From the Chair

Thanks to the patience and generosity of my colleagues and to the skill of the office staff, I survived my first year as chair without any major mishaps. I am especially grateful to Myrtle Doaks, Jeanette Torok, and Tori Davies for their expert handling of daily affairs, and to Chris Hamlin and Dan Graff for their superb stewardship of our graduate and undergraduate programs, respectively. I hope no one figures out that I am the least important person in 219 O’Shaughnessy!

We had a great year as a department. You will read lots of interesting and impressive details in the pages to follow, but I want to take this opportunity to highlight a few developments.

Topping my list are promotions. Karen Graubart was awarded tenure — she joined us as an associate professor — and Margaret Meserve was awarded tenure and promoted to associate professor. They are outstanding historians and increasingly indispensable members of the department. Karen recently has won major fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Philosophical Society, and the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University. Margaret won the American Historical Association’s Helen & Howard R. Marraro Prize and the Renaissance Society of America’s Phyllis Goodhart Gordan Book Prize for her *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought*, published by Harvard University Press.

Next on my list are appointments. The eminent and prolific Felipe Fernández-Armesto taught in Notre Dame’s London program last winter and joined us on campus this fall. He insists that he is a microhistorian because he only studies one planet. John Deak, who received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 2009, joins us to teach German, Austrian, and central European history. He is particularly interested in liberal reforms, bureaucracy, and democracy in Habsburg Austria. Lauren Faulkner, a 2009 Brown University Ph.D., comes to us as a specialist in modern German history and the Holocaust. Her dissertation studied Catholic priests in the German army during the Nazi period. Rory Rapple, trained in British and Irish history in Dublin and Cambridge, spent two years as a visiting faculty member in the department but now takes up a tenure-track position. His book *Martial Power and Elizabethan Political Culture: Military Men in England and Ireland, 1558–1594* was issued by Cambridge in 2009.

Lastly, the accomplishments and activities of both our faculty and students continued to spread the department’s reputation well beyond campus. Remie Constable was elected a fellow of the Medieval Academy of America. Several faculty published new books. Patrick Griffin got some good press for his *American Leviathan: Empire, Nation, and Revolutionary Frontier*, which was released by Hill and Wang in 2008. Mark Noll gave lectures all over the country. George Marsden’s retirement was celebrated with an outstanding conference. Our graduate students kept winning prizes and getting jobs. A couple of undergraduates from the class of 2009 are now in prestigious graduate programs, and current senior James Hrdlicka, who is on the department’s honors track, received a Beinecke Scholarship for graduate study.

As you can see, this is a time of great excitement and energy for the department and for the University. If you’re on campus, please stop by and see us.

Thomas F.X. Noble
Professor and Chair
My sense after an initial year as director of graduate studies in the Department of History is primarily one of vicarious exhaustion. The 72 students in the Ph.D. program, along with another dozen or so from the Program in the History and Philosophy of Science (HPS) and the Medieval Institute, were regularly rushing off to conferences, workshops, and archives—mostly (but not always) in places more exotic than South Bend. They sent off papers, won fellowships, and fascinate them, and they are my sense after an initial year as director of Graduate Studies.

I write from the experience of working with two incoming classes, of 15 in 2008 and 14 in 2009. Both are larger than what has commonly been the case in a range of other fields, too: the later medieval Mediterranean, the early phase of Spanish colonization, modern Ireland and Russia, and the ethnic and environmental history of the United States. This year, two of our students are from a new program in history and peace studies.

Structural changes undertaken four years ago have become traditions. Our first- and second-year students now have a common course together in each of their first three semesters. These have led, as they were intended to do, to a greater emphasis on what historians share over the specialized questions that divide (and fascinate) them, and they are means to combat the centrifugal tendencies of graduate study. One of last year’s highlights was an end-of-year symposium, magnificently orchestrated by Professor Patrick Griffin, that was dedicated to first-year research papers, with two commentaries on each—one from the perspective of a nearby field and the other by a colleague whose work is more remotely related. Both papers and commentaries were strong; they sparked widely ranging discussion among other students and faculty alike. Another highlight was a graduate student conference, “From Res Publica to the Republic of Letters: The Common Good in Transition and Translation,” held in early October 2008. Our seven graduate student organizers (including two from HPS) raised funds for the conference, which featured four eminent plenary speakers and 27 student presentations. A second such conference, “The Center Cannot Hold: The Movement of Ideas Between Imperial Centers and Peripheries,” took place this October. Here, too, the lineup and organization were most impressive. As an antidote to the isolating effects of 24/7 fixation on a dissertation topic, advanced students met as the Dissertation Writers’ Seminar, most notably for caffeine-intensive breakfasts to grapple about the general frustrations of dissertationing but also to move beyond the trees to see their own and others’ forests once again. And, hidden away in South Bend and elsewhere, several finished the Ph.D.: Ben Finkpatrick and Micaela Larkin in the fall, Sean Brennan in the spring, and Gavin Foster, Matt Salafia, Michael Lee, and Martin Beisswenger during the summer. We congratulate all of them.

From the Director of Graduate Studies

2008–09 Departmental Graduate Prizes

Martin Beisswenger
Siegfried Kantz

Gavin Foster
Micaela Larkin

Now an assistant professor at the University of Scranton
Benjamin Fitzpatrick
Dissertation: “Negroes for Sale: The Slave Trade in Antebellum Kentucky”
Now an assistant professor at Florida State College at Jacksonville

Christopher Hamlin
Professor and Director of Graduate Studies

DESANTIS PRIZE
Best unpublished essay by a graduate student
Joshua Kercmar
“Absence Does Not Make the Heart Grow Fonder: The Conflicted Legacy of Perry Miller and the Re-visioning of Early New England”

The prize committee writes: “That Perry Miller once stood among the greatest historians of early America almost one doubts. That his work still influences historians today is by no means obvious. In this impressive and lucidly written historiographic essay, Joshua Kercmar enters the debate over Miller’s stature today. On the basis of a comprehensive survey of historians and shrewd analysis of histories, Kercmar persuasively shows where and how Miller still matters—and where not. Kercmar’s essay takes in place as the most reliable assessment of Miller’s current influence. It richly merits publication in alreadying journal.”

GLEASON PRIZE
Best published essay by a graduate student
Michael Lee
“Higher Criticism and Higher Education at the University of Chicago: William Rainey Harper’s Vision of Religion in the Research University”

Appeared in History of Education Quarterly (November 2008)

The prize committee writes: “This article attempts to shift the terms of debate over the historical tension between reason and faith in higher education. The author finds that the person behind the founding of what could be considered the preeminent secular research institution, the University of Chicago, saw no such tension. Focusing on William Rainey Harper’s ideas about Christianity, the author demonstrates that the University of Chicago was established as a research university to save Christianity. Reason and faith for Harper went hand in hand, suggesting that the ways we normally conceive of the history of higher education—a zero-sum game between rational truth and superstitious faith—needs to be reformulated. This article is a good start in that effort at reconceptualization.”

Ph.D. Recipients, 2008–09

Matt Salafia
Recipient of the Richard Ward Award for the best article published in the journal Ohio Valley History over the previous two years

David Swartz
Dissertation: “Left Behind: The Evangelical Left and the Limits of Evangelical Politics”
Now a postdoctoral fellow at Notre Dame

Tammy Van Dyken
Dissertation: “In the Sweet Bye and Bye”
Now a postdoctoral fellow at Seattle Pacific University

J ohn H ighbarg er M emorial Dissertation Award

David Swartz

The prize committee writes: “Swartz’s dissertation will be a major contribution to two fields: the study of (usually right-wing) evangelical politics and the history of the New Left, which has often forgotten its religious allies. Marshalling an impressive array of sources, from university, church, and grassroots movement archives to oral histories and interviews to the burgeoning literatures on postwar politics in the U.S., Swartz complicates the study of the evangelical right by reminding us that it was preceded by an energetic and colorful leftist movement, which fragmented and dispersed in the fray of identity politics in the 1980s. We have no doubt that this weighty tome will revise our understanding of recent U.S. history as well as the study of religion and politics.”

New Faculty: Rory Rappe, Lauren Faulkner, John Deak
From the Director of Undergraduate Studies

The past academic year was impressive for history majors, many of whom I got to know well. Among the seniors, 49 graduated as members of the Phi Alpha Theta national history honor society, and 16 completed senior honor theses in our History Honors Program. Dozens of majors participated in the broader intellectual life of the community by presenting original research at the Undergraduate Scholars Conference and engaging in our Exploring History Beyond the Classroom program. The measures of a successful academic year, however, lay in less numbers than in the quality of the intellectual experience. In 2008–09 history majors took advantage of the resources offered by our department to pursue their passion for history. One history major who seized the opportunities available at Notre Dame is one of the intellectual community itself. In this particular issue of a journal, I would like to describe a bit about our fall programming.

As the 2009–10 History Club president, I am excited to share some of our goals for the club and to describe a bit about our fall programming.

My name is Amy Holt, and I’m a senior history major writing an honors thesis about family life during the American Civil War. My vice president is Ally Minnich, a junior history and psychology major; our secretary is Carly Anderson, a sophomore history major, and our treasurer is Jim Napier, a senior history major. We have taken it upon ourselves to revitalize the History Club, beginning with club membership. We now have more than 110 members, mostly history majors who nevertheless have diverse interests ranging from anthropology to business to political science to biology. A major goal for the club is to foster student-faculty interaction, especially outside of the classroom, in order to encourage students’ research ambitions and allow them to benefit from the experiences of our wonderful faculty. Through our monthly “Dinner With a Professor” series, the first installment of which was held this September, students already have shared a meal with Tom Noble and John Deak, Sabine MacCormack and Felipe Fernández-Armesto, and John McGerr — who is also dean of the College of Arts and Letters — and Lauren Faulkner. Another of our goals is to encourage a lively interest in history and the history community here at Notre Dame. To that end, we’ve commissioned t-shirts imprinted with Churchill’s remark “History will be kind to me, for I intend to write it,” which we will distribute to club members as well as interested majors and faculty to promote the history department on campus.

Of course, we continue to sponsor traditional events, such as the major-to-major advising prior to class registration. Not so traditionally, though, we took a trip to Chicago to experience the “Abraham Lincoln Transformed” exhibit and an Untouchables gangster tour, featuring Al Capone and his cronies; back on campus, we just hosted a highly anticipated Guy Fawkes Day bonfire.

We are grateful to the history department faculty and staff, particularly Dan Graff, our advisor, for his advice and experience; Jeannette Torok, for all her cooperation and enthusiasm; and Professor Noble, for his tireless encouragement of undergraduates. If you would like more information about the History Club (or about the undergraduate history experience), please feel free to contact me at histclb@nd.edu. Amy Holt ’10, senior, History Club president.

Beinecke Scholarship
Encourages highly motivated juniors to pursue opportunities in a graduate course of study in the arts, humanities, or social sciences

James Hrdlicka

2009 Undergraduate Awards

DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS

Senior Honor’s Thesis Award
Best essay by a senior history honors student
Allyson Brantley
“Rebellion as Entertainment: Tijuana’s Tourist Industry, 1880–1910, and the 1911 Insurrection in Baja California” (Thesis Supervisor: Ted Beatty)

Monsignor Francis A. O’Brien Award
Best essay by a senior history major
Brian Corrigan
“Let Us Do Whatever It Takes: The Strategic and Domestic Implications of Lyndon Johnson’s Space Policy” (Originally written for John Soares’ seminar on “The Cold War,” Spring 2009)

Laura Yamartino
“A Turning Point in the Campaign for Equality: An Analysis of the ERA Ratification Campaign in Indiana” (Originally written for John Soares’ seminar on “The Cold War,” Spring 2009)

EXTERNAL AWARDS

Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship (Spain)
To assist permanent teaching staff in either a secondary or elementary school
Laura Yamartino

Humanity In Action Fellowship
Provides domestic and international experiences focusing on minority issues that affect cultural and national assumptions, political and educational institutions, and human rights standards
Allyson Brantley

Lilly Graduate Fellowship
Supports exceptionally well-qualified students who are entering Ph.D. or equivalent graduate programs in the humanities or the arts and who are interested in becoming teacher-scholars at church-related universities
Heidi Hauser

NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship
Awarded to student-athletes who excel academically and athletically and who are in their final year of intercollegiate athletics competition
Patrick Smyth

Class of 2009 Honors Track

Jaime Amrhein
“For or Against Smith: Defending the Southern Way of Life in the 1928 Election”

Colleen Anderson
“Changing Narratives of War: Memory and Memorials in Twentieth-Century Hamburg, Germany”

Michael Angulo
“Resisting Neoliberalism: The Movement Against Water Privatization in El Salvador”

Brian Beyersdorf
“The Press, Al Smith and the Election of 1928”

Allyson Brantley
“Rebellion as Entertainment: Tijuana’s Tourist Industry, 1880–1910, and the 1911 Insurrection in Baja California”

Thomas Foley
“A Study of Atlanta Newspapers’ Coverage of Selected Nazi Anti-Semitic Actions, 1933–1935”

Brittany Fox
“Through British Eyes: Turn-of-the-Century British Representations of the Empress Dowager of China”

Patrick Garland
“Peace Through Strength: Ronald Reagan and the Transformation of United States’ Foreign Policy”

Heidi Hauser
“The Emperor Remembered: Reagan and the Transformation of the New World Order”

EXTERNAL AWARDS

Beinecke Scholarship
Encourages highly motivated juniors to pursue opportunities in a graduate course of study in the arts, humanities, or social sciences

James Hrdlicka

Funeral Procession of Charles V

John Hennessey
“Colony Versus Motherland: Political Tensions Between French Indochina and Vichy France, 1939–1941”

Melissa Lee

Peter Leonard
“The End of Times: Protestant Postmillennialism’s Explanation of Civil War Death”

Christopher Reidy
“Cardinal Francesco Tedeschi (Pius III) and the Papal Bulls in the Sixteenth Century”

Brian Sarnacki
“A Not So Golden Oldie?: Rethinking the Golden Age of Capitalism Through the 1959 St. Louis Newspaper Guild Strike”

Laura Srebro
“Images of Fascism: A Comparative Study of Fascist Propaganda in Spain and Germany, 1918–1945”

Joseph Stranix
“I Am Willing to Defend My Country Again If Necessary: The American Legion, Duty and the Patriotic Perception of Jehovah’s Witnesses”

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Faculty Notes

Ted Beatty completed his two-year term as acting director of Notre Dame’s Kellogg Institute for International Studies in 2008–09 and returned to his life as a historian over the summer. His brief encounters with the profession last year included the very rewarding experience of advising two history honors theses. His article “Boots for Beer: The Business of Technological Innovation in Mexico, 1890–1920” appeared in the summer 2009 issue of Business History Review. Ted is on leave in 2009–10, spending half the year as a visiting scholar at the Instituto de Iberoamérica at the University of Salamanca.

Gail Bederman is writing a two-volume history of the earliest public advocacy of contraception in Britain and the United States, a project for which she won a grant from the American Council of Learned Societies. This research concentrates on the forgotten interactions of William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft, T.R. Malthus, Francis Place, Richard Carlile, Robert Dale Owen, and Frances Wright. The first volume, The Worst Sort of Property: Population, Marriage, and Sexual Interests in Victorian America, 1790–1850, is nearly complete, and Gail began working on volume two, titled The Very First Reproductive Rights: The History and Practice of History, over the summer.

Rev. Thomas Blantz, C.S.C., continues to teach his courses on 20th-century American history as well as a graduate research seminar in the history of Notre Dame. His article “James Gillespie Blaine, His Family, and ‘Romanticism’” was the cover story for the October 2008 issue of The Catholic Historical Review.

Jon Coleman is still at work on his biography of Hugh Glass, mountain man and grizzly bear victim. Last fall, he spoke at Glass at Yale University and about wolves at Rockhurst University. He also joined the editorial board of Reviews in American History.

Remie Constable was named acting director of the University’s Medieval Institute in July 2008; she started a five-year term as Robert M. Conway Director in July 2009. With her appointment, the last four faculty to head the institute have been members of the Department of History. In March 2009, Remie was also elected a fellow of the Medieval Academy of America. Meanwhile, she continues to teach and to work on a book examining the daily life of Muslim communities living under Christian rule in southern Europe during the later Middle Ages.

John Deak joined the department this fall, having earned his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago over the summer. His dissertation focuses on the interplay between democratic development and bureaucratization in the Habsburg Empire. In addition to starting to revise it for publication, he is working on two article-length projects on Austrian constitutional history. During his first semester at Notre Dame, John is teaching a course for history majors on 18th- and 19th-century German history as well as a University Seminar on the philosophy and practice of history.

Vincent DeSantis (emeritus) continues to teach his popular course on the American presidency. He also is working on a number of essays on Gilded Age politics.

Lauren Faulkenrider received her doctorate from Brown University this past spring and will spend the summer polishing an article for publication in Contemporary European History; her paper examines the role of Bolshevism as ideological motivation for German Catholic priests and seminarians in the German armed forces during World War II. She was thrilled to join the Notre Dame faculty in the fall and is teaching an undergraduate class about modern genocide and a graduate seminar on readings in German history.

Felipe Fernández-Armesto, whose book 1492: The Year the World Began was just released by Harper Collins, started his tenure at Notre Dame in January 2009 at the University’s London Centre. Over the next couple of months, he gave lectures at Museo, Ateneo de Madrid, the University of Oxford, East Carolina University, the European University Institute, Universidad Pablo de Olavide, and the U.S. Air Force Academy. With a scholarly consortium based at the Radcliffe Institute (Harvard University), Felipe worked on a collaborative book, now nearing completion, on the problems of treating the pre-holocene past historically. He also joined the academic panel advising the government of Abu Dhabi on the creation of a museum of global history and continued to write regular columns for El Mundo, a Spanish national daily newspaper, and for the International Herald Tribune in the U.K. Two volumes he co-edited appeared from Ashgate Publishing Group, and he prepared a new edition of his textbook, The World, which was published by Pearson.

Dan Graff, director of undergraduate studies, supervises all aspects of the major program, including the department’s honors track and the History Alumni Network. In addition to teaching two classes each semester, he developed a course titled “Abraham Lincoln’s America, 1809–1865,” which he’s offering this fall. Dan also has been appointed associate director of the Higgins Labor Studies Program, an interdisciplinary research and education center at Notre Dame. At the annual Labor and Working-Class History Association conference in Chicago, he presented a paper on work, race, and violence in the 1830s. In the local community, he delivered talks on labor history at several places, including South Bend’s Center for the Homeless.

Karen Grabaur directed the University’s Latin American Studies Program last year and especially enjoyed leading students on a trip to the recent Aztec exhibit at the Field Museum in Chicago. Thanks to generous research support from the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Philosophical Society, and the John Carter Brown Library, she has just completed her dissertation on the pre-holocene past historically. Karen’s dissertation focuses on the interplay between democratic development and bureaucratization in the Habsburg Empire. In addition to starting to revise it for publication, she is working on two article-length projects on Austrian constitutional history. During his first semester at Notre Dame, John is teaching a course for history majors on 18th- and 19th-century German history as well as a University Seminar on the philosophy and practice of history.

Brad Gregory presented numerous invited lectures in 2008–09 related to his current book project on the long-term impact of the Reformation era on the Western world. These included talks to the departments of history and theology at the University of Oslo, the Center for European Studies at Stanford University, the Center for British Studies at UC–Berkeley, and the Early Modern Colloquium at Northwestern University as well as on a panel at the American Historical Association convention. Also at Stanford, he was one of four invited respondents to Roberto Unger’s Tanner Lecture on “The Future of Religion and the Religion of the Future.” Brad delivered the annual Newman Lecture at Yale University, giving a talk titled “Against Nostalgia: Catholicism, History, and Modernity,” and published two articles, one in History and Theory and the other in Historically Speaking.

Chris Hamlin, acting director of graduate studies, has interned work on the history of water and epidemiology with an ongoing project on natural theology. His book, Olores: The Biography, was just published by Oxford University Press, and his recent articles have appeared in the international journal Centaurus.

Asher Kaufman taught a new course in fall 2008 titled “The Middle East and the West.” He completed work on three articles, including “Forgetting the Lebanon War? On Silence, Denial and the Selective Remembrance of the ‘First’ Lebanon War” for the book Shadows of War (forthcoming from Cambridge University Press) as well as “‘Let Sleeping Dogs Lie’: On Ghajar and Other Anomalies in the Syria-Lebanon-Israel Tri-Border Region,” which appeared this fall in The Middle East Journal. Asher spent the spring semester on leave working on a book manuscript about the Syria-Lebanon-Israel Tri-Border Region.

Thomas Kelman was on sabbatical leave during the 2008–09 academic year with the support of a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities. He spent several months in France conducting archival research for his current project, which examines the history of religious liberty in France in the aftermath of the Revolution of 1789. While there, he gave a lecture at the University of Lyon based on an essay he wrote with Mark Noll, one of his colleagues at Notre Dame’s Department of History.

Mikolaj Kunicki was selected by the Japan Studies Association to participate in the Freeman Institute 2009, designed for those interested in incorporating Japan into their courses.

Semion Lyandres worked on his book The Fall of Tsarism: Untold Stories of the February 1917 Revolution while on leave in 2008–09. Co-editor of the international series Modern and Contemporary Russian History: Monographs and Documents and the new journal Modern Russian History and Historiography, he delivered a prestigious Mariano Miner Cook Athenaeum lecture at Claremont McKenna College in March. Semion recently brought yet another major library collection—this one of about 140,000 volumes—to Notre Dame in addition. He has also served as a commentator for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

Sabine MacCormack used her leave to continue her research on the Jesuits in the 16th-century Spanish world. She gave invited lectures at a symposium at the University of Florence and at the Denver Art Museum while also speaking about “Vergili in Italy’s 1826: Andrés Bello’s Ode to Tropical Agriculture” at Notre Dame’s “Italy” symposium. Her essay on “Classical Traditions in the Andes” appeared in the Guide to Documentary Sources for Andean America, 1534–1800, published by the University of Oklahoma Press. The editor of the Notre Dame Press monograph series Histories, Languages, and Cultures of the Spanish and Portuguese Worlds, Sabine has also worked on enhancing the collections of Notre Dame’s Hesburgh Libraries.
Alexander Martin went on leave in 2008–09 to write his new book on Moscow under enlightened absolutism from 1763–1811.

John McGreevy enjoyed his first year as dean of the College of Arts and Letters, although the stream of reports and memoranda crossing his desk occasionally made him pine for works of historical scholarship. A chapter of his Catholicism and American Freedom: A History, published by W.W. Norton in 2003, was translated into Italian, and he participated in roundtables for the journal Labor and the Villanova Law Review. John also lectured at the Museum of the City of New York and had the opportunity to visit Notre Dame’s vibrant study abroad program and research center in Uganda.

Margaret Meserve, who was promoted to associate professor with tenure in May, taught courses last year on the Italian Renaissance, Italian social history, and the history of the papacy and early modern Rome. Her book Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought, published by Harvard University Press and already the winner of the Helen & Howard R. Marraro Prize from the American Historical Association, recently was awarded the Renaissance Society of America’s Phyllis Goodhart Gordan Book Prize for the best book in Renaissance studies.

Rebecca Messler Henshaw was elected to the American Academy of Religion for her scholarship on the history of religious studies in the United States.

Thomas Murray is the author of the forthcoming Modernity: Concepts of Nature in Japanese Political Ideology, published by the University of California Press in 2002. He has been translated into Japanese, as has some of his work on museums. For the first time at Notre Dame, he had the pleasure of teaching graduate students, and she also created a new course on “Photography and Japanese History” for undergraduates.

Jim Turner finished a first draft of his history of philosophy and humanistic scholarship from antiquity to the 20th century, now under contract with Princeton University Press. In his effort to resolve remaining puzzles in this history, he traveled to Princeton to give a paper at the Davis Center for Historical Studies and to Dublin, Belfast, and London for more manuscript research. Three articles by his doctoral students were published or accepted for publication in History of Education Quarterly and Perspectives on the History of Higher Education. Jim acquired the large book collection of his own dissertation advisor, the late Donald Fleming, to add to the Hebsheh collection and to establish a new Department of History graduate student library.

John Van Engen spent fall 2008 at the University of Oxford courtesy of awards from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Council of Learned Societies; there he began a synthetic book on European culture and society in the 12th century. Meanwhile, his Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life, The Devotia Moderna and the World of the Later Middle Ages appeared from the University of Pennsylvania Press. By January or so, he hopes to complete the first reconstruction and translation (from Middle Dutch) of writings by a previously unknown female author named Alijt Bake (1413–1455), a spiritual autobiographer and preacher eventually exiled and shut down by the churchmen of her day.
Q: Can you tell us about your history coursework and senior honors thesis?

Amrhein: In my coursework and senior thesis, I have concentrated on the intersections of religion and politics in American and European history, in particular how the religions of individuals and cultures influence their politics and vice versa. I completed a research project on the reactions of French Christians to the German occupation of France during World War II, a paper that was published at Notre Dame in the Journal of Undergraduate Research. For my honors thesis, I analyzed the tensions between race, religion, and politics in the South during the 1928 presidential election. I truly enjoy doing original research because it gives me the freedom to examine questions and connect to the past in a way that interests me.

Q: What are your plans upon graduation?

Hausse: I am entering the Ph.D. program in early modern European history at Princeton University this fall in the hopes of following an academic career as a historian.

Q: Why did you choose to pursue a history major?

Hausse: I fell in love with history when I visited my first castle while living in Germany as a kid. I study early modern European history (c. 1450–1700), specifically social and cultural history. Research is really the only way to delve into exactly what you want to learn about any given historic period or theme. It gives you the power to choose what you want to study and… a special skill set that includes independent/original thought, analytical skills, and experience in articulating a complex project in written and verbal arguments.

Jaimie Amrhein

Q: Can you tell us about your history coursework and senior honors thesis?

Amrhein: I knew I wanted to study history when I first entered Notre Dame my freshman year. I find the stories of the past fascinating and enjoy learning about people’s lives and cultures in another time. Also, I am very interested in politics and believe an understanding of the past is crucial to gaining an understanding of the present, especially in the political world. I like interpreting how and why society has changed or stayed the same to arrive at where we are today.

Q: What are your plans upon graduation?

Amrhein: I will be teaching English in France on a service project for the next year or two, and after that I intend to pursue an advanced degree in history.

I am a senior from River Forest, Ill., living in Cavanaugh Hall and pursuing a double major in history— with a concentration in African history—and film.

My interest in African history began my freshman year when I enrolled in “African History to 1800” with Professor Emily Osborn (who has since moved to the University of Chicago). Among other things, I was amazed that scholars had ignored an entire continent’s history for centuries due to continuing racist and neocolonial attitudes. This interest led me to Kampala, Uganda, where I spent a semester learning about the Ugandan people, their culture, and their history.

I went to Uganda through the School for International Training’s (SIT) “Uganda: Development Studies” course. The program gave me the opportunity to live with a family and travel throughout the country and to Rwanda. I have always been interested in education as a result of my mom being a teacher and my own experiences working on education-related service projects around my hometown, as well as in Milwaukee, South Bend, and a public housing district of Denver. Therefore, focusing on education during my time in Uganda seemed a natural fit.

For the first half of the semester, I attended lectures on development theory and practice; I spent the second half researching non-formal education in the slums of Kampala. Beyond my formal coursework, I was directly involved in the education of Ugandan children. In the morning, I taught 80 children between the ages of three and 14 in a one-room shack. My afternoons varied slightly from day to day. Sometimes I worked with teenagers learning skills such as woodcarving, necklace-making, or tailoring. At other times, I conducted home visits and interviewed residents of the Kisenyi slums, learning how to integrate personal histories into research in the process. Many of the children and youth I worked with were refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi. Once a week I was able to teach the older kids baseball, which was definitely my favorite activity!

While I was in Uganda, I wrote a 50-plus-page research paper on non-formal education under the direction of Professor Mark Noll of Notre Dame’s Department of History.

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The Department of History would like to thank the following individuals who made donations to the department over the past year. We remain grateful for their generous support.

Dr. Thomas A. Brady ('59)
Dr. Vincent P. DeSantis
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hayes
Mr. Hugh Hayes
Mr. and Mrs. John H. Precheur