

Grad Notes Intelligencer

— an irregular newsletter of reports, hearsay, gossip, and information

November 2004

Jon Went Reports on Rocky Mountain Conference in Boulder

On September 25, I had the opportunity to present a paper at the Rocky Mountain Interdisciplinary Conference in Boulder, Colorado. The paper I presented examined racial whiteness and material culture on the Great Plains in the latter half of the nineteenth century and was part of the panel entitled "Memory and Identity in the American West." The other two presenters of the aptly named title focused on ruins and localized memory in Southwestern Colorado and examined the evolution of indigenous identity, intertwining both a tribal and governmental perspective and how these two have coaled over the past century. I was fortunate to be part of such a strong panel.

After my session concluded, I went to two other graduate student panels, one dealing with historical narratives and theory, and the other pertaining to minority and diasporic peoples at which fellow UNL graduate student Tonia Compton offered an outstanding paper detailing female slave resistance.

The conference, however, did not only consist of graduate student presenters. For the final session, organizers compiled two panels tailored to students at varying stages in

their academic progression: one for master's degree students applying for doctoral programs and, for more advanced doctoral students, tips for the job-search. Unfortunately both occurred simultaneously and I was only able to attend the former.

The panel consisted of faculty members who have previously served on admission committees. During their informative discussion, they identified characteristics of strong applications and offered insight into writing effective statements of purpose. One of the most important themes identified was that the applicant had researched the department and clearly identified the types of questions they are interested in exploring and with whom. Although committees realize your plans may certainly change—indeed they are looking for a willingness to explore new ideas—too often applicants are applying only to avoid the post-bachelor job market. Moreover, one should absolutely detail their intellectual evolution to not only illustrate how they developed a passion for their subject, but also, and perhaps most importantly since committees will literally read hundreds of applications, to personalize their application.

Finally, a strong application details the strengths that the applicant will bring to the department. Too often students have a clear sense of why they want to be at that particular department, but fail to highlight their intellectual assets and what they can do for the program.

Overall, the environment at Boulder was both professional and collegial. In addition to helpful criticisms, I met fellow graduate students from institutions such as the University of Washington, Utah State, and the University of Illinois-Chicago, and have continued to maintain contact. Reflecting on my experience, it was enriching. I strongly recommend graduate students to apply next year.



Grad Student Tom Smith to Speak

Three grad students who received summer funding from the UNL Human Rights and Human Diversity Initiative will report on Thursday, November 11, at 3:30 pm, in Oldfather 1206. A conference panel format will be used, with each student presenting on his/her research for no more than 15 minutes, followed by questions. The event will feature: Tom Smith, History, "Human Rights: Race and Reform in the British Empire," J. Pino, Modern Languages, "Human Rights in Colombian Modern Poetry," and J. Niati, Modern Languages, "Human Rights: Voltaire, Tolerance, and Freedom of the Press."



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History Department Offers Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs

You may choose to add dimension to your graduate experience through a number of interdisciplinary programs at UNL. Among the most active are the Center for Great Plains Studies, the Center for Judaic Studies, the Institute of Ethnic Studies, the Medieval/Renaissance Program, the Nineteenth-Century Studies Program, and the Women's Studies Program.

The Great Plains Studies interdepartmental area of specialization fosters the study of people and the environment in the sparsely populated Great Plains. The objective of the Great Plains Studies Interdepartmental Area of Specialization is to provide an understanding of the complex and unique features of the Great Plains. An annual symposium sponsored by the Center brings scholars from all over the world to Lincoln to discuss such topics as Great Plains environment and culture, natural resources, and environmental management policies and Native, Hispanic, and African Americans on the Plains.

Founded in 1991, the Norman & Bernice Harris Center for Judaic Studies focuses on Jewish civilization and the nature and history of anti-Semitism. Since its inception, it has become a vibrant center of academic activity and public programming, offering some twenty courses in

the fields of history, literature, philosophy and religious studies, psychology, and political science. Public lectures, such as the annual Krivosha and Wald lectures, deal with such topics as the Dead Sea Scrolls, Jewish-Christian dialogue, and problems of social discrimination.

The Institute for Ethnic Studies is composed of three separate programs: Latino and Latin American Studies, African American and African Studies, and Native American Studies. Ethnic Studies and the three programs also sponsor or co-sponsor a variety of lectures, symposia, research projects, and cultural events on campus, and serve as a resource for UNL students, faculty, and staff as well as the wider community.

The Environmental Studies Program is designed to serve a variety of students concerned about environmental issues and change. The program provides a holistic view of the environment, and human-environment interaction.

The Medieval and Renaissance Program focuses on this dynamic period in history which lies at the root of most modern cultures of the Western world. The period profoundly affected Western culture's current literature, philosophy, art, religion and politics. The program regularly offers

scholarly lectures to enhance the graduate experience.

Curricular and faculty strengths in Nineteenth-Century Studies within the departments of History, English, and Modern Languages and Literatures make this a natural area for graduate specialization. The program sponsors visiting speakers and an ongoing colloquium series.

Women's Studies provides graduate students from diverse disciplines with opportunities to broaden and enrich knowledge in one or more disciplines while drawing on the interdisciplinary perspectives of Women's Studies. Graduate courses focus on issues of gender, race, ethnicity, class, global feminism, and sexual orientation. The Women's Studies Colloquium held each semester provides opportunities for graduate students to meet and interact with Women's Studies faculty and visiting scholars about their research.

HGSA List-Serve Up and Running

Thanks to Joann Ross, the HGSA list-serve is now meeting our communication needs. Here are a few case-sensitive instructions for using the list-serve: To send messages to the group, address e-mail to:

HGSA-LISTSERVE@UNL.EDU

To send info to the owner of the list, address e-mail to:

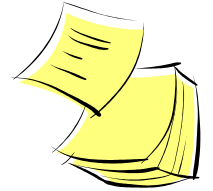
HGSA-LISTSERVE-OWNER@LISTSERVE.UNL.EDU

To unsubscribe send an e-mail message to:

LISTSERV@UNL.EDU

In the message field (not the subject line) type: UNSUBSCRIBE HGSA-LISTSERVE.

Call for Papers



The Western Association of Women Historians will hold their annual conference in Phoenix from April 29 to May 1, 2005. The WAWH welcomes proposals for papers or panels. The proposal submission deadline is post-marked by November 15, 2004. Check their website at: <http://www.wawh.org/> for detailed information.

Please see page three for an additional call for papers.

Seminar Classes Offered for Spring Semester

Still wondering what to take next semester? For your convenience, course descriptions for a number of spring seminar classes are included below.

History 932 - Seminar:
Early Modern Europe:
"Otherness:
Early Modern English"
Dr. Levin

This course will examine views of those the dominant culture views as "other" in early modern England and examine the actual voices of these groups as well through contemporary and historical, cultural, and literary texts. We will examine both those from other regions who came or were brought to England and those English of both sexes who were for one reason or another marginalized. Readings to include a number of Shakespearean plays, modern critical studies, and, particularly through EEBO [Early English Books Online], contemporary texts. There will be a variety of short papers and presentations throughout the seminar and a research paper appropriate to present at a scholarly conference at the end of the semester. Topics appropriate for research projects include attitudes toward and voices of: Jews, Africans, Moslems, Native Americans, Moors, homosexuals and lesbians, criminals such as pickpockets and prostitutes, accused witches, the poor, those born illegitimate, or those from foreign areas including the French, the Swedish, the Iberians, the Scots, and the Irish.

History 934 - Seminar:
Recent Europe:
"Postwar Peacemaking"
Dr. Ambrosius

This research seminar will focus on the problems of making the transition from war to peace. How can great powers, after defeating their enemies in war, establish durable peace? How might they create a new postwar order to reconcile or manage conflicts? Within the context of modern world history, these questions will be addressed in this seminar. Each student will select a prominent European who dealt with the problems of postwar peacemaking as a participant, observer, critic, or scholar. This person might be a government leader, diplomat, military officer, banker, industrialist, social worker, journalist, theologian, feminist, historian, or some other European who has left sufficient correspondence or writings for use as primary sources for a research paper. This European might have been involved in, or have analyzed the problems of, postwar peacemaking in Europe or elsewhere in the world.

History 941 - Seminar in
American History:
"Popular Culture in America"
Dr. Rader

The intention of this course is to introduce you to American cultural history. The introduction begins with some consideration of what cultural history is and how it is and has been done. While we will not attempt an in-depth consideration of American

cultural history, we will try to obtain an overview of the subject as well as the subject's methods and major historiographical issues. Finally, as individual projects, we will focus mainly on the history of twentieth-century popular culture through an examination of individuals as cultural icons.

History 941 - Seminar in
American History:
"Atlantic Slave Trade"
Dr. Dorsey

This seminar is designed to provide a thorough understanding of the Atlantic commerce in African slaves. Themes to be explored include the following: slavery in Africa; African slaves and the Atlantic complex; their incorporation and/or integration into the socio-political and economic systems of Europe and the New World from the 15th century to the present. Students will be expected to submit written critiques of each assigned work, write a final research paper or historiographical essay, and make a class presentation.

History 942 - Seminar:
American History:
"Postwar Peacemaking"
Dr. Ambrosius

This research seminar will focus on the problems of making the transition from war to peace. How can great powers, after defeating their enemies in war, establish durable peace? How might they create a new postwar order to manage conflicts? Each student will select a prominent American who dealt with the problems of postwar peacemaking as a participant, observer, critic, or scholar. This person might be from a variety of backgrounds, and has left sufficient writings for use as primary sources for a research paper. This American might have been involved in, or analyzed the problems of, postwar peacemaking in Europe or elsewhere in the world.

Call for Papers

Northwest Missouri State University will hold its annual Missouri Conference on History on April 14 - 15, 2005. Proposals for sessions and papers related to any historical topic or era are welcome. Persons interested in organizing sessions and presenting papers should submit an abstract and a brief curriculum vitae to Dr. Tom Spencer, Department of History, Northwest Missouri State University, 800 University Drive, Maryville, MO 64468, or via e-mail to: tspence@mail.nwmissouri.edu. The deadline is January 8, 2005.

