

## History Section

The mission of the History faculty is to promote advanced research and undergraduate teaching in a broad range of fields, including American, ancient, East and South Asian, European, Latin American, Middle Eastern, and Russian history. The faculty includes joint appointments with the Department of Urban Studies and Planning and the program in Science, Technology, and Society, and it participates actively in the program in Women's and Gender Studies and in the joint doctoral program in History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology, and Society.

### Personnel

This past year has witnessed several major personnel changes in the section. The section completed a search for a new Japan specialist in spring 2011. We are very excited to have Hiromu Nagahara join our faculty this fall. He completed his dissertation, titled "Unpopular Music: The Pleasures and Perils of Mass Culture Critique in Modern Japan," at Harvard University in spring 2011 while also working as an adjunct professor at Gordon College. Professor Nagahara's work examines two closely connected developments in 20th-century Japan: the rise of popular songs as a form of mass entertainment, and the emergence of mass culture critique in public discourse at mid-century. While existing scholarship has tended to characterize cultural critique in modern Japan as a type of social control, he argues that such criticism *also* opened up a new kind of public sphere, offering critics and consumers alike the opportunity to pursue their own agendas. He comes to us with an unusually strong teaching record, having received the Harvard University Certificate of Distinction in Teaching on two separate occasions.

We also welcome to campus in fall 2011 the newly appointed holder of the McMillan-Stewart Career Development Chair in Women in the Middle East and North Africa, Lerna Ekmekçioğlu. She comes to MIT from the University of Michigan where she spent the past year on a postdoctoral fellowship in the Armenian Studies Program. In 2010 she completed her PhD at New York University with a dissertation titled, "Improvising Turkishness: Being Armenian in Post-Ottoman Istanbul (1918–1933)." Her work engages with questions such as the gendered construction of minority nationalisms, wartime sex-based violence, and "Third World" and minority feminisms. Her dissertation, focusing on Ottoman Armenian male and female intellectuals, explores the ways in which Armenians crafted themselves a new presence in Turkey after the 1923 establishment of the Republic. This work, which was in part funded by the American Association of University Women, argues that women, both as historical actors and sites of discourse, remained central to the project of staying Armenian in the modern Turkish nation-state. We are very excited to see this important chair position filled again after several years of vacancy. We believe that Professor Ekmekçioğlu's research and teaching interests have much to contribute to the profiles of both History and Women's and Gender Studies, and are extremely pleased to be able to augment MIT's coverage of the modern Middle East and North Africa in new ways.

In addition, William Broadhead was promoted to associate professor with tenure. An historian of ancient Rome, Professor Broadhead is widely regarded by his specialist colleagues as a superb scholar in one of the currently most contentious and lively subfields of Roman history: the demography of the period that witnessed the expansion of the Republic followed by the transition to empire. Professor Broadhead combines the specialized skills of archeologists, demographers, epigraphers, numismatists, paleographers, and philologists as he engages in a number of significant projects. In this past year he has continued progress on his book manuscript, *Migration and Power in Roman Italy*. His significant contribution to the *Imagines Italicae* (a complete record of all extant non-Latin inscriptions from the period of the late Republic) is currently in press. His superior contribution to the teaching mission of the History section was recognized in May 2011 with the Levitan Award for Excellence in Teaching.

### Accomplishments

The following are some of the faculty publications over the past year:

Professor Chris Capozzola published an article, "Afterburn: Knowledge and Wartime," in *Social Research* 77, no. 3 (Fall 2010). He also authored several book reviews, and gave numerous talks in both academic and public settings, including invited lectures at Yale University, Harvard University, and the University of Michigan Law School. He served as a fellow of The Charles Warren Center for Studies in North American History at Harvard University and continued to work on his book manuscript, *Brothers of the Pacific: Soldiers, Citizens, and the Philippines in the Pacific Century*.

Professor John Dower was honored as a finalist in the National Book Award in fall 2010 for his latest book, *Cultures of War: Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima, 9-11, Iraq* (W.W. Norton, 2010). He gave numerous lectures to both academic and public audiences. Moreover, his commitment to expand the Visualizing Cultures project into new subject areas remained supported by a major grant from The Andrew Mellon Foundation.

Professor Eric Goldberg published an article, "Venatio est hominis: Some neglected works on hunting and falconry from the court of Louis the German," in *Discovery and Distinction in the Early Middle Ages: Studies in Honor of John J. Contreni* (Cullen J. Chandler and Steven A. Stofferahn, eds.; Medieval Institute Publications: Kalamazoo, 2010). He was awarded an Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship for Experienced Researchers and will be spending the summer of 2011 conducting research in German archives.

Professor Meg Jacobs saw the fall publication, with coauthor Julian E. Zeligar, of *Conservatives in Power: The Reagan Years: 1981–1989: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford/St. Martins, 2010). She also published two articles: "Wreaking Havoc from Within: George W. Bush's Energy Policy in Historical Perspective" in *The Presidency of George W. Bush: A First Historical Assessment* (Zeligar, ed.; Princeton University Press, 2010), and "The Uncertain Future of American Politics, 1940 to 1973" in *American History Now* (Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr, eds.; Temple University Press, 2011).

Professor Christopher Leighton completed his first year of teaching in the section after having come to MIT from Harvard University and a postdoctoral

appointment at the Stanford Humanities Center. He submitted an article titled “Venture Communist: Gu Zhun in Shanghai” for publication in a conference volume forthcoming from the University of California Press.

Pauline Maier, the William Rand Kenan, Jr. professor of American history, published her book *Ratification: The People Debate the Constitution, 1787–1788* (Simon & Schuster, 2010) in fall to widely appreciative reviews and great commercial success. *Publishers Weekly* called it “an unsurpassable achievement.” Her book was listed by the *Wall Street Journal* as one of the top 10 books of 2010, and included in the *New York Times* book review annual list of notable books of 2010. In May 2011 she was awarded the prestigious George Washington Book Prize for best book on Colonial History. She also appeared on *In Depth*, a C-SPAN Book TV program (March 6, 2011); the program was dedicated to the whole corpus of her scholarship to date.

Professor Jeffrey Ravel published an article titled, “Husband-Killer, Christian Heroine, Victim: The Execution of Madame Tiquet, 1699,” in *Seventeenth-Century French Studies* 32, no. 2 (2010). He also published the website for the Diderot MIT Library exhibit. He was elected to membership on the executive board of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies. He was invited to lecture at the Sorbonne, the University of Caen, and Harvard University, among others. In addition, he organized a two-day workshop with French colleagues at MIT for the Comédie-Française Registers Project (September 2010, funded by an MIT-France Seed Funds Grant).

Professor Harriet Ritvo received strong reviews for her new book, *Noble Cows and Hybrid Zebras: Essays on Animals in History* (University of Virginia Press, 2010). She also completed her two-year term as president of the American Society for Environmental Historians in April 2011, and gave her valedictory presidential lecture at the annual meeting, titled “Where the Wild Things Were: Issues in Animal Assimilation.” She continued to be invited to give numerous talks both locally and abroad, particularly in the context of her recently published books. With Dean Deborah Fitzgerald, she organized the MIT Seminar on Environmental and Agricultural History. She advised numerous doctoral students in MIT’s program in History Anthropology, and Science, Technology, and Society and in other doctoral programs in the Boston area. She continued to serve on the editorial boards of numerous journals, as well as a reviewer for the National Humanities Center and the Stanford Humanities Center, among others.

Professor Haimanti Roy submitted her book manuscript, *Partitioned States: Citizenship and National Identity in India and Pakistan, 1947–65*. She also completed a number of specialized entries for *The Cambridge Dictionary of Modern History* (John Stevenson and Chris Cook eds.; Cambridge University Press). In addition, she served on the local arrangements committee for the American Historical Association’s 125th annual meeting, held in Boston in January 2011.

Professor Craig Wilder completed his manuscript, *Scholars and Conquerors: The Academic Invasion of America* (Bloomsbury). He curated an exhibit, *Inventing Brooklyn*, at the Brooklyn Historical Society, which opened in June 2011. He also participated in the *Slavery’s Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development* conference, held at both Harvard University and Brown University campuses in April 2011, and gave a lecture at New York University on the great school wars in New York City. He continued his teaching with the Bard College Prison Initiative.

Professor Elizabeth Wood served as director of the Harvard Summer School program in St. Petersburg, Russia, during summer 2010. She gave the keynote lecture, “The New Facade of Autocracy: Vladimir Putin and Hypermasculinity, 1999 to the Present,” for the Modern European Lunch at the American Historical Association’s annual meeting in January 2011. She was also invited to speak at the 50th anniversary of the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies at the University of Michigan.

Professor and section head Anne McCants published “Modest Households and Globally Traded Textiles: Evidence from Amsterdam Household Inventories” in *The Birth of Modern Europe: Culture and Economy, 1400–1800, Essays in Honor of Jan De Vries* (Laura Cruz and Joel Mokyr, eds.; Brill, 2010). She also served as guest editor for a special forum on Deirdre McCloskey’s *Bourgeois Virtues* project that will be forthcoming in *Historical Methods: A Journal on Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History*. (Professor McCloskey teaches economics, history, English, and communication at the University of Illinois at Chicago.) She continued to serve on the Board of Trustees of the Economic History Association and as a network coordinator for the Social Science History Association and the European Social Science History Conference.

## Undergraduate and Graduate Education

Undergraduate teaching remains a core mission of the History section. History enrollments totaled 346 in the fall and 283 in the spring. Two history majors graduated in June 2011. Twenty undergraduates submitted major research papers or long essays in the annual Bruce Mazlish History Prize contest and three were selected to win prizes: Manishika Agaskar for “From Pacifism to Patriotism: Motherhood in American Popular Music During World War I,” Ethan Solomon for “Intentions Matter: How India’s Landmark Women’s Legislation Was Not About Women,” and Sara Ferry for “Paris on the Eve of Revolution: Looking for Clues in Primary Source Documents.”

In our ongoing effort to pursue best practice in the structure of our undergraduate curriculum, we embarked this year on a major effort to reformulate our world history subject (21H.912, formerly titled, *The World Since 1492*). The current subject has been taught exclusively by the History faculty, but to make it more truly global in its scope and orientation, an interdisciplinary team of faculty began working this year to devise a replacement subject that would cover a similar time period (the 15th–20th centuries) but be attentive to the methodologies of multiple disciplines, and less Eurocentric in its conceptual framing.

Although the new course, planned for spring 2013, will directly involve three faculty, the group involved in reformulating the course is much larger. It includes a number of faculty from History, Literature, Foreign Languages and Literatures, and Anthropology. This group began work by assembling a preliminary collection of reading materials, including sample syllabi from other university curriculums, world history teaching materials that might be adopted, and primary source materials that provide pedagogically rich exempla for possible course units. In late May, the group assembled for a two-day retreat during which group members discussed broad aims of the course and strategies for incorporating multidisciplinary approaches to the anticipated themes.

Because everyone teaching in this course will of necessity teach beyond their own range of expertise, we have planned a nine-segment internal workshop series during 2011–2012, with each segment focusing on a different aspect of the course. Experts will share with the whole group innovative lecture or reading materials in their area of knowledge. This series will be open to any interested colleagues, especially those who could not attend the retreat but who wish to remain active participants in shaping the course. A version of this course is also being designed as one of the initial offerings from [School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences](#) for the Singapore University of Technology and Design.

In addition to our strong commitment to undergraduate teaching, History faculty are also actively engaged in training graduate students for future careers in research and teaching. We serve as primary advisors to a number of the doctoral students in the History, Anthropology, and Science, Technology, and Society program, and as members of dissertation and general examination committees. The section offered four regular graduate seminars and supervised a number of individually coordinated reading subjects. Individual faculty members also served as committee members or secondary advisors for students doing thesis work in Comparative Media Studies, the Center for International Studies, and Behavioral and Policy Sciences in the MIT Sloan School of Management.

Professor McCants also completed her fourth year teaching in the MIT Portugal Program with Professor Susan Silbey of the Anthropology program, coteaching the Engineering Systems Research Methods course for the current cohort of 12 Portuguese doctoral students in Engineering Systems Design. This teaching collaboration has led to a research project, based in Portugal, on the economic history of 19th-century railroad development, for which Professor McCants is organizing an international symposium to take place in October 2011.

### **Programs and Activities**

During Independent Activities Period we offered a number of our most popular activities, as well as some new offerings. Professor Broadhead, Professor Goldberg, and lecturer Steve Ostrow led a group of 10 undergraduates to Rome and Pompeii for the IAP in Ancient Italy trip. Professor McCants taught her weeklong historical textile technologies workshop. Professor Ravel joined with Rabbi Michelle Fisher of MIT Hillel to explore the story of the Yiddish Book Center in an event titled “Outwitting History: Bringing Yiddish Literature Back.” In April 2011, Lecturer Ostrow undertook an exploratory trip to Greece to scout for possible future sites for the development of an IAP in Ancient Greece trip.

The Sahin Lecture Series for 2010–2011 featured a number of presentations from within the section and around MIT. In the fall term, Professor Ritvo spoke about her new project on wild animals as a special concern of environmental history. Professor Maier spoke about her recently completed project on the ratification of the American Constitution. In the spring of 2011, Emma Teng, associate professor in Foreign Languages and Literatures, presented the lecture, “The Unpardonable Sin of the East: Chinese Overseas Students and the Debate over Intermarriage in the Late Qing and Early Republican Era.”

Professor Ritvo, along with Dean Fitzgerald, continued to host the MIT Seminar on Environmental and Agricultural History. They invited six speakers this past year, including Anita Guerrini (Oregon State University); Judith Carney (University of California, Los Angeles); Helen Rozwadowski (University of Connecticut); Mark Barrow (Virginia Tech); Jonathan Harwood (Manchester University); and Paul Sabin (Yale University). The seminar continued to attract a large and lively audience from across New England.

The section also hosted a one-day symposium, "World into Globe: History for the 21st Century," in May 2010 to honor the long career of Bruce Mazlish at MIT and to recognize his role as one of the founders of the now-burgeoning field of global history. The symposium featured scholarly presentations by Everett Mendelsohn (Harvard University), Dominic Sachsenmaier (Duke University), John Headley (University of North Carolina), Akira Iriye (Harvard University), and Wolf Schäfer (State University of New York at Stony Brook).

Finally, in March 2011 the History section hosted a gathering of colleagues from around the Institute and the wider academic community to celebrate the publication of so many distinguished books over the past year. It was a festive occasion and a wonderful opportunity to welcome our new faculty hires to the intellectual life of the section.

**Anne E.C. McCants**  
**Department Head**  
**Professor of History**