

History of Science & Technology

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Issue No. 7

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings! The year 2008 marks rather dramatic changes for our Program in History of Science and Technology as our stalwart chair of eighteen years, Alan Shapiro, steps down from the directorship and moves toward retirement at the end of this academic year. Alan has been a dedicated leader of a steadily growing program that is now strongly situated within the university as well as the larger profession. I face a daunting legacy, joining a distinguished line of leadership initiated by Roger Stuewer and continued by Alan. I look forward to the challenges, knowing I am buttressed by wonderful colleagues here and a loyal cadre of alumni. Another change is that John Eyler, long an affiliated member of our program and director of the History of Medicine, announced he will also retire after taking a sabbatical leave this year, and we all wish him and Audrey well in Washington State. Luckily, Barbara Eastwold, with her good humor, extraordinarily organizational talents, and deep knowledge of our program, continues to be our administrator. She seems to be flourishing in her move to Pillsbury Hall (the plus is a private office with three windows) and surviving yet another new financial system at the university.

With Michel Janssen on leave at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science and Jennifer Alexander also on sabbatical this year, faculty members still on campus are absorbing significant responsibilities. Susan Jones has agreed to become the Director of Graduate Studies and is already thinking of ways to recruit a diverse and strong cadre of new students. Mark Borrello will be the Director of Undergraduate Studies and guide us through a looming process of recertifying our courses to meet Liberal Education requirements. Bob Seidel continues to coordinate the colloquium, and Tom Misa is leading the Charles Babbage Center and engaged in several new projects there. Bob and Tom have initiated a significant new project that involves students and others in doing research and writing a history of the Institute of Technology. Alan continues to be a significant senior advisor to all of us. This year Kalil Oldham has joined us to teach the history of physics and the modern period history of science survey. More news of the research and accomplishments of our faculty are below.

The graduate program merger with the History of Medicine is going very well. Jennifer Gunn will be interim director and, with Jole Shackelford and incoming faculty member Dominique Tobbell, collaborates with us on a fully integrated historiography and graduate research seminar sequence. Similarly, the Center for the Philosophy of Science under Ken Waters is making plans for an even more comprehensive Studies of Science and Technology minor that helps coordinate a Biology Interest Group (BIG) and Physics Interest Group (PIG - yes, really).

We truly value the network of alumni, well represented in the newsletter this year, for their ongoing interest in our program and students. Please let us know when you are in town and look for us at the History of Science Society annual meeting in Pittsburgh this year. I always welcome information and advice that can strengthen the program and our ties to all of you, so do stay in touch with us. I would also like to point out that there will be a thank you and retirement event for Alan on the afternoon of April 17, so mark your calendar if you will be in the vicinity. We will send more information in (late?) winter.

Truly best wishes,

Sally Gregory Kohlstedt

Alumni Updates

Brian Nichelson (1988)

Houston, TX

I suppose that after 20 years I'm overdue for a newsletter entry, so here goes, in a nutshell. After leaving Minnesota, I returned to my faculty position at the USAF Academy. In March 1990 I left the Air Force and moved to Houston, where I found a job at Exxon's Upstream Research Lab as a training specialist. In that capacity, I worked with some of the world's foremost experts in their fields. Interacting with such researchers, rather than reading about them, was quite an experience. After nearly 12 years with Exxon, I decided that I'd had all the fun I could stand and struck out on my own, as a consultant on technology training and usability issues. Just recently I joined a new, up-and-coming oil and gas reservoir modeling company where I'm the manager of training and software support. Who'd have thought?

And adding to all the excitement was the birth of my first grandchild, Matthew Christian, in April of this year.

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Natalie McIntire (1993)

Viroqua, WI

My family (husband Jerry and son Colin) and I moved back to the Midwest in 2007 and currently live in the lively and alternative small town of Viroqua, WI. Before that we had been living in Portland, OR for five years. We moved to Viroqua to enjoy a simpler life with less traffic, and more community interaction, and so far we are loving it. Colin will be in fifth grade this year at Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School, one of the reasons we chose Viroqua out of the numerous small towns in this country. Colin loves math, reading, handwork and recess. This summer he has been playing baseball, and discovered a new passion - fishing.



In 1996, I made a career shift to renewable energy. At first, I thought I wanted to be a dealer/installer of small scale renewable energy systems. But after volunteering with an expert, I decided that working on three story roofs, and struggling to get 500 lb solar tanks into basements was not for me.

So, I got a job in Boston working for a small non-profit working on solar energy education and policy. After moving back to the Northwest, I took a job at another non-profit working on renewable energy policy, where I stayed for five years prior to moving to Wisconsin. My focus has been on high voltage transmission policy for renewables and green power policy. Working for non-profits has allowed me opportunities to dabble in many other areas which keep me interested. I have become famous (or infamous, in the eyes of the utilities) within my small world for my work to develop a new transmission product called "conditional firm." I work from home now as an independent consultant, working primarily in the regulatory world on transmission policy

for both the American Wind Energy Association and a Midwest regional non-profit, Wind on the Wires. Recently, I have been working on issues related to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Order 890, as well as participating on technical advisory committees for wind integration studies. My background in engineering combined with the history of science and technology has been very helpful working on policy in the technical world of renewable energy.

When not working, I enjoy folk dancing, hiking, canoeing, cooking, reading, and my newest favorite craft, needle felting.

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Brett Steele (1994)
Alexandria, VA

It has been a dynamic year here in Washington, DC. I left the Homeland Security Institute in the fall of 2007 and took an engineering position with Ideal Innovations, Inc.—a small but growing defense-contracting firm. They had me work at the Joint Improvised Explosives Defeat Organization (JIEDDO) as a Science and Technology Advisor/Program Manager. During that transition into the military world of mitigating the threat of improvised explosives in Iraq and Afghanistan, I was also teaching my new course on Technology and Security at Georgetown's Security Studies Program. There, I faced a full spectrum of graduate students from the physical and social sciences, as well as engineering and the humanities—not to mention a number of active-duty military officers. So with Kai Barth's encouragement, I pushed them through 400 hundred years of overlapping military, scientific, and industrial history, coupled with some rigorous economic modeling to focus their critical thinking on fundamental, strategic, and enduring relationships. After all, this was a crowd that tolerates history only when it offers some direct professional utility. And yes, it got surreal at moments to lecture intellectually in the evening about relationships I was directly experiencing earlier that day at JIEDDO.

While getting up to speed at JIEDDO with supervising some electronic, optical, and mechanical R&D projects, the senior management of Ideal Innovations started giving me business-development tasks. That work blossomed into a full-time position by June, leading me to leave JIEDDO and work in Ideal Innovation's new business development office. So now I'm cutting my teeth on marketing high-tech engineering and management services to government clients. What proved surprising, however, is the close affinity that scholarship in the history of science and technology has with such professional work. It hadn't occurred to me that a major challenge of most contracting proposals involves researching and writing relevant (and hopefully engaging) corporate history.

On a more scholarly note, I presented a lecture this summer at the Washington Institute for Operations Research and Management Science on modeling both high-tech industrial firms and terrorist organizations with the same economic return-on-investment equation. Since it was well received, I'm now scheduled to lecture on this subject to the Irregular Warfare group at Booz Allen Hamilton in a few weeks.

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John P. Jackson, Jr. (1996)
Boulder, CO

The most exciting news from last year is that I successfully negotiated the tenure and promotion process at the University of Colorado. I am now Associate Professor. Since I started here as an adjunct instructor it is particularly gratifying to have that process completed.

I took my work on anthropologist Alfred Kroeber on the road this past year, with stops to give colloquia talk at Minnesota and Northwestern University. I also presented at a conference on the "Biological Explanations of Human Behavior" at Leibnitz University in Hanover, Germany. I am now moving on to the Freeman/Mead controversy in the history of anthropology. All of this is part of an inquiry into the notion of agency within Darwinian Theory in the twentieth-century United States.

On the family front, Michele is entering her last year of chairing the Department of Communication and getting ready to move to the Dean's office for a new position. Maggie (shown here in one of her dramatic poses) is entering high school this fall and Jack is entering middle school. The second picture is of Jack and me after our rock-climbing adventure to the top of the Flatiron Mountains outside Boulder.

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Mike Buckly (1997)
State College, PA

During 2007, I finished a three-year lectureship and moved on to a new job in the fall as a writer/editor for the Penn State Justice and Safety Institute, a division of Penn State Outreach. I also published two articles that might be of interest to the HST community: "'The Footsteps of Creative Energy': John Burroughs and Nineteenth-Century Literary Natural History" (ATQ, December 2007) and "The Discourse of Natural History in the Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition" (*Western American Literature*, Spring 2008).

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Chris Young (1997)
Milwaukee, WI

The past year has been rewarding, both professionally and personally. Rather than list particular accomplishments, I'd like to share a telling anecdote. As summer was winding down, and I was working to gear up for another school year, I brought Michelle and Riley (now 5) over to Michigan to see Mark Largent and Annabelle. We were joined by Michael Reidy for a day in Lansing and a second day in Grand Rapids. Mark, Michael, and I were able to explore familiar territory across our shared interests in the History of Science and Technology. We also explored some (for me) relatively new territory at the intersection of biotechnology, microbiology, food chemistry, physiology, and aging. Clearly, a fuller understanding of the history of these fields should form the core of our graduate program, so as to reduce the likelihood of repeating our experience. Attending a multi-media presentation featuring the talents of Billy Idol and Def Leppard, which included such history of science classics as "Flesh for Fantasy" (physiology), "Rock Rock (Til You Drop)" (geology), "Paper Sun" (astronomy), "Hot in the City" (climatology), and "Pour Some Sugar on Me" (chemistry), helped us to appreciate the deep connections between our field and broader human experience. More mundane, but also significant in the past year was my promotion to associate professor of biology at Alverno and presentations on curriculum development and digital portfolios in Savannah and New York.

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Erik Conway (1998)

Pasadena, CA

I'm still working as the historian at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. My best news is that the history of atmospheric science in NASA that I embarked on way back in 2002 is finally going to be published. I shipped the page proofs back to the press earlier this month, and it will be out in October. Like my previous books, *High Speed Dreams* and *Blind Landings*, it is being published by Johns Hopkins University Press. *High Speed Dreams* will be going paperback this year, too, so I guess someone besides the reviewers have now read it!

I've also been collaborating with Naomi Oreskes on the denial of global warming by a subset of scientists (no, ExxonMobil didn't create denial, as much as it's fun to imagine. Physicists did.) We've published two article-length studies on this during the past year and a half, one in the new Proctor and Schiebinger volume on Agnotology, and one in the revamped HSPS, Historical Studies of the Natural Sciences. We also have a contract to write a popular-level book on the subject, which is due next spring.

All of the above I've done in my own "free time" over the past couple of years. In my real job, I'm writing a history of robotic Mars exploration and am slowly working on a couple of articles on the intersection of planetary and Earth sciences. Last August, those two subjects earned me a trip to ICOHTEC in Copenhagen, which was wonderful, and out to Arhus, to speak to Helge Kragh's group about NASA and the reconstruction of climate science. That was great fun. Helge is a tough audience, though!

As a public historian, I also have to do some more popular sorts of things, and this year marked the 50th anniversary of JPL's launching of the American end of the space race. I wrote a popular article about this for Caltech's Engineering and Science Magazine that came out this past January, and helped in the production of a documentary on the first US satellite, Explorer 1. It showed on Discovery Channel many times this spring. It also got me my first radio and TV interviews!

JPL, finally, decided to establish a climate science website aimed at a popular audience, and I'm one of the scientific advisors (and frequent contributor). It takes up more time than I'd like, but it seems a worthwhile thing to do. There's enormous misinformation floating around, and the basic concepts of climate, at least, aren't that hard. But there's really nowhere the basics get explained, so we're gradually trying to explain them.

My only significant personal news is I bought a condo in Pasadena. I'm a mile from Caltech, and less than a mile from Old Town. If you're in the area, please stop in and say hello!

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Diana Kenney (1998)

Marstons Mills, MA

I am entering my second (hopefully less whirlwind) year as the staff science writer/editor at the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) in Woods Hole, MA. I recently returned from the Toolik Research Station in arctic Alaska, where I spent 10 days with MBL scientists learning the ropes of environmental and climate change research. With me were a fabulous, fun group of science journalists from National Geographic, NPR, New York Times, etc., all of whom had won MBL fellowships to go to Toolik. I learned more in those 10 days about environmental science than I've learned in my

entire life. Now, I am immersed in writing eight articles about microscopy for the MBL's magazine, Catalyst. In the past year, I have produced articles and press releases on the most eclectic range of topics you can imagine, from microbiology to science education to vision research to contraceptive technologies. Someday I will write a book about the MBL. It's much more like an organism than an institution.

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Amy Foster (1999)

Orlando, FL

I am starting my fourth year in an assistant professor position at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. (Come visit!) This fall I have an article on women astronauts coming out in a special issue of *Florida Historical Quarterly* celebrating the 50th anniversary of NASA. I am also serving as the guest editor of that issue. In other research, I am currently working on an article discussing the role (or myth) of presidential leadership on women's opportunities at NASA, and am completing edits on my book, *Sex in Space*, for which the Johns Hopkins University Press has shown interest. (My thanks goes to a couple of lady colleagues who are also at similar stages in our tenure tracks. We are keeping each other productive.)

On a personal note, I will be traveling to China in October to visit my brother, Regan, (U of M, BS, '03), my sister-in-law, Jinny, (U of M, BA, '02), and my two-year old niece, Mia (U of M, '28?). If you want to travel with me virtually, I'll be keeping a blog during my trip: <http://amygoestochina.blogspot.com/>. Expect a lot of pictures from the night my brother and I will be spending the night on the Great Wall.

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Mark Largent (1999)

East Lansing, MI

I have to single out one particularly exciting undertaking as by far the most memorable of the last academic year. Along with two other graduates of the University of Minnesota Program in the History of Science and Technology - Professors Michael Reidy and Christian Young - I was invited to what was by far the most prestigious academic event of my career. On August 15th, the three of us met in beautiful Lansing, Michigan and drove to nearby and even more beautiful Grand Rapids, Michigan for the event. Once there, we engaged in focused, small-group discussions, which culminated in our attendance at a concert held in our honor by Sir Billy Idol and a relatively obscure quintet named Def Leppard. More intensive small-group discussion followed at a nearby watering hole. The next day, exhausted by previous day's intense intellectual activities, we limped back to our home institutions with commemorative t-shirts in hand. The event's official photographer, Annie Leibowitz, captured the attached photo to commemorate the event. Other than this, the last year has been very quiet - I published my first book, wrote the opening chapter for the soon-to-be published Cambridge



Companion to Darwin's Origin, and was reappointed as Assistant Professor at James Madison College at Michigan State University.

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Michael Reidy (1999)

Bozeman, MT

After years of working, reworking, and re-reworking my dissertation into a book, it has finally come out. *Tides of History: Ocean Science and Her Majesty's Navy* was published by the University of Chicago Press this past summer. I spent all of last year on sabbatical, including four months in archives throughout England and Scotland engrossed in material for my next project:-- a history of British mountaineering and science in the nineteenth century. I am particularly interested in how scientists used a vertical orientation in their research. For instance, botanists such as Joseph Dalton Hooker realized that by climbing mountains, they could cover several different zones of vegetation in a single day, thus enabling them more easily to chart species change with changing environments. Physicists such as John Tyndall likewise climbed mountains to reach extreme environments, where they then studied diverse topics such as glaciology, solar radiation, the polarization of light, and even spontaneous generation. Partly owing to my interests in John Tyndall as a mountaineer, I have also been asked by Bernard Lightman to become a General Editor of the John Tyndall Correspondence Project. We are in the process of collecting and transcribing all of John Tyndall's letters found in archives throughout Europe and the United States. Yet, by far the most meaningful event in my life this past year was my trip to visit Mark Largent in Lansing, Michigan. With special T-shirts designed by Chris Young, we all converged on Grand Rapids to see Billy Idol and Def Leppard live in concert. Who said you needed two arms to be a drummer in the greatest rock 'n roll band ever?

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Kevin Francis (2002)

Olympia, WA

I have just finished my fourth year of teaching at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. The career milestone this year was successfully going through—in Evergreen's lingo—"conversion" from "term" to "continuing" status as a faculty member. That's our version of tenure, which means I'll be able to stick around for the indefinite future.

In fact, I find that I have become an enthusiastic convert to Evergreen's unique approach to education. Most courses are full-time programs taught by several faculty members. We strive to develop a learning community in each program, which means that we participate in each other's lectures, labs, and workshops alongside the students. It's a bit like being an eternal college student. At the end of the program, each student writes a self-evaluation and each faculty writes a narrative evaluation of the student's work in place of a letter grade. We conclude with a conference where we talk about the quarter. Many people assume that Evergreen must be a private college—I have seen it abbreviated to "Evergreen College" on more than one conference program even when I submitted its full name—but, remarkably, Evergreen is a public institution.

Most of my time has been absorbed with teaching. Last spring I taught a program on alchemy with a chemist, who did an amazing job of helping me decode obscure ancient and medieval texts and who convinced me that scientists are indispensable for doing certain kinds of historical work. In the upcoming year, I will teach a three-quarter program in the health sciences with a biologist, a chemist, and a science librarian. My contributions in this program will include

philosophy of science, history of medicine, evolutionary biology, and bioethics. I have also devoted a fair amount during the past two years on governance activities—serving on Evergreen’s version of a faculty senate and working with the Evergreen Foundation (think scholarships) to increase our endowment. Scholarship has taken a back seat, though hopefully I’ll have more to report in this area next year.

I hope to see folks in Pittsburg or Friday Harbor (for the Columbia History of Science Group). As always, Tom and I welcome visitors, so please get in touch if you find yourself in Olympia or Seattle.

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David Sepkoski (2002)
Wilmington, NC

2008 has been a fine, though fairly uneventful, year for me. I’m still in the History department at UNC Wilmington, and I’m still adjusting to living in the South. It’s awfully nice to be able to swim in the ocean in October, but can be brutal in August. We’re gearing up for a big Darwin celebration here this year, which will include a student conference March 19-21 2009. Any students interested in making the trip down here can contact me for details. Otherwise, I’ve been hard at work on my manuscript about paleobiology, which I hope to finish by next summer. I’ve also been seeing an edited volume I’m doing with Michael Ruse called *The Paleobiological Revolution* through to completion. I hope to see everyone in Pittsburgh, and I’m looking forward to coming back to Minnesota for the HST colloquium this winter.

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Jay Aronson (2003)

Pittsburgh, PA

We had yet another productive, exhilarating, and exhausting year here in Pittsburgh. Tamara, Ezra and I welcomed Talia Michal into the world on October 2, 2007, nearly two weeks after her due date, but definitely worth the wait. Other than her apparent lack of a need for sleep, she has been a phenomenal baby so far—very even-keeled and good natured, but with a fire-cracker personality. She’s also quite beautiful if I do so say so myself. Ezra continues to be a fantastic kid, full of energy, excitement, and zest for life. We’re hoping he continues to develop his budding musical talents and eventually starts to listen to his parents on a regular basis. We continued our busy travel schedule last year—with family trips to California, DC, Little Rock (where Tamara was doing some consulting work) and South Africa. I also gave talks in New York, New Jersey, and DC. Professionally, things continue to go very well. My book came out in November, and has been reviewed very favorably in a number of major and not-so-major journals. I was recently awarded a very generous grant from NIH to continue my work on the use of DNA identification in post-conflict settings. I also have a few articles and book chapters in the works, but I won’t bore anyone with the details. This year, I don’t have any excuses for not attending the HSS meeting since it’s right in my back yard, so...I hope to catch up with everybody in Pittsburgh in a few months!

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Ioanna Semendeferi (2003)

Houston, TX

After a long time, here I am again! I got my first article out ("Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences", May 2008), I am working on my second one, and I got a job for next academic year at the University of Houston, Texas. I will teach on ethics and social responsibility in science and I am truly excited about this! I will see you all at HSS in November. You can still communicate with me via my U of M email account, which I keep as alumni. I always miss you.

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Don Opitz (2004)

Chicago, IL

This past year I went skiing: on the slippery slopes of school service! (How's that for alliteration?) But rather than complain, let's celebrate. DePaul's School for New Learning endured two major undertakings this year: a (successful) search for a new Dean and academic program review, an internal self-assessment that is part of our accreditation requirements. In this latter venture, I dredged up my data analysis skills to lead the team that wrote the student profile section of the report. The major finding is pretty common sense: adult students of the new millenium are not the same adult students of prior decades. Many more are transferring from community colleges; they are younger; they are more diverse; and more are pursuing online programs and attending full-time. In addition to this fun work, I chaired the B.A. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee (TLA), which oversees course review and transfer credit assessment (among other things) AND our school's Local Review Board, which advises on IRB applications before submission to the university board. Connected with my TLA work, I'm proud of my presentation to the school faculty that proposed our participation in a state-wide articulation agreement with community colleges; this smooths students' transfer between institutions. (The proposal passed.) I also enjoyed my service (really!) on the Academic Integrity Board, which conducts student hearings in cases of academic dishonesty (plagiarism and the like). I often complain that "they don't teach you about how to survive committee meetings in graduate school!" but, who would really want training for this stuff?

On other slopes, I offered a full complement of courses this year, with my favorites being "Cosmic History" (a largely historical perspective on cosmology), "Issues in Science and Religion" (an opportunity to question Gould's "Non-overlapping magisteria"), and "Quantitative Reasoning" (a fun approach in developing pre-calculus math skills).

Scholarship-wise, my attendance at a conference in England last summer resulted in a chapter (for an anthology) on the foundation of Cambridge's genetics department. My research in archives last summer has given me ample material for an article on horticultural education for women in England in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which is in progress. In the coming year I will be working on a proposal for a faculty leave in 2009-2010, during which I plan to focus on my book on country-house science (based on the dissertation). In addition to my history of science work, especially at DePaul, I've been consulting with departments on "Universal Design" in teaching and learning. An article I co-authored on this topic last year has just been reprinted in a collection put out by the Department of Postsecondary Teaching and Learning at the University of Minnesota.

In my spare time (ha!), I've been playing French horn with Ridgeville Band in Evanston and the Northwestern Summer Band. And, in the community garden plot this year, I had a bumper crop of zucchini!

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Paul Brinkman (2005)

Raleigh, NC

I am working as a vertebrate paleontology lab technician at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh. One of the best aspects of my present job is the opportunity to do all kinds of fieldwork, especially in the Triassic of North Carolina, the Cretaceous of Montana, and - my long-time favorite - the Oligocene of Nebraska. I'm also going to Peru to look for fossil birds in August-September. I never seem to have enough time for history of science, but I do what I can. I'm still hopeful that my dissertation will soon see the light of day.

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Juliet Burba (2005)

St. Paul, MN

The Twin Cities continue to be home for me and Richard, but the past year was full of other changes.

Last fall, I left my position as an exhibit developer at the Science Museum of Minnesota, where my major project was an exhibit on race. (The exhibition is touring the U.S. for the next several years; if you have a chance to see it, please drop me a line and let me know what you think of it.) That fall, I returned to the HST program for a semester to teach the history of ecology and environmentalism course while Susan Jones was away. January, 2008 brought yet another career change when I became the curator of exhibits and instruments at the Bakken, a museum and library focused on the history of "electricity in life." For those of you unfamiliar with this small gem of a museum, the Bakken has a unique artifact collection focused on electrical medical/ therapeutic devices and 18th- and 19th-century electrical instruments and an extensive library with electricity-related materials from the 18th-, 19th-, and early 20th-centuries. Now I'm learning about all things electrical, continuing to work on exhibits, and learning to manage a historical collection.

Our (non-human) family expanded by two this year with the arrival of our two horses, Darwin and Noah. Caring for them has been a fun and occasionally trying experience, and sometimes seems to take almost as much effort as human children, without diapers and college expenses.

I look forward to seeing you all in Pittsburgh.

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Georgina Montgomery (2005)

East Lansing, MI

Well a lot has happened this year. I am now a tenure-track assistant professor in Lyman Briggs and History at Michigan State University, and Bob and I have brought our first home. Looking to the year ahead, I am giving a talk about Dian Fossey and the wildlife TV series *Wild Kingdom* at the Film and History Conference and a talk about a mountain gorilla called Congo at the 2008 HSS meeting. This summer has been spent writing as I am submitting my Fossey article for publication and also writing a book chapter about teaching Animal Histories with Linda Kalof, professor of sociology here at MSU. My work concerning animal histories will be further expanded in the spring when I will be using funds from a teaching award from the Humane Society of the United States and grant money from the Culture and Animals Foundation to host an animal histories conference at MSU. Other adventures should include a summer 2009 trip to Amboseli, Kenya, to spend time at the Amboseli Baboon Project. This trip will enable me to finish my book manuscript, *Seeing Primates Scientifically*.

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Olivia Walling (2005)

Santa Barbara, CA

I am a lecturer in the Writing Program at the University of California, Santa Barbara. I received my Ph.D. from University of Minnesota in 2005, and I use my degree and my background as a lawyer to teach scientific, engineering, and legal writing. I am also an active researcher in the field of scientific discourse. My book chapter with Paul M. Rogers, "Writing, Knowledge Making, and Learning to Write in College: Insights from an Historical Perspective", is forthcoming in *Writing in the Knowledge Society*. I also have an article under review, "Writing Is a Knowledge-Making Tool: An Historical Study of Nuclear Energy Level Diagrams."

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Ronald Frazzini (2006)

Plymouth, MN

Culminating this coming October with a paper to the University of New Mexico Conference on Mentoring, the past year has been mostly occupied with research on mentoring for the Office of Student Affairs. It is a broad ranging project directed toward the impact of different types of mentoring on student engagement and retention. Starting a new project this past June, I have been part of a team researching and writing the history of the Institute of Technology at the University of Minnesota, a project centered at the Babbage Institute. Spanning a year and a half, it will include academics, social events, growth of the colleges, industry and government relations as well as many other aspects of the seventy-five year history of the Institute. Finally, in January I begin co-teaching a course in the Graduate Liberal Studies program at Metropolitan State University. Entitled "Technological Momentum and User Voices," it is a broad look at technology and society from historical and cultural viewpoints.

I continue to fence (the sport got Olympic Gold this year for the U.S.), participate in a couple of mentoring programs on campus and sing with a community chorus. Travel and the grandkids also occupy some time.

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Susan Rensing (2006)

Mississippi State, MS

This past year I served as the Director of Gender Studies during the spring semester. The highlight of that experience was coordinating the events for our Women's History Month keynote speaker, Vanita Gupta, whose work in Tulia, Texas is currently making its way onto film. This summer I got a grant from the University of Wisconsin library to do research and writing in Madison. In June, I presented at the Berkshires in Minneapolis in a session entitled, "Sexual Science Revisited" with Cynthia Russett. In September, I'll be back in Madison presenting at the Science and Print Culture conference where I hope to see some Minnesota folks. I'm still working on the book, *Sexual Eugenics*, and have a couple articles that will emerge from the hopper this year. In my spare time, I am playing a lot of guitar and trying to learn the "chicken pickin'" fingerstyle.

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Soma Banerjee (2007)

Vancouver, BC

My academic trajectory has become more like a dispersion experiment, having a dissertating velocity found in a scattering medium of infinite refractive index. Internalistic as it may sound, I've enjoyed my first year at the History Department at the University of British Columbia studying history of physics in South Asia's context. Apart from taking classes in theoretical topics like Nationalism, I was also a TA for an introductory class on HPS titled: "The Evolution of Anti-Evolution", which was quite a learning experience. Thanks to Alexei, I attended the annual Qualicum Student-Faculty History Conference on Vancouver Island in January 2008. I have also started working with the Graduate Student Society acting as an Event Coordinator.

Laxmi and I have enjoyed the climate and natural ambience of Vancouver. We are now the foster parents of a bunny (named it Anna) from a small animal rescue society and we have a good time together. In Vancouver they say getting a reasonably priced apartment for rent is harder than writing a dissertation; with the former accomplished, the latter does not seem too far away. Sometimes I miss my Minnesotan academic life with my partners of crime dispersed mostly in the Mid-West, eh!!

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Faculty Updates

Jennifer Alexander

I am on sabbatical leave this academic year. I continue research on the project "Sport and Work", which analyzes the international biomechanics movement of the twentieth century and concentrates on labor and sport physiology during World War II and the Cold War. The project investigates the years when preeminence in the field shifted from German to American researchers. I am also beginning work on a project at the intersection of technology and religion, in the form of the Committee on Technology and Social Justice of the World Council of Churches in the post-war decades. Jacques Ellul, eminent French critic of technology and influential in both the history and philosophy of technology, was a prominent member of the group. This project investigates the juncture of technological and theological orthodoxies in a time of political and social tension.

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Mark E. Borrello

I can't believe it's time for another update already – let's see what I can reconstruct. The HSS meeting in DC was great – Gina Rumore, Rachel Mason Dentinger and Georgina Montgomery put together a great session and I was very pleased to think that I had some connection to each of their projects. As a still relatively new member of the faculty I feel very fortunate to be identified with such promising young scholars. I also had an excellent time at Michael Ruse's Werkmeister HPS workshop in March. We discussed the relationship between history and philosophy of science and all agreed to the possibility that such existed. I think we also agreed that the barbeque brisket was almost as good as the barbeque chicken. This summer we visited my family in Hawai'i in early June and returned to the Evolution 2008 meeting hosted by the University of Minnesota. The meeting was great and the Minnesota Citizens for Science Education pre-conference workshop that I helped organize was enthusiastically received. I'm looking forward to an action packed year coordinating the historiography seminar in the fall and feting Darwin's bi (his birthday) and sesqui

(publication of The Origin) centennials.

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Michel Janssen

Suzy and I are excited to be spending a sabbatical in Berlin, recently declared the cultural capital of the world by the New York Times. To make this possible, Suzy had to quit her job at what used to be ADCS. Despite seven years of impeccable service, the U flatly refused to give her an unpaid leave of absence. We won't let it spoil our year in Berlin. I'll be working at the Max Planck Institute for History of Science (MPIWG) in Dahlem. Within 24 hours of his arrival at airport Schoenefeld, Luc started high school at the German-American John F. Kennedy school in Zehlendorf. I'm sure Suzy will find plenty to do as well. She deserves the credit for finding us a bright and spacious apartment in Steglitz with an easy commute for both me and Luc. My first order of business is to finish the Cambridge Companion to Einstein, which is badly overdue. Once that's done, I return to history of quantum mechanics, the topic of one of the main projects of Juergen Renn's department in the institute ([website](#)). After being involved with two conferences on the topic in Berlin (HQ0 and HQ1) and one in Utrecht (HQ2), I'm down for the organization of HQ3 in Minnesota in July 2010. A paper with Pitt theorist Tony Duncan based on our HQ2 talk appeared in the most recent issue of Studies in History and Philosophy of Modern Physics (SHPMP). I got some experience with conference organization this past year, organizing two of them, one with Antigone Nounou on Harvey Brown's book on special relativity and my first Seven Pines symposium as Roger Stuewer's successor as head of the Seven Pines Board on cosmology. The lengthy paper based on the talk I gave at the former will appear soon in SHPMP. The talk I gave at the latter provided me with yet another opportunity to rehearse key parts of my chapter on general relativity for the Einstein Companion. Two conferences and two articles: not bad for a year in which I expected only to finish my pre-sabbatical burn-out. Now that I am actually on sabbatical, I trust colleagues and graduate students alike will enjoy the break from my dubious antics (especially during colloquia). In fact, I worry they'll enjoy my replacement, Kalil Oldham, a little too much! Let me therefore warn everybody not to count their chickens before they hatch: I'll be back (assuming Obama wins).

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Susan Jones

This past year has been a transition time for the Program and for my work as well. This past summer, I have been immersed in finishing my book manuscript, *Death in a Small Package: a History of Anthrax*, which I am about to send to Johns Hopkins University Press. Just as I was working on my last chapter, new information emerged from the FBI investigation of the 2001 postal attacks. We historians are not often writing as events are unfolding, but this is exactly what I found myself doing during the month of August. It has been very stimulating, raising issues such as the standard of validation for scientists versus law enforcement and the difficulties for scientists who work with dual-use agents (microbes that can cause "natural" disease or can be used as weapons). I have also combined very recent genomic and ecological information about anthrax with my historical analysis, so that the book ends up being a "biography" of the bacillus, the disease, and human interactions with them. I have an article coming out in September's *Isis* on anthrax research and outbreaks in the nineteenth century, and I will also publish something next year about the FBI investigation, just before the book's release. All of this activity has been nurtured by the interest of my colleagues, the graduate students here in the Program, and several of you alums out there. It's a great intellectual community, and this year I feel especially fortunate to be a part of it.

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Sally Gregory Kohlstedt

While David stayed on as head of Geology and Geophysics in 2007-2008, I took a sabbatical leave in order to finish two articles and my book manuscript on nature study and do the preliminary work for new projects. I spent two months in the fall in Washington, just three blocks from the Library of Congress and near the Eastern Market and Metro, circumstances that kept me productive and put me in touch with various friends and colleagues, including Kai and his family, who lived in walking distance. In January, I left for New Zealand, where I spent five months (fall semester) at the University of Auckland and taught a seminar with a colleague, Ruth Barton. When school was not in session, I lectured and did research in Wellington and Christchurch. The sabbatical adventure ended when David, Kris, and Kurt joined me to tour North Island and then visit Queenstown, with skiing on the 4th of July; and the younger set bungee jumped. All in all, a good break before I returned to direct our program for the next five years. With several graduate students in final stages of the dissertation and new ones originating projects and plans to reorganize my course on Science in American Culture, I anticipate a busy year. It is good to be back and working directly again with students and faculty as we continue to build and strengthen our program. I also intend to continue to work on those research notes that came back with me from Down Under even as I revise the book manuscript and make plans for our program.

Sally at the History Department at the University of Auckland

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Tom Misa

HST faculty Bob Seidel and I are leading an eighteen-month effort to research and document the history of the Institute of Technology, which will celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2010. We are working with HST graduate students Maggie Hofius and Nathan Crowe, as well as HST alum Ron Frazzini, in conducting research in the existing archival collections, identifying and collecting new materials held by faculty and offices around IT, and conducting a set of oral-history interviews. Our project will culminate in a 100-page illustrated history on the history of the Institute of Technology, its predecessors and its activities over the years. Themes receiving early attention include university-industry relations, university-government interactions (state and federal), transformation of student life, changes in the curriculum, the rise of engineering research, and the place of women and minorities in IT.

The Charles Babbage Institute was recently awarded a three-year grant to continue its examination of NSF's FastLane. With the assistance also of CBI's Jeffrey Yost and HST graduate student Joline Zepcevski, the project is creating a set of software tools that will enable web-based collection of interview-type data. The project will also conduct traditional person-to-person interviews with NSF staff members, principal investigators and staff members of sponsored-projects offices at universities around the country. Of particular concern is whether FastLane altered the research activities of minority serving institutions or other under-resourced universities. The project also aims to identify and present lessons about user-centered computer design that can be helpful in the present efforts to create and use cyber-infrastructures in the nation's research enterprise.

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Bob Seidel

I spent my sabbatical reading, writing and repairing houses that had been damaged by Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi and New Orleans. Some of the reading was



done at the Chemical Heritage Foundation in Philadelphia and at the Hagley Library in Wilmington, Delaware and most of the writing took place in my basement which, for the first time, did not flood this summer.



We've launched a project to write a history of the Institute of Technology for its 75th anniversary with Tom Misa, Maggie Hofius, Nathan Crowe and Ron Frazzini. Although the project is just coming back from a summer shakedown cruise, it looks like it will be smooth sailing with this great crew.

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Alan E. Shapiro

This year I edited two special issues of journals. The first, "Kepler, Optical Imagery, and the Camera Obscura" in *Early Science and Medicine* (no. 4, 2008), presents three papers from a fun workshop on the camera obscura that I attended in Berlin in July 2005. My paper is on the development of the concepts of real and virtual image in the 17th century. The second (co-edited with Jed Buchwald), "The Legacy of Newton's *Opticks*," should appear soon in *Perspectives on Science* and gathers papers from a Dibner Institute conference held to mark the 300th anniversary of the publication of Newton's *Opticks*. My contribution is on the composition of the *Opticks*. As soon as classes ended in the spring, Linda and I left for Provence, which we had never visited. When we visit a place that is as highly touted as Provence, we are often disappointed, but not this time. Finding our way in France by car was a little nerve wracking, but definitely the way to go. After that we spent five pleasant days in Paris, where I had a meeting.

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Current Student Updates

Frazier Benya

I will be a fourth year this fall and can now say that I have finished all my class requirements. This summer I was fortunate to receive a summer research fellowship from the department. I was able to research the literature in my areas of interest and begin selecting a dissertation topic. My research is focusing on the development of federal regulation of human experimentation and the influence of the field of bioethics on biomedical research and science policy.

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Sara Cammeresi

This year I continue research for my dissertation on the early modern Jesuits. I will also begin my second year as the publications assistant for the Center for Early Modern History.

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Nathan Crowe

Well, my first two years have gone by pretty fast here in Minnesota. As the summer begins to melt away into the fall, I am in the middle of completing my prelims. I am one of the guinea pigs for the new prelim system, and it has been an interesting experience as my advisers and I have negotiated these new expectations. I should be finished with all my papers and exams by November and plan to attend several major conferences this year. I hope that when I see many of you there that I have a clearer idea of a dissertation topic than I do now. This fall I also left the ranks of the TAs and have become an RA working on a new project led by Tom Misa and Bob Seidel. We will be researching and writing the history of IT here at the University of Minnesota. I am looking forward to working on my first collaborative history project.

On a personal note, I am also getting married at the end of September to my girlfriend, Stephanie. She is one of the archivists at the Charles Babbage Institute and many of you have already met her, as she is an active participant in many of our department activities. This fall has certainly shaped up to be a season of transition for me!

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Adrian Fischer

It has been a very interesting past year. I am on the cusp of changing the direction of my studies. Therefore, I need to take more classes in the fall. I spent the summer in Berlin and kept myself busy in the libraries.

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Suzanne Fischer

I was recently appointed Associate Curator of Technology at the Henry Ford Museum, in Dearborn, MI, where I will be working on the history of recent technology, digital collections, and other projects. This is also a great opportunity to move back to my hometown of Detroit, where I hope to become involved in urban agriculture, bicycle activism and local history projects.

In other professional news, I spoke at the Midwest Junto meeting this spring, have been serving as an officer of the HSS Graduate and Early Career Caucus, attended the American Association of Museums annual meeting on an "emerging museum professional" fellowship, and have organized a session for HSS in Pittsburgh. I also spent several months this year in Rochester, MN, working on an archival project at the Mayo Clinic. I will defend in the early fall.

I urge everyone to come to Detroit and visit me at the museum!

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Amy Fisher

I had a dissertation fellowship last year and made good progress on my thesis. I am a TA in the History of Medicine program this fall and working towards completing a draft of my dissertation

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Xuan Geng

This fall I will start my second year in the program of HSTM. During this summer break, I returned to China and worked on narrowing down my research topic. I interviewed several biologists and learnt many interesting stories about biological sciences in Mao's China. I also learned more about utilizing archives.

This summer everyone in Beijing was involved in the Olympic Games. Actually the Olympic Events brought troubles to our life and to my information collecting. Nonetheless, I joined in the excitement. The Ping-Pong Games were held in Peking University, my undergraduate University. It was my first time to be so close to the Olympics.

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Maggie Hofius

It has been a highly productive year and summer for me. I have come closer to completing my coursework (one more semester to go!). This summer I received a fellowship from the program that allowed me to spend some time looking at the dynamics between Soviet scientists and their colleagues in Western Europe and the United States during the period between the First and Second World Wars.

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Kate Jirik

I have been in the program for five years and after this coming year I will finally be able to be a third year student. I have been working on figuring out a dissertation topic. It is going to look at institutions for people with mental retardation at the turn of the twentieth century. I am still refining the exact focus. I gave a talk at the Midwest Junto meeting on some of my preliminary findings regarding the first ten years of the Association of Medical Officers of American Institutions of Idiotic and Feeble-minded Persons which was established in 1876. I went to HSS in Washington D.C. and was lucky enough to have two days for sightseeing before the conference. I saw FDR's wheelchair, which was one of the highlights for me.

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Rachel Mason Dentinger

Since moving to Canada, I have visited the far northern reaches of Quebec (the southern reaches of Hudson Bay) and seen quite a bit of Ontario beyond the sprawling Toronto metro area. Last fall I traveled back to the States a few times, presenting at HSS and continuing research for my dissertation on coevolutionary studies in the late 20th century. My final research trip was my most exciting interview yet, with ecologist Dan Janzen at the University of Pennsylvania. In early 2008, I traveled to Ecuador to help Bryn study a genus of orchids thought to mimic mushrooms. Though not

directly related to my dissertation, I consider this trip to have enhanced my research, since this is (purportedly) a coevolved system!

Though it appears that we have spent much of the last year trying to escape Toronto, Bryn and I have actually learned to enjoy living here (though, admittedly, we still consider “How Torontonians!” to be the ultimate insult). We will be here for at least another year, while Bryn continues his post-doc at the Royal Ontario Museum. I am turning out dissertation chapters and starting a new job, helping to reconstruct a first-year biology course for the University of Toronto’s Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology.

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Hyung Wook Park

Last year was perhaps the busiest time for me. I wrote my dissertation, and submitted one chapter for publication in the *Journal of the History of Biology (JHB)*, another to the Nathan Reingold Prize Committee in the History of Science Society (HSS). Fortunately, both of my attempts were successful. My article on the birth of the science of aging in America was accepted for publication in the *JHB*, and my manuscript was chosen for the Reingold Prize during the last year’s HSS meeting held at Washington, D.C. I also gave several presentations at the meetings of various national and international academic societies, such as the American Association for the History of Medicine, the International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology, the Society for Social Studies of Science, and the History of Science Society.

I have finished writing and revising my dissertation about the early history of gerontology, the science of aging, in the United States and the United Kingdom. I hope that I can successfully defend it soon.

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Barbara Reiterer

At the beginning of my second year in the program, I am looking back to an exciting and productive first year and expect no less from the upcoming one. I am interested in European female social scientists (with a focus on sociologists) who immigrated to the United States between 1920 and 1950. Over the last year, I had the chance to investigate this issue for a research paper with a specific focus on Minnesota. Even though, for my dissertation, I will apply a broader perspective, looking at immigrant women social scientists at the University of Minnesota suggested some interesting general topics to explore, e.g. the relationship between sociology and social work, gender relations within this structure, the differences between European and American social sciences in the first half of the 20th century, and the significance of the migration experience for the careers of these women and the disciplines they worked in.

I presented my thoughts on this topic at a conference of the Research Committee on the History of Sociology of the International Sociological Association held in Sweden in the summer of 2008.

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