan and the World He Made* by David Halberstam. While I don't think it's up to par with some of his previous work like *Summer of '49* and *October 1964*, I think it offers the best available account on how Michael Jordan got to be MICHAEL JORDAN. I'd even recommend it for non-sports fans.

Another book that I just picked up and am really enjoying is *Hugger Mugger*, Robert Parker's new Spenser novel that is set in the horse country of Georgia. Though the plot is not hard to figure out, Spenser is in top form goofing on southern manners and culture.

Jill Lepore: On my bedside table: Mary Oliver, *Twelve Moons*; Rogers Smith, *Civic Ideals*; Dorothy Sayers, *Five Red Herrings*; Margaret Wise Brown, *Good Night Moon*; Alexander Melville Bell, *English Visible Speech for the Million*.

Cheryl Boots: This summer, I'll be reading *Angela's Ashes* thanks to recommendations from many family and friends and before I see the movie (hey, I know I'm behind the curve here but better late than never). I think I'll also read Ampersad's biography of Jackie Robinson because it is baseball season. And last but not least, in that twilight between "work" and "pleasure" is a volume of Whittier that I've been savoring and will continue to enjoy through the summer months.

Richard Landes: Robert Wright, *Non-Zero: The Logic of Human Destiny* (Pantheon, 2000): excellent idea, bad history, lessons in both how to do evolutionary thinking, how not to do history; criticizes Gould well and then falls into the Whiggish trap that Gould would never fall into.

Donald Harman Akenson, *Surpassing Wonder: The Invention of the Bible and the Talmuds* (Harcourt Brace, 1998): one of the best works that approaches the Biblical text as a product of history (i.e. historical documents composed by people) without demeaning religious beliefs and inspiration; excellent sense of how to avoid anachronism.

James J. O'Donnell, *Avatars of the Word: From Papyrus to Cyberspace* (Harvard Univer-

sity Press, 1999): brilliant and brief account of the impact of communications technology on culture from ancient times to present.

Arthur Mendel, *Vision and Violence* (University of Michigan Press, 2000): best study on the paradoxical relationship between millennial visions of peace and apocalyptic violence. ♦

EVENTS OF NOTE (cont. from page 6)

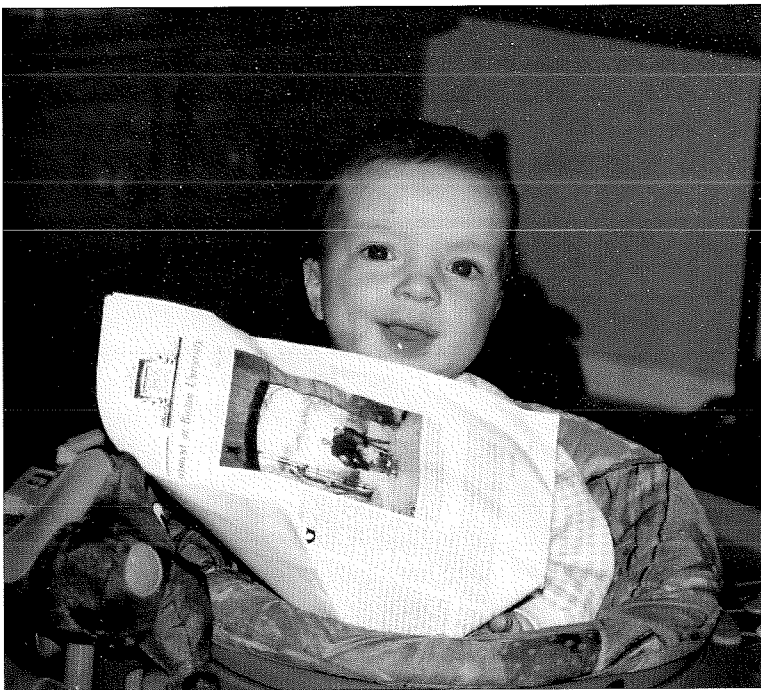
new book project on color in industry. On May 2, she will present her research on this topic to the community at Harvard's Charles Warren Center, where she is a visiting scholar this year. The paper is entitled "The Spin on Style and Color: Edward L. Bernays, the Cheney Brothers, and the Rationalization of Fashion."

Professor **Barbara Diefendorf** was selected to receive one of this year's CAS Honors Program Distinguished Teaching Awards, on the basis of a poll of the students who are graduating from the program this year.

Senior **Lisa Sopher** won the CAS/GRS Alumni Essay Writing contest for Social Sciences. The department submitted a paper she wrote for Professor Clifford Backman.

Graduate student **Kyri Clafin's** essay "Savoring the Rat" will be published in the proceedings of a conference that she attended in Montalcino, Italy, last summer; the conference, and the proceedings, are entitled "Cities under Siege." The same essay will appear soon in the Italian journal *Ricerche Storiche*. She will have a review of the book *Les Assistantes sociales au temps de Vichy: Du silence à l'oubli* by Armelle Mabon-Fallin published in the winter/spring 2000 issue of the journal *Contemporary French Civilization*. She has also co-authored the report for the Boston University International History Institute's conference "From Journalism to History: The Angle of Vision." The editor of that project is Professor Cathal Nolan. ♦

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Sheila McIntyre (PhD 1996) sent this photo of her son Will. If you look carefully, you will note a somewhat dog-eared (baby-eared?) copy of the department newsletter in the foreground. According to Sheila, "He pored over this issue for hours and screamed when it fell beyond his reach. It gave us a few hours of peace and obviously gave him immense pleasure. He eagerly awaits the next installment."