



## Some Remarks from the Chair of the Department

David Parker



Principal Woolf, who returned to Queen's as a member of our department and is interviewed in these pages.

The report by Principal Woolf's Academic Writing Team of six advisors, which came out in late summer of this year (2010), highlighted Queen's unique character as a mid-sized, research-intensive university that emphasizes top-quality undergraduate and graduate teaching on an accessible, human scale. Against critics who might see tension between the University's teaching mission and its research mission—there are, after all, only so many hours in the day and few of us are supermen—the Principal's advisors underscored how undergraduate teaching, graduate supervision, and faculty research complement one another; and how a mid-sized university like Queen's is uniquely positioned to achieve that complementarity.

I think the Department of History provides a model of how research and teaching can work together. As you will see in the profiles of Tony D'Elfa, Jackie Duffin and Ariel Salzmann's work in the Vatican archives, and in the gallery of new books published over the past year, our department is rich with productive and innovative scholars. Many of our younger faculty have recently published first books that are gaining international recognition and multiple prize nominations. Some of our more senior members continue to publish at a furious clip: Ian McKay, for example, has already followed up on his 2009 Sir John A. Macdonald Prize-

This is our second newsletter, and comes at the end of my first of two years as Department Chair. The past year was dominated by the Queen's-wide academic planning process, initiated by

winning *Reasoning Otherwise: Leftists and the People's Enlightenment in Canada* with a new book, *In the Province of History: the Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia*, co-authored with former Queen's undergraduate and MA student Robin Bates, now a PhD candidate at the University of Chicago.

Our graduate program has just come off a successful recruiting year, with 26 new MA candidates and 10 new PhDs in fields ranging from medieval Europe to modern India. Meanwhile, our undergraduate program keeps its place among the three or four most popular in the Faculty of Arts and Science, with an annual intake of about 160 new majors and medials and around 90 new minors.

But success brings its own challenges, of course, especially in the face of student-faculty ratios that are unacceptably high, as they are at all Ontario universities. "Academic Planning" often serves as a euphemism for "figuring out where to save money," and this time around has been no exception. The good news is that the massive cutbacks that Richard Greenfield had been told to expect when he wrote his Chair's remarks in 2009 have been scaled back, at least temporarily. We were able to meet our 2010 budget targets by trimming rather than slashing, and we hope that the cuts required for 2011 will not be so draconian that they force us to eliminate the core features of our program. But even if we have suffered a hundred small cuts rather than the dreaded big cut, the cumulative impact is no less real. This year more courses filled up instantly, more students had to accept their second or third choices, more classrooms are at a capacity that the Fire Marshall would frown upon, and little relief appears in sight.

The special challenge facing History was made especially clear this past year, when as part of the planning process the Faculty of Arts and Science

disclosed for the first time the per-student tuition and government revenue generated by each department, balanced against departmental operating budgets. By that set of measurements, History made Queen's an annual "profit" of 27%, one of the highest in the Faculty of Arts and Science. Put another way, as we cut costs like everyone else, the revenues we generate do not stay in History, but are redistributed to departments that operate at an annual "loss." On the one hand, such redistribution is proper and necessary: small programs can't expect to generate the same income per student, yet any great university needs a comprehensive range of departments. On the other hand, imagine the quality the History Department could achieve—smaller class sizes, more courses in more fields—if we were allowed to keep every dollar we "earn."

So how do we manage to preserve our seminar system—our commitment to engaged learning in small discussion classes—that has been a cherished hallmark of Queen's History for as long as any of us can remember? In part we have survived by modestly reducing the number of seminars required and by allowing our lecture classes to grow: 200-level courses now have as many as 130-140 students, while first-year lectures range from 200 to as high as 280. And we rely more than ever on advanced PhD students who are writing their dissertations to run tutorials in the first-year courses and to teach several of our seminars. On the one hand, this is not a bad thing: PhD students jump at the opportunity to be true teachers rather than TAs. As hands-on professional training, Teaching Fellowships are a selling point for our PhD program, and undergraduates tend to rate grad student-led seminars very highly.

But on the other hand, in an ideal world we would have more permanent faculty members and fewer courses taught by professors-in-training. Too much teaching can slow down a PhD student's progress on the dissertation, and undergrads who have too few of their seminars taught by tenure-stream professors don't get the sustained mentoring they deserve. History has, I think, devised the best possible way to squeeze the highest-quality education out of the student-faculty ratio we have, but "squeeze" is lamentably the right word to describe what we do.

Although we are acutely aware of the sacrifices and compromises that we have to make as a department in an underfunded public university, I believe that our pride in the quality of our program remains justified.

This year we celebrate a milestone: the 100-year anniversary of the Douglas Chair in Canadian and Colonial History. Donated in 1910 by Queen's

benefactor and Chancellor James S. Douglas, the chair was one of the first endowed professorships in Canada and at the time one of the most generous. Douglas' gift established the History Department at Queen's as the first to teach Canadian History as a discipline of its own. The list of former Douglas Chairs—William Lawson Grant, John Lyle Morison, Duncan McArthur, Reginald Trotter, Arthur Lower, Roger Graham—includes some of the leading lights in the history of writing Canadian History. (And current Chair Don Akenson is a luminary in multiple fields). To celebrate the Douglas Chair Centenary, the Department has professionally restored and donated to Douglas Library the ornate teakwood and leather throne that James Douglas commissioned and gave to Queen's to commemorate the endowed professorship.

There is other good news. As former Chair Richard Greenfield noted in last year's Newsletter, the Department has benefited enormously from the generous bequest by Bernice Nugent (BA Hons '38). Earmarked for "the purpose of lectures or papers in the Department of History," the Nugent Fund has permitted us to bring an impressive roster of speakers to the Department's Thursday seminar series, its annual Nugent Lecture (which for 2011 has invited Dr. Natalie Zemon Davis), and a range of other faculty- or student-sponsored lectures, conferences, workshops, and symposia.

On a day-to-day basis, on those days when we're not worrying about "planning" or budgets, I continue to wake up mornings eager to begin my workday, in large part because our students remain such a joy to teach. To them—to you—we devote our second newsletter.

David Parker  
Chair, Department of History



# Faculty Honours and Awards

## **Ian McKay wins Sir John A. MacDonald Prize**

Ian McKay's *Reasoning Otherwise. Leftists and the People's Enlightenment in Canada, 1890-1920* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2008) was awarded the 2009 Sir John A. MacDonald prize, given annually by the Canadian Historical Association to the best book in Canadian history. The citation for the award praised the "originality" of the book and its "fascinating" and "nuanced" portrait of the intellectual and cultural world of the first formation of Canadian leftists. *Reasoning Otherwise* is the first instalment of a three-part series on the history of the Canadian left. Professor McKay is currently working on volume two of the series, entitled *Revolution's Iron Gates*, which will cover the period from 1921 to 1956.

## **Jackie Duffin is awarded the Jason A. Hannah Medal of the Royal Society of Canada**

Jacalyn Duffin's book *Medical Miracles: Doctors, Saints, and Healing in the Modern World* (Oxford University Press, 2008) was awarded the Jason A. Hannah Medal of the Royal Society of Canada in 2009. The medal is awarded annually to an important publication in the history of medicine. Professor Duffin's book is discussed in the newsletter's feature piece, New Research from the Vatican's Archives and Libraries.

## **Marc Epprecht receives numerous accolades**

Marc Epprecht's *Heterosexual Africa?: The History of an Idea from the Age of Exploration to the Age of AIDS* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2008) was a finalist for the Melville J. Herskovits Award (2009) for the best book on Africa and received honorary mention for the David Easton Award, given by the Foundations of Political Theory Section of the American Political Science Association (2010). It was also nominated for the Joel Gregory Prize (2010) for the best book

published on Africa by a Canadian or by an African based in Canada in 2008-09, the Lambda Literary Award (2009) for the best book on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues, and the National Council on Public History Book Award (2009) "dedicated to making the past useful in the present and to encouraging collaboration between historians and their publics."

## **Steven Maynard wins the W. Kaye Lamb Prize**

Steven Maynard was awarded the 2009 W. Kaye Lamb Prize by the Association of Canadian Archivists for his article "Police/Archives." The Lamb Prize recognizes the article that "by its exceptional combination of research, reflection, and writing, most advances archival thinking in Canada." The citation for Steven's article praised its "highly nuanced analysis, following Foucault, of police-as-archives/archives-as-police. With disarming clarity and simplicity, Maynard's lively exploration of the archive as state disciplinary institution encourages self-reflection on the nature of archives and the role of archivists in society." Steven's article appears in *Archivaria* 68 (Fall 2009).

## **Rebecca Manley wins the AWSS Heldt Prize**

Rebecca Manley's *To the Tashkent Station: Evacuation and Survival in the Soviet Union at War* (Cornell University Press, 2009) was awarded the Heldt Prize, given annually to the best book by a woman in Slavic/Eastern European/Eurasian studies by the Association for Women in Slavic Studies. The book was selected for its "original, compelling, and beautifully written" examination of "a central aspect of the Soviet home front during World War II." The citation for the award described it as "a major contribution to understanding the dynamics of mass migration in twentieth-century history."

# Welcome to our new Marjorie McLean Oliver Postdoctoral Fellow

**Rebecca Slitt** is the new Marjorie McLean Oliver Postdoctoral Fellow in Medieval History. She earned her PhD in 2008 from Fordham University, with a dissertation titled "Aristocratic Male Friendship in the Anglo-Norman World, 1000-1300." Her other research interests include the culture of chivalry, and Latin and vernacular chronicles. She has presented at the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, and the Medieval Friendship Conference at Queen's University, Belfast. Her most recent article is "Acting Out Friendship: Signs and Gestures of Friendship in the Twelfth Century," forthcoming in the *Haskins Society Journal*. She recently completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Hofstra University Honors College, teaching the interdisciplinary course Culture and Expression. While at Queen's, Rebecca will teach HIST 250, The Middle Ages, and continue work on her current research projects: an examination of chroniclers' retelling of the life of William Longsword, second duke of Normandy; and preliminary work on a study of theatricality in Anglo-Norman aristocratic life.

# Faculty Research Grants and Visiting Fellowships

**Jeffrey Collins** was awarded a four-month residential research fellowship at the Huntington Library in San Marino, CA. He spent the spring and summer at the Huntington working on his new project, which focuses on ideas of civil religion in British political thought. For the 2010-11 academic year, Professor Collins is a Visiting Research Fellow at Clare Hall, Cambridge University.

Last year, **Ariel Salzmänn** was selected as a finalist and later the alternate for the senior Rome Prize (offered by the American Academy of Rome) in the field of Renaissance and Early Modern Studies for her project on the Vatican and the Ottoman Empire, 1683-1880, described in the feature article of this year's newsletter.

From February to June 2011, Professor Salzmänn will join about a half dozen Senior Residential Fellows at the Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations at Koç University in Istanbul, Turkey. An international competition, the fellowship brings together about 26 Ph.D. candidates, junior and senior scholars from around the world whose research interests (from archaeology to popular culture) address prehistorical, Medieval, or Modern Anatolian societies and cultures.

She will be working on a book on European responses to the Ottoman challenge in the eighteenth century.

**Marc Epprecht** has been awarded a SSHRC to continue his research on the history of sexuality in Africa. The new project is entitled: Same-sex sexualities and gender non-conformity in Africa in comparative historical perspective: case studies from East, Central and West Africa. The project aims to challenge the popular stereotype, tacitly endorsed in much of the scholarly literature, that associates homosexuality in Africa with white or other non-African men and imagines it as a recent introduction to the continent.

**Andrew Jainchill** was invited to a one-month visiting professorship at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales in Paris in May of 2011. While there, he will give three lectures on republicanism and constitutionalism in eighteenth century France. The lectures will build on themes he explored in his first book, *Reimagining Politics after the Terror: The Republican Origins of French Liberalism* (Cornell University Press, 2008), and will contribute to a new project he is pursuing on republicanism before the French Revolution.

## The History Department Seminar Series

### Ishita Pande

The History Department Seminar Series concluded another year with a set of thought-provoking talks by prominent historians and critics, thanks to the generous funding provided by the Nugent bequest. In 2009-10, the annual Nugent lecture was presented by David Scott, Professor of Anthropology at Columbia University. Dr. Scott is a specialist in the history of culture and politics in Sri Lanka and the Caribbean, and has contributed extensively to critical thought on postcolonial politics, diaspora and cultural history by sparking a lively debate on the direction critical inquiry might take "after post-coloniality." In *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Duke University Press, 2004), Dr. Scott explored the tragic entailments of revolutionary promise through a radical rereading of *The Black Jacobins*, C. L. R. James's classic account of the only successful Caribbean slave rebellion, the Haitian Revolution of the 1790s, a theme he developed further in his talk on the Grenada revolution presented at Queen's entitled "Revolution's Tragic Ends."

The annual Faculty Lecture was presented by Professor Marguerite van Die. The talk, entitled "Practising Medicine and Spiritualism in the 1860s: Sacred Encounters, Gender, and Lived Religion," was followed by the annual holiday party at the University Club.

Londa Schiebinger, the John L. Hinds Professor of History of Science at Stanford University and Director of Stanford's Clayman Institute for Gender Research, and author of numerous books on gender in science, spoke on "Exotic Abortifacients: Bioprospecting in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World" at the John Sherwood Memorial Lecture in the History of Science.

Among other speakers in 2009-2010, Ian Hesketh, a research associate at Queen's, spoke on "Edward Freeman and the Boundaries of History in Victorian Britain;" Gyan Prakash of Princeton University presented a talk entitled, "The Tabloid and the City: Bombay, c. 1960s;" Nicholas Dew of McGill University spoke on "Orientalism in Louis XIV's France;" and Paul Cheney of the University of Chicago wrapped up the series with a talk entitled, "Revolutionary Commerce: Globalization and the French Monarchy."

Please see the department website for information about this year's speakers.



# New Histories from the Vatican's Archives and Libraries

## A Renaissance scholar searches for paganism and subversion in the Vatican Library

In 1475, the humanist scholar Bortolomeo Platina was made head of the Vatican's libraries and commissioned to write a history of the popes. Professor Anthony D'Elia was working on a translation and edited edition of Platina's *Lives of the Popes* (ITRL-Harvard UP, 2008) when he discovered a little known manuscript of prison correspondence in the Marciana Library of Venice. The manuscript contained letters that Platina and another humanist, Pomponio Leto, had written during their stay in the harrowing dungeon of Castel Sant'Angelo, to which they had been condemned for their alleged participation in a conspiracy to murder Pope Paul II. Professor D'Elia notes: *I was always puzzled by Platina's alleged involvement in a plot to murder the pope. The letters, written in an eloquent classical Latin, were deeply moving in their descriptions of pain, torture, and loneliness. The conspiracy has always frustrated historians as key documents are missing, such as trial records, and the richest extant sources were penned by the accused, who were brutally tortured and imprisoned, making them somewhat biased. The discovery of these letters, however, helped me to understand the episode in a new way and led me in a host of different directions, which included a semi-private tour of the torture chamber and the rooms the alleged conspirators inhabited in the papal dungeon, Castel Sant'Angelo. The letters also raised questions about the pagan and Christian traditions of consolation, and what philosophy and religion could offer in such dire circumstances.*

Intrigued by these questions, Professor D'Elia set out to revisit the history of the conspiracy. The result was *A Sudden Terror: The Plot to Murder the Pope in Renaissance Rome* (Harvard University Press, 2009), an engaging study of this fascinating episode. The book brings the conflicting intellectual and cultural currents of Renaissance Rome to life, as Professor D'Elia probes the nature of the humanists' challenge to the papacy. Many of the alleged conspirators had worked in the Vatican library, where they pored over the rich collection of manuscripts from antiquity. Indeed, it was in the Vatican, among other places, that they deepened their appreciation of the pagan classical world. And, as D'Elia deftly shows, it was in part this interest that made them suspect in the eyes of the papacy. For the newsletter, we asked Professor D'Elia to comment on the history of the Vatican Library's holdings and on his work there:

*The Vatican Library owes its foundation to Pope Nicholas V (1448-1455). After Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453, Byzantine refugees flooded Italy, often carrying with them precious and rare manuscripts of the Greek classics from the rich libraries of Byzantium. Nicholas bought all the manuscripts he could, had copies made of borrowed manuscripts, and commissioned Latin translations of Greek classics, such as that of Thucydides made by Lorenzo Valla. Some of the manuscripts that Nicholas collected in fact constitute the sole editions of texts that otherwise would have been lost. The Vatican library, therefore, played a vital role in preserving the classics of ancient Greek and Latin literature. Pope Sixtus IV (1471-1484) greatly expanded the library's holdings and hired Platina as the head librarian and commissioned him to write a history of the popes using classical models. The library continued to grow with the constant influx of bequests from cardinals, princes, and humanists.*



Sixtus IV Appointing Platina as Prefect of the Vatican Library (by Melozzo da Forlì, 1477)

*During the Renaissance, the library was open to scholars, who could even borrow manuscripts—some of which were never returned—but access was gradually reduced during the Reformation, inventories were sealed, and special permission to consult volumes was rare. Only in 1883 did the progressive Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) reopen the library as he had the Vatican Archives in 1881. The Vatican Secret Archives were*

*only separated from the library in the seventeenth century, and there is still much overlap in holdings—some papal correspondence, for example, is still housed in the library.*

*Today the Vatican Library contains 75,000 manuscripts in various languages, including Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Persian, Coptic, Syriac, Chinese, and Ethiopic. The core of this collection are Latin texts written in the Renaissance. The Vatican Library is the richest library for Classical and Renaissance texts in the world, and hundreds of thousands of these texts are uncatalogued and barely known. Since medieval and Renaissance books in manuscript often contain many unrelated texts that at some point were bound together, cataloguing is incomplete and often misses shorter texts that may not have been of interest to the cataloguer. It is, therefore, very exciting to study manuscripts in the Vatican Library. Discoveries are constantly made — most confirm what historians already know, but some can change our entire view of the Renaissance and history.*

*Apart from its priceless treasures, the Vatican Library and Archive has a wonderful bar at which scholars from around the world take breaks, enjoy a cappuccino, an amaro, and/or a cornetto (brioche), and for lunch a panino. I look forward to returning to the Vatican Library to continue my research on the political dimension of paganism in the court of Sigismondo Malatesta, who has the rare distinction of being the only person in history to have been canonized to Hell while he was still alive.*

## **Medical Miracles: a historian of medicine's improbable path to the Vatican archives**

In 1987, Jacayln Duffin, a practicing hematologist and a historian of medicine, was asked to review a set of bone marrow samples “blind.” This was no standard medical review. Although she did not know it at the time, by agreeing to review the slides Dr. Duffin had involved herself in a process that originated in the late sixteenth century, when the Vatican established a juridical framework to guide the process of canonization. The Sacra Rituum Congregatio, or Holy Congregation of Rites, was founded in 1587 at the height of the counter-reformation to gather and evaluate evidence of miracles attributed to potential saints. To ascertain that the seemingly miraculous events, many of which involved healing the sick, could not in fact be explained by science, a special office popularly known as “the devil’s advocate” was established. The “devil’s advocate” solicited the

opinions of the leading experts of the day, and only when they were satisfied that no scientific explanation existed was the event in question deemed a miracle.

When Dr. Duffin was approached to review the slides of an unknown patient, she assumed that her opinion would be used to determine the possibility of malpractice, not a miracle. The slides told a seemingly simple, albeit tragic, story: the patient was ill with severe acute leukemia. She had gone into remission, suffered a relapse, and entered a second remission. All of the medical literature suggested that the second remission would be short-lived, and Dr. Duffin naturally assumed that the patient was dead. Much to her surprise and delight, the patient was alive and well. Both the presiding physician and Dr. Duffin were stumped. Not so the patient. During her relapse, the patient had begun praying to Mere Marguerite de Youville, the founder of the order of the Grey Nuns of Montreal, and she attributed her miraculous recovery to the intercession of the long dead woman. As Dr. Duffin relates in her book *Medical Miracles*:

“This case became the capstone in the ‘cause’ for Youville’s canonization as the first Canadian-born saint... A few years later, in December 1990, I was invited, with my Jewish husband, to attend the canonization ceremony at St. Peter’s Basilica. It was a moving experience, which we shared with the treating physician, Dr. Jeanne Drouin of Ottawa. There the postulants, led by their Canadian shepherd, Father Constantin Bouchaud, presented me with a gift that they deemed appropriate for a doctor who was also a historian: the *Positio*, or bound testimony on the miracle.

Suddenly, I realized that a record of my small part as a doctor in this remarkable tale would reside forever in the Vatican Secret Archives (*Archivio Segreto Vaticano*, ASV). In the same instant, the historian in me recognized that one such file must exist for every saint canonized in modern times. Until then, the Vatican Archives and Library loomed in my mind as remote, auspicious places of no relevance to my work. Now I began to crave them as the repository of hundreds of miracles just waiting to be explored.” (3-4).

Thus began Professor Jackie Duffin’s foray into what is, at first glance, an unlikely topic for a historian of medicine: the history of miracles. Between 2001 and 2007, Dr. Duffin, who holds the Hannah chair in the history of medicine at Queen’s, made four separate research trips to the Vatican, joining a handful of

scholars who have turned to the Vatican's archives and libraries in a quest to better understand the modern history of medicine, illness, and healing.

Working in the Vatican Archives in the morning and the manuscript library in the afternoon, Duffin pored over the records of some 1400 medical miracles dating back to the late sixteenth century and described in positia much like the one she had been given. The files contain the testimony of a host of witnesses including the person who received divine intervention, his or her circle of friends and neighbours, local priests or nuns, and doctors. They stand at the centre of Professor Duffin's award-winning *Medical Miracles: Doctors, Saints and Healing in the Modern World*, (Oxford University Press, 2008).



The Miracle of the Child falling from the Balcony (by Simone Martini, c. 1324)

What can a historian of medicine glean from the tales of miracles? In Professor Duffin's able hands, the miracles are made to serve as a window into changing conceptions of medical expertise, medicine, and healing. We learn, for instance, of how medical expertise came to occupy an increasingly prominent place in the inquiries, displacing the priority previously given to the miraculée and reflecting the broader medicalization of society. We see the introduction of new instruments, such as the stethoscope and the X-ray, and in the process gain fresh insight into their acceptance and dissemination. The files are also an invaluable resource into medical history "from below," and Duffin masterfully uses these compendia to examine the beliefs, ailments, and healing practices of people from centuries past.

Professor Duffin continues to probe the relationship between science and spirituality in her latest book project, *Medical Saints in a postmodern world*, an anthropological examination of the veneration of two medical saints, Cosmas and Damian. Her research methods have changed — this book is based not on archives but on interviews — but the book promises to offer further insight into the myriad popular healing practices that define the modern era just as surely as the evidence-based practice of modern medicine.

## Not all roads lead to Rome: One Middle East historian's path to the Vatican Archives

### Ariel Salzmann

Rarely is the scholar who presents her tessera to the Swiss guards as the Porta Sant'Anna of the Vatican City, a Middle Eastern historian. Mind you, Middle Easterners do use the Vatican archives and library. The day I applied for my first permit, I swapped small talk with two Egyptian doctoral students who had arrived to consult ancient Latin and Greek manuscripts on classical Alexandria. However, most historians of the Islamic Middle East find their sources elsewhere: there are the great Arabic manuscript collections of Cairo's Dar al-Kutub and the enormous Persian and Turkish manuscript collections in the Istanbul's Suleymaniye, without mentioning special collections throughout the region and in London, Vienna, Paris, Venice, and St. Petersburg. As for archival sources, no single European archive before 1600 can compare with the wealth of the Ottoman Imperial archives in Istanbul and Ankara in which one finds detailed records of the economic, military, and social life of an empire that once stretched from Algeria to Georgia and from Hungary to Iraq and Yemen.

Yet a handful of us, by dint of interest in matters Italian or Latinate, are now finding our way to the Vatican collections. Dr Adnan Husain in our department is a Medievalist who couples extensive training in Medieval Latin with Middle Eastern languages. With projects focusing upon religious polemics between Muslims, Christians and Jews, he has consulted Arabic, Turkish and Persian manuscripts in the Vatican library as well as its Latin materials. While some of the Vatican Library's medieval manuscripts are well studied, he notes that many other texts, such as those concerning Spanish Muslim converts, the Moriscos, who were expelled from Spain between 1609 and 1614 in the single largest mass expulsion in early modern European history, are not. Although the Catholic hierarchy depended on Middle Eastern Christians and converts



to undertake translations from Arabic, as missionaries and members of the mendicant orders grew more proficient in Arabic and Persian, they not only produced dictionaries and attempted translations of Islam's holy texts, but also translated the scholastic classics, such as St. Thomas of Aquinas from Latin into Middle Eastern languages.

Unlike the manuscript collections, Middle Eastern historians might find much of value in the Vatican archives, including the Archivio Segreto (ASV). My research centers on the way that the Vatican influenced and, when it could, orchestrated Europe-wide policies toward the Ottoman Empire and Ottoman subjects in the early modern and modern period. Relying on the eighteenth century correspondence between Rome and its network of papal ambassadors, I have found that the Ottomans were very much part of the larger European geopolitical and historical scene. In contrast to Samuel P. Huntington's "clash of civilization" thesis, Muslim-Catholic relations were far from uniform: France, which was an Ottoman ally since the time of Francis I (1495-1557), enjoyed excellent relations with the Topkapi Palace while Venice depended on its trade agreements with the empire.

In 2005, when a Queen's Advisory Research Committee grant enabled me to work for six weeks at the Vatican archives, I was able to take a closer look at Vatican policies. Perhaps one of the most startling findings concerns the long-term cultural and political impact of the last, long Holy League War (a latter-day crusade), which the Vatican organized in response to the Ottoman assault on Vienna in 1683. It is important to clarify that the Ottoman siege was both offensive and a means of protecting their Protestant clients in Hungary from annexation by Catholic Austria. The efforts of the coalition in the Holy War did achieve Catholic dominance over all of Hungary: thousands of Jews, Muslims and Protestants who had lived in peace under Ottoman suzerainty were expelled from lands that came under Habsburg rule.

Vatican documents suggest that despite continued smaller conflicts, the conclusion of the Holy League war in 1699 began the normalization of relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Catholic world generally. Yet peacetime brought with it its own worries for the Vatican. Concerned with staunching the flow of converts from Catholicism to Islam (which included not only

captives but also soldiers of fortune who switched religions as one might take on a new passport today), the Vatican exerted much energy to expand its missions in the Mediterranean in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Perhaps more than Islam as a religion, one reads in the writings of missionaries how fearful Catholic clergy were of the "liberal" atmosphere in Ottoman cities where people of different faiths routinely encountered one another in the marketplace and neighborhoods and where the curious soul might visit different houses of worship, observe different Christian rites, and even participate in multi-religious festivals and events.

There is no question that more Middle Eastern historians should find their way to the Vatican collections, which hold great promise for placing both European and Middle Eastern history into a new geographical and cultural context. They furnish sources for documenting the often contradictory policies between Catholic and Muslim states, the tensions between Western and Eastern churches, and the cultural forces shaping the Mediterranean world in which many faiths coexisted throughout the medieval and early modern periods. As the 2011 Nugent Lecturer, Natalie Davis emphasizes in her study *Trickster Tales* (2006), Rome of the early modern period must not simply be considered a point of Catholic dissemination of Western knowledge to the Atlantic and Pacific, but also one of the most important conduits through which Islamic science reached Europe and transformed Christendom.



The presentation of the French Ambassador to the Ottoman Court (by Van Mour, 1699)



# Alumni profile: Principal Daniel Woolf reflects on his education in history

## Interviewed by Rebecca Manley

Earlier this year, Daniel Woolf marked the thirtieth anniversary of his graduation from Queen's with an honours B.A. in history. He returned to the department first as a postdoctoral fellow from 1984-1986, and more recently as a faculty member with his appointment as university principal in 2009. Dr. Woolf specializes in early modern British cultural history and the history of historical thought and writing. For the newsletter, we asked the principal to comment on his undergraduate education in history and to reflect on the value of a history degree.

### *What made you decide to study history?*

I think this has a long origin. My uncle is a pretty well known historian of Italy and nineteenth century Europe. He was an early influence. I also had very good history teachers at both schools I attended in Winnipeg. I always had an interest in history, although I flirted with English and Classics when I arrived at Queen's. History 121 sealed the deal, however, and then I had remarkable instructors from that point on. I can't think of a bad course I took in history.

### *What was it about History 121?*

The late Stewart Webster was a perfect first-year instructor, and the course was so different from any kind of history that I had done at school. School history then, and I suspect partly now, was date and fact based. History 121 was so conceptual — it was all about ideas. Of course there were deficiencies — there were no women writers on the curriculum, and the course was entirely euro-centric (without the global alternatives available today) — but 121 introduced me to the world of ideas, and I did end up as an intellectual and cultural historian. History 121 also worked very well with some of the other courses I took my first year, in English, Classics and Philosophy.

*As principal, you have spoken about the impact a particular course or professor can have on a student. You have already mentioned your first year course, but can you comment on your other experiences as a student in the history department at Queen's?*

The faculty member who had the strongest influence on me was Paul Christianson, who became my mentor and later supervised my postdoctoral fellowship. His second year course on Tudor England had a great impact on me. I will give you some examples.

The first essay was an analysis of two early sixteenth-century documents, written two years apart. This required a careful reading of both documents to spot and contextualize the differences between them. It was a great assignment, and when I returned to Queen's as a postdoctoral fellow and had a chance to teach the course, I used it myself. Paul gave his students carte blanche to write their 2<sup>nd</sup> term major papers on anything they chose. I wrote mine on Shakespeare's history plays. This got me interested in English attitudes to the past, which continues to be one of my major areas of research. Finally, there was an interesting moment in one class that sticks with me. Paul asked us to describe the differences between two British historians we had read for that day. Nobody, me included, understood what he was talking about — surely both historians were simply representing the facts? He made us all re-read the passages. It was like a lightbulb went on for me — I realized that historians see things differently. I can trace the origins of my broader historiographic fixations back to this episode.

Paul's influence was very strong, but others were influential as well, for instance Christopher Crowder in medieval English history (where I learned to read medieval chronicles), and Bill McCready whose two courses on medieval European intellectual history got me interested in issues of perception. All told, I worked with a fairly finite group of people at Queen's, and most of my courses were in the earlier half of history. The latest I got chronologically was the compulsory Canadian history class, which I took with Gerry Tulchinsky. I ended up really enjoying it, and really getting into the essay, which gave me my first experience of working with documentary sources. A down side of this early specialization is that I missed out on taking courses from a whole lot of other terrific professors. But I got to know a few of them through working on the Department student council.

Someone else I should mention is the late George Rawlyk. He was never my instructor, but he was the head of the department throughout my time as an undergraduate and during the first year of my postdoc. In the summer after my third year George invited me to work on a history he was preparing of the Queen's Theological College (now Queen's School of Religion). The project got me into the archives, and demonstrated the importance of the research element in history. It also convinced me that I wanted to pursue history as a profession.

*You have had an active career as a historian, but you have also had a successful career as a university administrator. Has your training in history shaped the way you approach your current job as principal?*

Yes, I think it has shaped my approach. A friend of mine who is a historian elsewhere made an interesting comment. She noted that there are more historians in the university administration than from some other disciplines and wondered if this was because historians are used to dealing with imperfect or scant evidence, conjecture, and probabilities. Historians are used to reading documents and reconstructing their background. As an administrator, on any given day, you find things coming across your desk that you have to piece together on the basis of partial information. On a less serious note, my expertise in Tudor Stuart England has helped me understand how universities work, or at times don't work as well as we would like. The structure of universities is not dissimilar to sixteenth century England. Universities are very decentralized. They operate by persuasion (although Henry the Eighth did have other means at his disposal!).

*Some of our students go on to pursue careers in history, but many do not: what do you see as the value of a degree in history for those who do not choose to become historians?*

It is always a mistake for us professors to think that the majority of students will be like us. Those undergraduates who go on to pursue a career in history, or any discipline, are always a minority. The vast majority will do something else with their degree. History provides a great grounding for professions

such as politics, law, and public administration, and many history majors go on to have successful careers in these areas. Just last month, the federal Deputy Minister of Health, Glenda Yeates, was in my office. The last time we saw each other was in Bill McCready's fourth year seminar. In terms of skills, training in history gives students the ability to evaluate evidence critically, the ability to reconstruct a narrative or set of circumstances on the basis of incomplete evidence, and a reasonable understanding of human nature, which obviously can be quite different at different times.

*As someone who has seen the educational system from multiple vantage points — from the perspective of student, professor, dean and now principal — what do you value most about your own undergraduate education?*

I have always appreciated what I got here, both inside and outside the classroom. Being in the administration, one is obviously more alive to all the bits and pieces that go into making education happen, and I have a much greater appreciation for what in theatre terminology is called the "back of house" — all that goes on behind the scenes to allow the core activities of teaching and research to occur.

*Do you have any other comments?*

I consider my current job the best job I have ever had, and one of the major attractions is that it came with a faculty position in my home department. By a nice twist of fate, it seems that I have also inherited my old mentor's office.

## History Undergraduates win National Essay Prizes

**Hilary Wight** (B.A. Honours - History 2009) was one of the winners of the 2009 Canadian Undergraduate Essay Contest in British Studies. The contest, sponsored by the North American Conference on British Studies, awards 10 prizes annually to the best essays in British Studies by Canadian undergraduate students. Hilary's essay, entitled "Bomb Disposal in Britain During the Second World War: A History of Unexploded Bombs and the Image of the People's War," traced the development of bomb disposal programs and practices by the British military as well as the extent to which unexploded bombs on Britain's home front filtered into the public consciousness and popular narrative of the British war experience. Hilary's essay also won the Department of History's 2009 Michael R.G. Harris Memorial Prize for the best essay on a topic in military or naval history at Queen's.

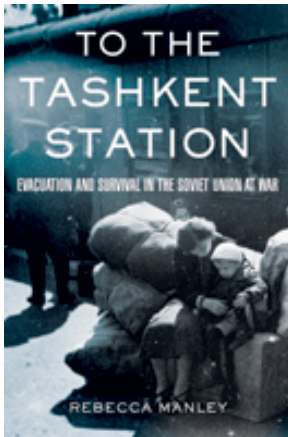
**Ramya Ravishankar** won the 2010 award for best Undergraduate Essay in India Studies written by a Canadian student for her essay "Proscribing Fundamentalism: The 1948-9 Ban of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the Ensuing Correspondence Between M.S. Golwalkar and the Indian National Congress." This prestigious prize is awarded annually by the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute. In the essay, written for HIST 310: Introduction to Modern India, Ramya analyzes the correspondence between Golwalkar, the leader of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), an Indian ethno-nationalist group, and Prime Minister Nehru, in the months following Gandhi's death at the hands of a Hindu fundamentalist in 1948. She argues that the correspondence encapsulates "the post-Independence Indian political struggle between centrism and fundamentalism" and she uses it to shed light on the Nehruvian stance against communalism and sectarian nationalism as well as the the cultural politics of the RSS.

## Department's First Teaching Awards

The department of history has long been known for its commitment to teaching. Its success is reflected not only in the popularity of history courses, but also in the large number of instructors who are nominated for, and awarded, prestigious university teaching prizes. Recently, the department decided to institute its own awards to recognize teaching excellence on the departmental level among both faculty and adjuncts as well as Teaching Fellows and Teaching Assistants. Last year was the inaugural year for these new awards, fulfilling Richard Greenfield's vision and hard work in establishing them. Nominations came from undergraduate students, and the selection committee comprised both students and faculty.

The 2009 nominees for the Faculty/Adjunct award were Richard Bailey and Rebecca Manley. The nominees for the Teaching Fellow/TA award were Robert Dennis, Kristin Ireland, and Milen Jissov. The decision was a difficult one. All of the nominees deserved to win, but after great deliberation the Committee selected **Rebecca Manley** and **Robert Dennis**. Professor Manley teaches a range of courses including "The Soviet Experiment," "The Russian Revolution," "Russia's Imperial Borderlands," and "The Experience of War in 20th Century Europe." She has also taught first-year students in "The Making of the Modern World." PhD student and Teaching Fellow Robert Dennis was nominated by students in his seminar "Religion and North American Society."

## Hot off the Press



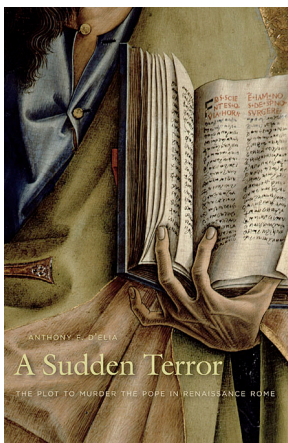
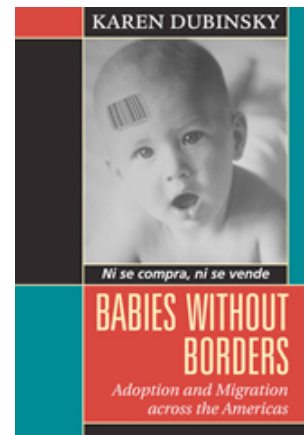
### Rebecca Manley

*To the Tashkent Station: Evacuation and Survival in the Soviet Union at War*, Cornell University Press, 2009

Winner of the Association for Women in Slavic Studies' 2010 Heldt Prize

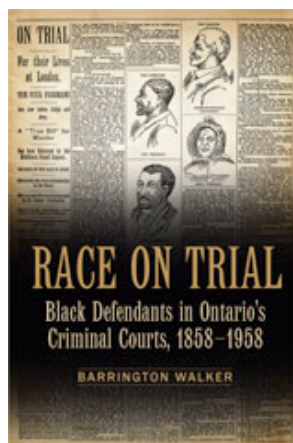
### Karen Dubinsky

*Babies without Borders: Adoption and Migration across the Americas*, University of Toronto Press, 2010



### Anthony D'Elia

*A Sudden Terror: The Plot to Murder the Pope in Renaissance Rome*, Harvard University Press, 2009



### Barrington Walker

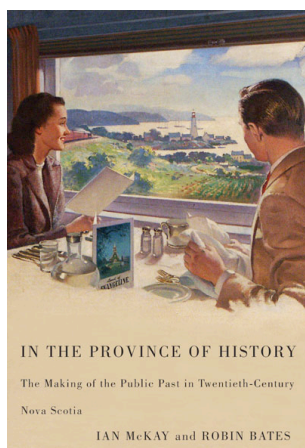
*Race on Trial: Black Defendants in Ontario's Criminal Courts, 1858-1953*, University of Toronto Press, 2010



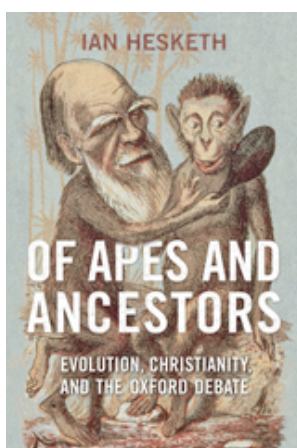
### Ishita Pande

*Medicine, Race and Liberalism in British Bengal: Symptoms of Empire*, Routledge, 2009

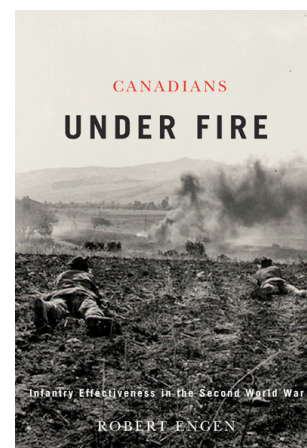




**Ian McKay and Robin Bates**  
*In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia*, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009



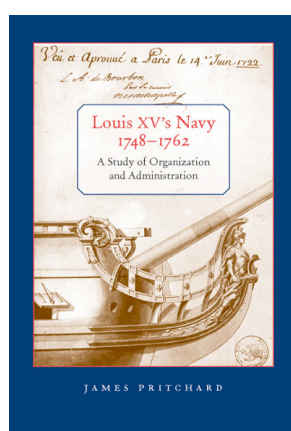
**Ian Hesketh**  
*Of Apes and Ancestors: Evolution, Christianity, and the Oxford Debate*, University of Toronto Press, 2009



**Robert Engen**  
*Canadians Under Fire: Infantry Effectiveness in the Second World War*, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009



**Jacalyn Duffin**  
*A History of Medicine: A Scandalously Short Introduction*, 2nd edition, University of Toronto Press, 2010



**James Pritchard**  
*Louis XV's Navy, 1748-1762: A Study of Organization and Administration*, 2nd edition, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009



**Karen Dubinsky, Catherine Krull, Susan Lord, Sean Mills, and Scott Rutherford**, eds.,  
*New World Coming: The Sixties and the Shaping of Global Consciousness*, Between the Lines, 2009

## Keeping in Touch with the Department

For a more complete picture of our faculty and programmes and news about the department, please consult our departmental website at [www.queensu.ca/history/](http://www.queensu.ca/history/) or call us at (613) 533-2150. Inquiries about potential donations can be made to Deborah Stirton ([stirton@queensu.ca](mailto:stirton@queensu.ca)) or the Departmental Chair, David Parker, at (613)-533-2232. Donations can be made online through the department's website or at [www.givetoqueens.ca/history](http://www.givetoqueens.ca/history).

We have recently established an alumni page on the departmental website, and encourage undergraduate and graduate alumni to contact Cathy Dickison at [dickison@queensu.ca](mailto:dickison@queensu.ca) with news. **We welcome news from our alumni, and look forward to hearing from you.**