

History of Science & Technology

September 1, 2006

Issue No. 5

FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Program scaled new heights last year as a record number of students earned their degrees: Eight new Ph.D.s—Georgina Montgomery, Olivia Walling, Paul Brinkman, Juliet Burba, Mary Anne Andrei, Susan Rensing, Ronald Frazzini, and Karen Ross—and one M.A., Rick Swanson. Like Joe DiMaggio's legendary hitting streak, this appears to be unsurpassable, at least until some one develops the equivalent of steroids for academics.

The search for Arthur Norberg's replacement concluded quite happily. Tom Misa has joined us as the ERA Professor of History of Science and Technology and Director of the Charles Babbage Institute. Tom was at Illinois Institute of Technology for nearly twenty years and is the author of the prize-winning *A Nation of Steel: The Making of Modern America, 1865-1925* (1995) and *Leonardo to the Internet: Technology and Culture from the Renaissance to the Present* (2005). For more on Tom see our webpage.

Last spring the University Regents approved the merger of our graduate Program with the graduate program in History of Medicine. The merged program will become the Program in the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine. We are now recruiting students for the joint program for the 2007-08 academic year. Although it is administratively confusing, this is a merger only of the graduate programs. Our Program in History of Science and Technology will remain in the Institute of Technology, and the History of Medicine in the Medical School. Faculty appointments and undergraduate teaching will remain unchanged.

With the help of generous contributions from many of you, we have accumulated enough money in the Roger Stuewer Fellowship Fund to make the first award. Adrian Fischer, a new student from Germany who intends to study the history of physics, will receive a fellowship from the fund for Spring semester. We hope to be able to award a fellowship for a full year soon, but that depends on continued contributions. The university is still matching contributions to the Fund, which means that if you make a contribution this year, it will in effect be doubled. Contact Barbara to make a contribution, which is, of course, tax deductible. We also welcomed three other equally promising students—Nathan Crowe, Maggie Hofius, and Andrew MacKinley—this year, and you can read about them in the student section of this Newsletter.

We hope to see many of you at the HSS annual meeting, which will be in Vancouver from November 2-5. As usual, we will have a reception in my suite on Saturday night after the HSS banquet. More information will follow in October.

Best wishes, and we hope to see you soon

Alan Shapiro

Alumni Updates

Eda Kranakis (1982)

Ottawa, ON

I have become Director of a new interdisciplinary M.A. program in Globalization and International Development at the University of Ottawa. The participating departments include Economics, Geography, History, Law, Political Studies, Religious Studies, and Sociology & Anthropology. The program is bilingual, serving both francophone and anglophone students. The first group of students will enter the program in Fall 2006.

My current research encompasses several projects. I am working on the history of European and world patent system integration. I am also working on the history of civil aviation in Europe, focusing on its role in the growth of European identity. I am also doing a study of export processing zones, viewed as combined technological-organizational systems. A paper on this topic will be presented at the upcoming SHOT conference in Las Vegas.

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Brett Steele (1994)

Alexandria, VA

It has been a productive year. Developing and producing professional education courses for the Department of Homeland Security has occupied much of my attention at the Homeland Security Institute. Especially successful was the Terrorism/Countering Terrorism course--a forty hour course that relied on speakers throughout the federal government, including the FBI, CIA, DOJ, NSA, and various components of DHS, as well as academics from Johns Hopkins and George Mason. I am also pleased to have discovered how much you can leverage from the history of technology when thinking about terrorist organizations. Currently, I am developing a new course on countering terrorism financing, which has opened up an entirely new domain of business discourse to me. And if all goes well, I will soon be commencing a study on countering "external" attack threats to commercial aviation, as well as developing a new DHS course on emergency planning and restoration strategy.

From an academic perspective, my article on Leonhard Euler's interior ballistics analysis and its influence on both military and engineering thinking in the late eighteenth century was published in Brenda Buchanan's new volume on the history of gunpowder: Gunpowder, Explosives, and the State: A Technological History (Ashgate, 2006). I was also pleased to have discovered the Euler Society recently, and hope to present a paper next year at their celebration of the 300th anniversary of Euler's birth.

Having survived all the flooding in DC this past week, Tamera and I are looking forward to more landscaping and gardening projects this summer, especially since our terriers, Pico and Kepler, protect us so well from those Virginia squirrels and mosquitoes.

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John P. Jackson, Jr. (1996)

University of Colorado--Boulder

A year ago, New York University Press published my Science for Segregation: Race, Law and the Case Against Brown v. Board of Education. This book explores how segregationists attempted to preserve racial segregation in the nineteen-

fifties and nineteen-sixties. This brings to a close my project on the interaction of science and segregationist thought in the twentieth-century United States.

I've spent a lot of last year reading new kinds of materials and writing. It has been fun to be a student learning new things again.

My project with Professor David Depew of the Project on the Rhetoric of Inquiry at the University of Iowa tentatively entitled *Organisms as Agents: The Fragile Rhetoric of Liberal Darwinism*, has required me to read a lot of disparate things from anthropologist Alfred Kroeber's pioneering work on the culture concept from the early twentieth century to the vast literature of the sociobiology debate in the nineteen-seventies.

A smaller project has led me to the fascinating new historical work on the history of logical empiricism in the United States. I'm working on study of how Hans Reichenbach's distinction between the "context of discovery" and "context of justification" was enrolled by various scholars in the nineteen-fifties.

Most recently, I just returned from the American Psychological Association annual meeting. The APA has been very good to me and this has been the third time they've invited me to speak. What was especially notable was the location: New Orleans. A year after Katrina, you could see the city beginning to get back on its feet. The locals were incredibly gracious and generous to visitors and urged us to spread the word that "New Orleans is back!"

In August 2006 Michele and I will be celebrating our twentieth wedding anniversary. Life is good.

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Chris Young (1997)
Milwaukee, WI



Who ever heard of an historian of science serving as a consultant at a zoo? At the Bronx Zoo no less. That was the highlight of my summer, along with watching Riley (3) ride her bike and swim. I spent a week at the Bronx Zoo and literally did not leave the zoo grounds from Monday through Friday the first week of August. The Wildlife Conservation Society received an NEH grant to examine the history of the Bronx Zoo, which it runs, and to explore the connections between the zoo and American conservation. Along with zoo historian Nigel Rothfels, environmental historian Tom Dunlap, and some exhibit designers and marketing types, we talked about some themes and dug into the zoo's archives to flesh out the story. It was fascinating.

marketing types, we talked about some themes and dug into the zoo's archives to flesh out the story. It was fascinating.

Mark Largent and I finished assembling a reference book on the evolution and creationism debates, which is due out from Greenwood Press in December. We'll see if permissions come from the intelligent designers, who are busy honing their argument in the face of recent defeats.



I taught four sections of intro biology in the spring, a science education masters course in the summer, and am preparing a new course on global warming for the fall (along with two more intro biology sections and two senior seminars). 'Nough said.

Michelle is pulling together a global project for Rockwell. Very challenging stuff. She likes to "relax" with our busy daughter. Riley is loving every minute of her life, except when she has to slow down to rest or change shoes. She was excited to see "Lady Liberty" in New York, and loves to listen to "Ring of Fire" on the way to school.

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PHOTOS: Mark Largent and Young at the Columbia History of Science Group meeting, held in February; Riley playing in Central Park

Diana Kenney (1998)

Marstons Mills, MA

I rejoined the workforce full-time about a year ago, after a few years of child-raising and freelancing. I'm presently associate editor at Cape Cod View, an arts and culture magazine published by the Cape Cod Times. I enjoy it, although it affords no opportunity to write about science. I did recently write a biography of vision researcher and Nobelist George Wald for "New Dictionary of Scientific Biography," and in the process became acquainted with his widow, Ruth Hubbard, also a biochemist as well as a sociologist of science. Both of them figured in the master's thesis I wrote 15 years ago at the U of M! The Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole sent me last fall to a conference at George Mason University on "Doing Digital History," which was very well worth attending -- we hope to create a digital history at the MBL at some point. I had a wonderful dinner with Brett Steele and his wife, Tamara, while in D.C. Kai, I didn't think to contact you but next time I am in Washington, I will. I would love to see you and Kati again.

My husband, Jeff, is building an addition to our house and has also started performing in theater again. Our son, Joseph, is 8 years old and loves his school, soccer, traveling, Game Boy and music. And did I mention Game Boy?

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Mark Largent (1999)

East Lansing, MI

I just completed my first year at Michigan State, and the end of the school year brought the birth of our daughter, Annabelle Joy Largent. She was born a few days before the end of the semester, so Nancy and I have spent the summer enjoying our time with her. Mom and baby are doing great, and we really love being parents.

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Karin Matchett (2002)

Minneapolis, MN

Like for many of us, the theme of this past year for me has been transitions--house, family, job. I am in Minneapolis again, and I sold a house, bought a triplex, my mother died, I started a new job. The first three are water under the bridge (though it's a long, long river), and the last one is most relevant to this newsletter and the most fun to talk about.

In July 2005, I started a job as an editor, or technical writer, in the College of Veterinary Medicine at the U of M. It's been a real pleasure, because I've had the freedom to do the job however I see fit, according to the needs I see and my interests and abilities. At the core, they wanted someone to edit high-dollar grant proposals -- but since those don't go out the door every day, I've extended the job in the directions of writing in general, and grants in general. I edit a great variety of proposals and manuscripts on various aspects of biomedical science (mainly), clinical studies, and veterinary public health. I created a set of web pages on grants resources (which everyone is thrilled to have, although I think very few people use them...), organized a grantwriting workshop with a small group of faculty, and am playing with ideas about data collection (about which I know very little--but anything is better than paying a retired faculty member to page through 50 files and copy down the titles of all of the department's faculty's manuscripts published in the past year). It's an interesting job, with great people to work with as well as time alone editing for my introvert side. It's a pleasure to finally think hard about writing itself--what works, what doesn't, and why.

I had an article published in the Journal of History of Biology this summer, titled "At Odds over Inbreeding: An Abandoned Attempt at Mexico/United States Collaboration to "Improve" Mexican Corn, 1940-1950." I'm still doing a little work with a project on the history of horticulture begun at Yale for Dan Kevles. In terms of future projects, I'm starting to read more in the history of technology (finally!), and am looking for a project at the intersection of history of agriculture, biology, and energy. I am not sure what angle I want to take--I'm interested in social histories, history of policy, and just about everything else.

It's great to be back near this group of historians of science and technology, and I look forward to seeing the rest of you in conference venues in random cities across North America!

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David Sepkoski (2002)
Wilmington, NC

Glad to report that Dara, Ella, and I have made the transition down to North Carolina, where I've started a tenure-track job in history of science at UNC Wilmington. For all of you fans of teen television dramas, yes, Wilmington is where Dawson's Creek was filmed--along with a bunch of other tv shows and movies. There's actually a big movie studio here, but the best attraction is the beach, which is miles long, pristine, not-too-crowded, and great for surfing. We're not actually ON the ocean (hurricanes do come through), but just a few miles away and glad to have visitors. I'll look forward to seeing everyone in Vancouver this fall, where I hope to catch up with what everyone's been up to. It's been a good year in other ways, too: I'm inching towards delivering a manuscript to one publisher (the dissertation) and getting a collection of essays on paleontology off to another. And my current book project on paleobiology is going well. But clearly the highlight of the year was a week in England this summer with Mark Borrello, who demonstrated that some of our best Minnesota traditions are in no danger of dying out. What What?! My new email address is:

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Jay Aronson (2003)
Pittsburgh, PA

Jay Aronson and his wife, Tamara Dubowitz, have had a wonderful, but very tiring, year. We just celebrated our son Ezra's first birthday on August 10, and Tamara started a fantastic job as a health policy analyst at RAND's new Pittsburgh office. Ezra has been such a wonderful gift to us; he is mellow, charming, always smiling, and makes us happy every single day. He also makes us extremely tired, but that's a different story! We are doing very well here in Pittsburgh, and enjoy taking our huge dog Madiba for long walks in one of two parks within walking distance of our house. When I got

the job at Carnegie Mellon, we weren't sure we would make it for more than two years, but now it looks like we'll be here for much longer. This past December-January, we went to Cape Town, South Africa to visit Tamara's extended family, especially her grandmother, who loved meeting her first great-grandchild. All is well with me—my job is good, and my first book, entitled "Genetic Witness: Science, Law, and Controversy in the Development of DNA Profiling" will be published by Rutgers University Press in Fall 2007. In addition to finishing up my book this summer, I also spent five weeks in New York participating in a National Endowment for the Humanities institute on human rights, which was very interesting. Hopefully, I'll get a chance to see at least a few of you in Vancouver in a few months.

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John Gustafson (2004)

Knife River, MN



Life in the north woods continues to unfold in slow and pleasant ways. After receiving my Ph.D. in 2004 and expecting my door bell to ring immediately thereafter, I have instead been graced with peace and quiet. I continue to teach a variety of courses at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College in Cloquet, Minnesota. Most recently, I have developed several new courses and a new certificate program to train technicians on electric-based renewable energy systems. Another ongoing project, where I am actually using my history of science and technology training, is to develop a course that highlights Native Americans' heritage in science (natural philosophy), technology, and mathematics. Surprisingly, by looking at Native Americans' accomplishments in these areas, a new

perspective on European science, technology, and mathematics history is appearing to me. Who knows where this project may lead? Our life here in northern Minnesota involves paying bills, feeding the deer our geraniums, and waiting for the grandkid to drop in. I hope someday to return to studies of Wolfgang Pauli. So far, I haven't found anything new about him, even on a recent Canadian National Railroad trip to Allanwater Bridge, Ontario. See the attached photo of my wife Karen and me, that shows us smiling and happy before we were dropped off the train.

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Don Opitz (2004)

Chicago, IL

The big news for me after having completed my PhD in December, 2004, is having landed a tenure-track position at my alma mater, DePaul University, in Chicago. I will be joining DePaul's School for New Learning as a member of the science faculty. SNL (not to be confused with "Saturday Night Live") is an internationally-recognized program in adult education. I will be teaching a variety of courses that fulfill students' science competencies as they work toward Bachelor's degrees in liberal arts. I'm excited about this position because it will bring together a variety of my passions and skills acquired as a physics major, history of science graduate student, and instructor at the General College of the U of MN. In my new position, I will continue my research in history of science (especially in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century

life sciences and institutional history), as well as contribute to pedagogical research in adult education -- not a far cry from the kind of collaborative research I have been engaged in at GC.

Other news is that my partner Gregg Albrecht and I were married last month in Ontario, Canada; we celebrated with family and friends at a big reception in Chicago. Gregg will begin a Master's degree in geography, with an emphasis in rural and community planning, at Western Illinois University this fall.

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Georgina Mary Montgomery (2005)

Bozeman, MT

In November 2005, in case my defense would not be stressful enough, I decided to combine defending my dissertation with presenting a talk at HSS in a session I co-organized with Erika Milam! The following month, I completed my Ph.D and had an article published in the Journal of the History of Biology. The new year brought an adjunct lectureship at Seattle Pacific University and the opportunity to write two contributions for the New Dictionary of Scientific Biography that will be appearing in 2007. In the spring of 2006 I heard that I had been successful in securing a postdoctoral fellowship at Montana State University in the "Mile High, Mile Deep" program within the History and Philosophy Department. Thus, after three years of living in Seattle, Bob and I are moving to Bozeman at the end of July. We are sad to leave Seattle where we have enjoyed the company of friends and the wide range of outdoor activities available here (see photo). However, we are very excited to experience life in Bozeman and look forward to being so close to the mountains and Yellowstone. I am also very excited to pursue my research and continue to develop my teaching skills at Montana State University.



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Paul Brinkman (2005)

Raleigh, NC

This has been a very busy year for me. I graduated last December. Then, after a long and painful search, I accepted a fossil preparator job at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, in Raleigh. So far, the new job is going well. The museum is very impressive, and I have a number of excellent specimens to work on. I just returned from a three-week dinosaur collecting expedition to Montana. (This is the first time I've ever been paid to collect fossils!) Tomorrow I open the field jackets and begin working on our best capture: a well-preserved and reasonably complete Edmontosaurus, with skull. Next week I'm starting a class at N.C. State University on archives management. There's a history of science program here, as well. In time, I'd like to offer a class there.

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Mary Anne Andrei (2006)
Charlottesville, VA

It was great to experience graduation in May with Susan, Paul, Juliet, and Ron. Congratulations to everyone who completed their PhDs this academic year! In Spring 2007 I'll join the history department at the University of Virginia as a Lecturer, teaching an undergraduate seminar, "Science in the Age of Jefferson." In July I'll teach a two-week inter-port course on Darwin aboard the MV Explorer from Valparaiso, Chile to Callao, Peru for UVA's Semester at Sea program. For now I'm turning my dissertation, "Nature's Mirror: How the Taxidermists of Ward's Natural Science Establishment Transformed Wildlife Display in American Natural History Museums and Fought to Save Endangered Species," into a book manuscript. Jack will be four in October. This fall he'll start a Spanish immersion program at the Charlottesville International School. He'll be ready to join Ted and me in South America next summer. Ted is hard at work on the Virginia Quarterly Review. Check out their website at VQRonline.org. See you all at HSS.

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Susan Rensing (2006)
Starkville, MS

Well, this last year has been a whirlwind. I tested the job waters, found them warmer than expected, and accepted a tenure-track position in the History Department at Mississippi State University. I presented at HSS in November, finished the dissertation, defended, graduated, partied, sold a house, and bought a new one in Starkville, MS. Oh, and I think I wrote a book review and worked at the HCMC Medical History Museum in there somewhere too. I'll be teaching women's history and history of science here and also will be working with Alan Marcus (the Dept. Head) to strengthen the History of Science and Technology (a.k.a. HoST) focus in our graduate program. In that vein, we're planning a Southern HoST conference for sometime in March to be HoST-ed (I couldn't resist the pun) by Mississippi State, so I'll be inviting all you newly southern Minnesota-folk down here for that one.

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Karen Ross (2006)
Clinton, SC

This year has been a busy one, but I graduated this summer. I have spent the past two years writing my dissertation and working for the Division of Epidemiology in the School of Public Health. This fall I started my new job as a visiting assistant professor at Presbyterian College in South Carolina. I will miss the Twin Cities terribly, but I expect that to lessen come January (average snowfall: 1.2 inches).

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Faculty Updates

Jennifer Alexander

The last year has been busy. I finished up the project on the history of efficiency, which now allows me to concentrate fully on "Sport and Work," a study of the biomechanics movement of the twentieth century. Encountering Efficiency is

due out next fall from Johns Hopkins, and an article on efficient worker seating in late Weimar Germany has just appeared in *Technology and Culture*. Another piece on efficiency and labor physiology in Nazi Germany will follow, in *History and Technology*; it links together the efficiency project and my newer research into technologies of human performance. I am planning upcoming research trips to do research on the Harvard Fatigue Laboratory, in Cambridge, Mass., and the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Labor Physiology, in Berlin and Dortmund.

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Mark E. Borrello

So far, 2006 has been action packed. I started off the year doing a joint presentation in the Bell Museum's film series with our own Alan Shapiro. We commented on a great film called *Proteus* about Ernst Haeckel's *Radiolaria* drawings. Since then there've been a few dissertation defenses, some teaching and some traveling. I spent a few weeks in the UK this summer doing some archival work on a book I'm writing while on research leave this fall. I also gave a talk at the British Society for the History of Science meeting in Kent. On the way to the conference, David Sepkoski (Minnesota PhD 2002) and I stopped in Down to visit Charles Darwin's house (we also stopped in at the pub for some excellent fish and chips and a pint). I'll be presenting a few talks this fall. In late September I'm giving a talk at the University of British Columbia in the colloquium series and I'll be back in Vancouver for HSS in November. I'll also be giving a talk at Science Education Saturday at the Bell Museum the week after HSS. Me and Regina are very excited about the imminent arrival of a baby in early October. Nico is also anticipating the event but is sure to be disappointed when we don't follow his naming suggestion of 'Penny the Cow'. Gia turned one in March and is rapidly developing a vocabulary that goes beyond 'baby' and 'cookie'. Really, what else is there?

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Michel Janssen

By far the most exciting thing for me this year was watching the improbable Superbowl run of the Steelers with my son Luc and his friends. The Steelers have now passed up the German national soccer team (which also had a pretty good run during this year's world cup in Germany) as my favorite sports team. Academically, I had to get used to tenure. At first, I felt like sitting in a car in the parking lot of the cemetery waiting for my turn (a variant on what the Hungarian authorities during the cold war told their citizens to do in case of a nuclear attack: put on a white gown, drive yourself to the cemetery, and wait). But after a few months I managed to set myself new goals. I made great progress on a paper I'm writing with one of my Pitt physics teachers, Tony Duncan, in which we use an unduly neglected paper by Minnesota's very own John H. Van Vleck to retell the story of the birth of matrix mechanics. We presented this paper at a workshop at the MPIWG in Berlin in June this year to kick off a new project of the institute in history of quantum physics. The Max Planck Gesellschaft has awarded the institute 1.6 million Euros for this project! So it looks as if this project, which me and my colleagues in Berlin have been talking about for years, will finally take off. It makes me all the more excited that three out of the four incoming graduate students this year have a strong interest in history of modern physics. I hope at least one of them will go into history of quantum physics. Unfortunately, there is also still a lot of Einstein business left over from the 1905 centenary last year. I hope to finally get that off my plate this academic year.

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Susan Jones

I'm very pleased to be a new member of the Program in the History of Science and Technology. I came from the University of Colorado—Boulder, where I was a faculty member in the Department of History for six years. At the U of M, I am tenured in the Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior on the St. Paul campus. I teach courses on the history of ecology and environmentalism; the history of women, gender and science; history of the life sciences; and the historical ecology of disease. My research interests have included: the changing scientific understanding of disease over time in conjunction with the historical context in which scientists worked; structure and practice within the biomedical sciences and professions; and scientists' influences on human-animal interactions. I am currently working on two book-length projects that investigate the modern histories of bovine tuberculosis and anthrax in a transnational context. These projects are part of my overall program of exploring the historical ecology of zoonotic diseases. In addition, I am a participant in the University's Consortium on Law and Values in Health, the Environment, and the Life Sciences and am a member of the National Center for the Study of Terrorism and the Response to Terrorism.

I live in St Paul with my family, husband Kevin Reitz (Professor of Law) and our three-year-old son. This past summer, we moved into and renovated a house built in 1930 by Harry Dewitt Lees, a physician and one of the early directors of the Student Health Services at the U of M. We have enjoyed exploring the North Shore, St Croix, and other beautiful areas in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and we look forward to many great years here.

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Sally Gregory Kohlstedt

The past academic year was a very busy one with students who had started at various times over the last decade now completing their projects. It seemed that I (and many of my colleagues) always had a dissertation on our desks to be read as we had eight students finish up, plus, in my case four students in other departments on whose committees I served. You can find details about names and dissertation titles now on the UMN website if you follow the Graduate School links to our program and then check out the statistics; you will also find celebratory comments by our new alumni. My multi-faceted interests are reflected in a number of new items off the press, from an article on Nature Study in Isis, a forum piece on museums, and an article on gender in museums about to be published in a volume by New England University Press. I have completed my two-year stint as anthropology chair and am beginning to make plans for a sabbatical leave in 2007-2008. David, however, has just agreed to become head of Geology and Geophysics for the next five years and so will have to postpone his leave. At the moment, I have some hopes of going abroad for part of that sabbatical but plan to spend the rest of my time doing shorter stints for research and responding more positively to invitations to talk on other campuses. With a new bulldog, Watson, joining our airdale, Tucker, we get ample exercise walking along West River Road, which is a good thing because we get Up North less often than we might hope.

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Bob Seidel

Greetings to you and yours! I've been busy thinking about computers and high-energy physics this year in the interstices between reorganizing the historiography course for the newly-merged History of Science, Technology and Medicine Program and teaching the old course, as well as Ethics and Science in American Culture. This summer, I took a week off and fulfilled a 35-year-old dream of visiting St. Petersburg, Russia (a.k.a. Leningrad, Petrograd) and did it in style on a cruise ship from Stockholm to Copenhagen. After teaching four courses this year, (Technology in American Culture,

Historiography, Science in American Culture and Ethics), I hope to spend my sabbatical in Philadelphia and Wilmington Del. looking into the history of chemical engineering.

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Alan Shapiro

This past year I visited Germany twice to attend workshops and give talks. The first workshop was in February on “The Reception of Isaac Newton’s Scientific Work in Europe” at the Mathematical Research Institute, Oberwolfach in the Black Forest. The second was on the camera obscura from Kepler to Vermeer at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin in July. We arrived in Berlin a few weeks after the World Cup games in the midst of Europe’s heat wave. It reached 100° F one day, although, fortunately, it was not very humid. My talk was on how Kepler’s introduction of the concept of projected image into geometrical optics evolved into the “virtual image” by around 1670. I will expand my talk into a paper for publication this year. The workshop was quite interesting, as it brought together art historians, historians of science, and curators. After the workshop Linda and I rented a car and visited Dresden and Weimar and explored the surrounding areas, which we enjoyed very much. In her first year of retirement Linda continued her freelance writing and started to take long bicycle rides.

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Current Student Updates

Soma Banerjee

I’ve enjoyed my first year in the program. I’ve been able to narrow down my interests in the history of quantum mechanics to studying the various dispersion mechanisms in the 1920’s which included a few scattering experiments that acted as a bridge between the old quantum theory and matrix mechanics. On the more social and institutional front, I’m now interested in unpacking the historical processes which led to the creation of a school of physics in Bengal (in colonial India) pioneered by some Indian scientists, their alternative modes of doing science and the consequent movements of nationalism. I was fortunate to accompany a few of the HST grad students to the Midwest Junto in UW, Madison this year, which was quite a learning experience. I had an eventful summer back home in Calcutta (India), I learnt German “Grundstufe eins” at the Goethe-Institut. And this summer was a lucky one for me as I also found my life partner, but I’ll keep that story for another day.

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Nathan Crowe

I entered the "U" this fall as a first-year graduate student in the program. I completed my MA in History this past spring at North Carolina State University in Raleigh. Although my master's thesis concentrated on the eugenic ideas of the Nobel Prize winning geneticist H. J. Muller, it really dealt with the role that scientific optimism plays in the development of ideology. As for future research plans at Minnesota, I'm interested in exploring the issues surrounding scientific optimism, sociobiology, and evo-devo in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s (although I retain the rights to change my mind at any point in the next few years). Before North Carolina State University, I lived in a rural part of Maryland on the Chesapeake Bay where I attended a small liberal arts college, St. Mary's College of Maryland, and spent most of my life feasting on

blue crabs and oysters. I've lived my whole life on the East Coast and look forward to moving to Minneapolis as a change of scenery.

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Erika Dirkse

The working title of my dissertation is "The Naturalness of Value and the Value of Naturalness: The Economic Geology of Alexander von Humboldt, Roderick Murchison and Josiah Dwight Whitney." In the thesis I explore how the interests of naturalists and geologists in the mapping of and prospecting for regional and global precious metal resources intersected with practical and theoretical economic concerns advanced by moral scientists, government policy advisers and political economists. Specifically, in the case of Humboldt and Murchison, I am interested in the making and articulation of expertise in economic geology that stemmed from a common tour of the mining regions in the Ural Mountains undertaken by Humboldt roughly ten years prior to Murchison. Later, I believe Humboldt and Murchison's brands of economic geology offered a model for Whitney's claim to a similar expertise while he worked on the first geological survey of California during the 1850s. Furthermore, the topic of economic geology serves as a useful vehicle for a more nuanced consideration of the interaction and overlap between natural history and the moral sciences/nascent social sciences in the period bookended by the late eighteenth century and the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

My research interests lie in the following areas: eighteenth- and nineteenth-century earth sciences, economic history, social studies of science, science and visual culture, and the history of modern Germany and Russia. I plan to complete my long overdue thesis in the spring of 2007. Last fall I participated in the workshop "Maps, Graphs and Scientific Images" at the University of British Columbia. Presently I am a visiting student at the Office for the History of Science and Technology, University of California, Berkeley.

Apart from the history of science I am active in child advocacy work, volunteering as a CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocate) and as an education surrogate in the San Francisco Unified School District. I also enjoy distance running, knitting and hiking. I live in San Francisco in a periodical-cluttered apartment together with my husband and our two cats, Enoki and Purrl.

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Adrian Fischer

I am a first year graduate student in the program. I finished my M.S. degree in Meteorology at Freie Universitaet Berlin, Germany. I have worked at the Department of Space Sciences for two years. And although my work in the sciences has been rewarding in many ways, I am now interested in thinking more critically about science and its larger context. Because of my educational background in physics, I am highly interested in the history of physics in general and especially in 20th century physics (quantum mechanics, theory of relativity). I have other interests in the history of meteorology and climatology as well as in the history of satellite technology. Besides this main focus I feel attracted to the philosophy of science. Questions on the construction of facts, on how scientific knowledge gets institutionalized and gets transported to the public fascinate me. Playing music, biking and hiking gives me the relaxation I need.

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Suzanne Fischer

I am in the dissertation-writing home stretch, and hope to finish by the end of 2006. My project, "Diseases of Men: Advertising Medical Institutes, Syphilis and Scientific Medicine in the American Midwest, 1900-1930," explores 'for men only' urban medical institutions and their use of the techniques and rhetoric of scientific medicine to sell their VD treatments. My research travels took me to the Atwater Collection of Popular Medicine at the Miner Medical Library at the University of Rochester (NY), a terrific archive which I recommend to all interested historians of medicine. I gave a paper at the Mid-American American Studies Association conference in St Louis this spring, and organized a session on "Medicine and the Modern City" for the HSS meeting in November. I am working part-time at the Hennepin County Medical Center History Museum, a small museum in the basement of the downtown Minneapolis hospital, doing mostly collections management work. Additionally, I entered my pickles in the Minnesota State Fair this summer.

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Amy Fisher

I am entering my fifth year in the program. I have been working on my dissertation. My research examines the development of electrical science in Britain and France in the 18th and early 19th centuries. I hope to do some traveling to archives in Britain soon, to finish my research, and I hope to start writing this fall. On an even happier note, Simon and I are getting married next summer! It is going to be a busy year. Best wishes to everyone!

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Margaret Hofius

I am a first year graduate student with an A.B. in history from the University of Georgia. Within the history of science and technology, I am most interested in 19th and 20th century physics and related technology in Europe and the United States. This past year was spent outside of the classroom working as a legal assistant in a small law office in Marietta, Georgia. I enjoyed witnessing the judicial system at work but am looking forward to returning to my studies.

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Margot Iverson

I've spent this past year working on my dissertation, which doesn't make for much exciting news. I did take two research trips—one to the Harvard Archives and one to the Archives at the University of Alaska at Anchorage—and worked on drafts of several thesis chapters. I also started working part-time in the Provost's Office, which I enjoy—it has introduced me to the policies and politics that keep the university running. And I managed to learn a great deal about mummies this year, and gave two talks (one to an archeology group at UMN and the other at the Friday Harbor conference in March) on a 1930s scientific feud over the determination of the blood-types of a bunch of Native American mummies found in Alaska. Sadly, mummies do not make much of an appearance in my dissertation, but the talks were fun.

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Kate Jirik

I'm starting my fourth year in the program but since I take one class at a time, I'm more like a second year student. I've presented talks at the Midwest Junto. I'm still really interested in the interconnections among science, politics and ethics. I really like looking at those interconnections through the lens of American eugenics. I'm also starting to explore those interconnections by looking at state institutions for people with mental retardation and physical disabilities. I traveled to Victoria and Vancouver this summer.

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Andrew MacKinlay

This is my first year in the program. I recently graduated from St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, with a BA in Liberal Arts. While at St. John's I developed an interest in 19th and early 20th century physics, particularly individuals such as Faraday and Maxwell. I wrote my senior essay on Maxwell's paper, "On Physical Lines of Force," looking at his notion of molecular vortices and its ability to represent nature. I am excited to begin study in Minnesota and discover what interests me most as I go along. Originally from a suburb of Philadelphia, I enjoy both curling and rowing, two activities I intend to pursue while in the Twin Cities.

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Rachel Mason Dentinger

I passed my preliminary exams at the beginning of the 2005 school year and spent the next two semesters developing a topic for my dissertation and TAing for HST courses. My dissertation examines the history of research on the biochemical coevolution of plants and their insect predators. In the Spring of 2006 I had the pleasure of presenting at Friday Harbor and the Midwest Junto, giving two different talks based on my preliminary research. This summer I collected mushrooms, venomous snake sightings, and incredible volcano-top views in Costa Rica with my mycologist husband, Bryn. Since then I have been refining my dissertation topic and seeking funding for my research, which will combine archival work with the collection and analysis of a number of oral histories.

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Gina Rumore

This will be my fourth year in the History of Science Program, and I am looking forward to working on my dissertation and to teaching in the CLA Honors Program and working with the Program for Teaching with Writing. I will also be serving as the Women's Coordinator for HST. The past year flew by as I began work on my dissertation, which looks at the history of science – ecology and glaciology – in Glacier Bay, Alaska. I presented papers based on my dissertation at HSS in November and at the Midwest Junto in April. During the spring and summer, thanks to support from this program, the University of Minnesota Graduate School, and the National Science Foundation, I traveled around the U.S. conducting research for my dissertation in Berkeley, CA, Boulder, CO, Fairbanks, AK, and, most recently, Glacier Bay, AK. In Glacier Bay I spent a week in the field (actually on a boat most of the time) with a group from the United States Geological Survey following up on studies begun in Glacier Bay over 100 years ago. Part of this study is a repeat photography project documenting changes in glacial position and vegetative patterns over time as evidence of global

climate change. These photographs are available to view at www.NSIDC.org. In my spare time I continue to swim, bike and run – I even managed to squeeze in a half marathon in North Pole, Alaska, during my three week stay in Fairbanks.

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Pete Schmidt

Last fall I made a successful move to San Diego, California with my wife Kimberly and we are happily living in the land of sun and moderate temperatures. After taking the necessary time to move in and get acquainted with the surrounding libraries, museums, coffee shops, (and a few trips to the beach) and deal with a few family tragedies large and small, I continued my academic work on my dissertation. Over the next few months I made good progress in my research and writing on the history of terraforming science. In the spring, I applied for my first full-time position teaching, a position teaching Humanities at Grossmont College- the second largest community college in San Diego County. After an arduous and nerve racking one-and-half-month long interviewing process, I was hired as a tenure track instructor in the Philosophy, Humanities, and Religious Studies department. Having achieved my primary career goal of attaining a full-time teaching position at a community college in a city that I love, I collapsed and went to the beach, happily facing a life of gainful employment for the first time in many years. Since then I have been very busy continuing to work on my dissertation in an attempt to finish as quickly as possible, preparing and teaching a World History summer class at a different community college, playing drums in a two-man acoustic punk rock band, working on a 1972 Super Beetle, and preparing classes for my full-time fall schedule.

My new email for anyone to reach me at is: pete.schmidt@gcccd.edu

Betty van Meer

I am in the middle of my move to South Carolina as I am writing you my news for the coming year. I will be living in Clinton, with Karen Ross as my neighbor and colleague! I have a one year position at Presbyterian College, and will be teaching Modern European History (mostly). I also look forward to defending my dissertation within the next month or two.

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Michael Ziomko

My dissertation has taken a slight turn, and I'm now working on the broader story of material cohesion in the 17th century. Robert Boyle will remain a major player, but I'll also be treating the work of Descartes, Gassendi, and perhaps Galileo. This fall I start my 10th year in the program -- having begun classes when I was working full time. After a three year hiatus to take preliminary exams and work on research I return to the work world, at least part time, this August as the Director of Major and Planned Gifts at the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library at St. John's in Collegeville. My goal is to defend by the summer of 2007.

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