

DESERT HARVEST

Newsletter of the Division for Late Medieval and Reformation Studies

Vol. 6, No. 1

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA®
College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

April 1998

From the Desk of the Director

This may well be our last annual newsletter . . . For most other institutions, such an announcement would portend doom and translate into dissolution: for the Division, it spells invigorating growth. Our readers' response has encouraged us to consider expanding first to a biannual and then to a quarterly publication.

Indeed, growth is the theme of my report to you this year. The new age and rage of 'academic accountability' hardens the arteries of university administrations across the country, clogging the system, and has widely led to a steep increase in the number of vice-presidents. Less well advertised is the other side of the same trend: at the University of Arizona, insight matches oversight by translating accountability into academic competitiveness. The high national ranking the Division achieved through its 100% record in placing new graduates and its unforeseen success in winning international fellowships were important factors that led to the decision by Provost Paul Sypherd and Dean Holly Smith to go a significant step further than simply securing the future of the Division. From 1 July I will concentrate full time on the recruitment and training of graduate students. At the same time, an Assistant Director will be appointed who will serve the Department of History simultaneously as Associate Professor with tenure.

An international search is now underway for an established scholar, preferably in the field of German Reformation Studies in order to complement my specialization in the later Middle Ages and Early Modern French history. As I write, an unexpectedly large number of applications has been received from this country and abroad less than one week after opening the search. The Chair of the History Department, Helen Nader, has appointed a Committee of Five to prepare a shortlist of the three top candidates who will be invited to our campus for interviews and lectures: we are on the move -- and exhilarated!

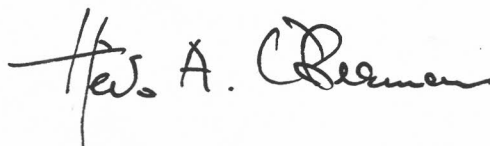
Equally important, the Dean has authorized the hiring of a support staff member to assist with the overflow of demands on the office resulting principally from the quarterly publication of our new *Journal of Early Modern History* and the increasing editorial responsibilities for the three leading scholarly monograph series in the field, steered from the helm of our Division.

There can be no question: the single most crucial factor in putting -- and keeping! -- the Division on the map of international scholarship is the quality of our 'product', the former graduates now serving universities across the country. There can be no doubt that the generosity of our friends and supporters enabled our students to investigate the riches of Europe's archives and afforded them time to write the books that now shape the course of future scholarship . . . and will inspire generations of students to come.

These are exciting times for the Division. We will keep you posted.

With a true sense of gratitude,

Cordially yours,



The Division's First *Combibium*

Each year scholars of early modern European history meet to exchange ideas at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference. The Division for Late Medieval and Reformation Studies is always well represented there by current and former members. This year's conference, held last October in Atlanta, Georgia, was no exception.

The conference, however, is not just about sixteenth-century history. It also provides an opportunity for former members of the Division to meet informally and relive more recent history. This year the Division made the reunion official by sponsoring a reception for former members and

Desert Harvest:
*the Annual Newsletter of the
Division for Late Medieval and
Reformation Studies*

Social Sciences Rm. 120
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721
(520) 621-1284

Director:
Prof. Dr. Heiko A. Oberman

Board of Advisors:
Stanley Feldman, Chair
Hermann Bleibtreu
Richard Duffield
Morris Martin
Nancy O'Neill
George Rosenberg
Bazy Tankersley

Fund-Raising Committee:
Richard Duffield, Chair
Hermann Bleibtreu

Administrative Associate:
Luise Betterton

"Desert Harvest" Editors:
Robert Christman
Derek Halvorson
Joel Van Amberg

friends of the Division from the world of scholarship.

The '*combibium*', as it was named (Professor Oberman coined the Latin term which translates 'to drink together') was a smashing success. Ten former students and forty honored guests were on hand to celebrate the achievements of the Division.

The following piece is a slightly revised version of a speech presented at the *combibium* by Andrew Gow, a former member of the Division, now an Assistant Professor of History at the University of Alberta.

Pro doctoribus, fratribus sororibusque Or, In Praise of Folly

by Andrew Gow

Life after Arizona does not always afford us the luxury of a well-crafted presentation, solid and polished enough to withstand the intense scrutiny of a Thursday night seminar at Camino Antonio. Between hasty lecture preps, endless committee meetings to manage the institutional "church" and the siren call of one's own research, there is little time to think up and write out personal and academic "dissertations" of the kind on which we cut our professional teeth. The inevitable nostalgia I felt saying this -- and which I now feel writing it up for the Desert Harvest -- is for a community of scholars and of scholarship that has few parallels, if any, in the modern world. But nostalgia cuts two ways, and not all its pain is pleasant. There is also nostalgia for an ideal future, one which scholarship may never realize.

In my own university, a massive degree-factory like the University of Arizona, I see many graduate students adrift on the sea of their supervisors' indifference, fatalism, or inability to cope with all the demands placed on them. I struggle to provide enough time to my own few Master's students. I still cannot imagine how Professor Oberman finds the time to see so many students so frequently. The undergraduates appear, week by week, meek or brash, with more or less the same questions and problems; but graduate students pose more fundamental quandaries, openly or implicitly: why am I here? Do I have the right stuff? And as a beginning supervisor, I ask myself exactly the same questions: why am I here? Do I have the right stuff? I am not at all sure of the answers, and I find myself looking back to Tucson again and again for clues.

In my department, with nearly 100 graduate students, of whom fifty or sixty are really active, we have been told by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research to focus, strengthen, and build our graduate program -- all at a time of shrinking resources and few jobs. Our graduate chair has decided against the wishes and urgings of the Dean of Graduate Studies to limit enrollment in our graduate programs in as strict a manner as possible. We will eventually pay for this waywardness with the loss of some funding for teaching assistants (which is based largely on graduate

enrollment, not on undergraduate need). So be it: this is a smallish price to pay for making a responsible and unpopular decision. My sense of things in the academy -- relating to the job market and opportunities for advancement and research funding -- is that of a traditional rabbi, suspicious of prospective converts because they probably do not know what they are letting themselves in for. But as some people will not be persuaded, neither by a strict taskmaster nor by the prospect of forty years' wandering in the desert, some must eventually gain entrance.



Current and former members of the Division taking the term *combibium* seriously (L to R starting in the back: Profs. Michael Milway, Andrew Gow, Peter Dykema, Robert Bast, Sigrun Haude, Heiko A. Oberman, and Thomas A. Brady, Jr. of the University of California, Berkeley).

I am very strongly opposed to exposing young men and women with insufficient graduate training in our field to the vagaries of the market and to the prospect of growing alienation, economic, social and intellectual, from their contemporaries. One of my closest childhood friends, who was handling baggage at the Ottawa airport when I began graduate studies, has in the meanwhile finished engineering degrees, started a career, and worked his way up to vice-president of a major software company. My word processor is a super-pen that Derek's employees maintain and which they are constantly improving. He and I used to joke about the conformity and success-anxiety of "junior executroids" who aspired to corporate success. He is now a senior executive -- and I am still an untenured assistant professor. He earns five times my salary. On the other hand, I know that he had buck teeth and a geeky laugh in grade 7. And I would not trade my job for his under any circumstances! But only idiots like us should be allowed to spend our lives as scholars, to put in Derek's hours for our salary. This is an expensive folly, for ourselves and our families. Those of us who enjoy it (despite the occasional twinge of envy) have a moral obligation to make the costs clear to our students, to supervise only those who have a reasonable chance of getting a job, and to send them off to first-class Ph.D. programs where they can get the sort of training that young idiots deserve.

Appointments of Division Graduates

Andrew Gow

University of Alberta,
Edmonton, History Department

Sigrun Haude

University of Cincinnati,
History Department

Robert Bast

University of Tennessee,
History Department

Curtis Bostick

Southern Utah University,
History Department

Eric Saak

University of Groningen, the
Netherlands, Senior Fellow,
Federal Research Institute for
Medieval Studies

Marjory Lange

Oregon University,
Department of English:
History and Literature of the
Renaissance

Brad Gregory

Stanford University, History
Department

Jeff Tyler

Hope College, Michigan,
Department of Religion

Scott Manetsch

Northwestern College, Iowa,
Religion Department

Mike Milway

Centre for Reformation and
Renaissance Studies, University
of Toronto

• • •

Darleen Pryds (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin at Madison)

A two-year member of the Division and former editor of the *Desert Harvest*, Darleen is now at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in the Department of History.

The Division Launches a New Scholarly Journal

by Michael Bruening

Last year, Professor Oberman launched the *Journal of Early Modern History* together with Professors James Tracy (University of Minnesota) and Antony Black (University of Dundee). The quarterly publication has met with immediate success. Those of you who have strolled through the current periodicals room in the university's library may be asking yourselves, "Why do we need another academic journal?" The plethora of journals being published today received by universities can seem overwhelming and makes an easy target for budget-crunchers and critics who wonder why we need to stock volumes upon volumes of the *Wyoming History Journal*, or all those ghastly foreign language journals, like the *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geographie* (what kind of bastardized version of German is that anyway?). There will not be many, however, who will second-guess the validity of the *Journal of Early Modern History*.

As the subtitle indicates, the journal focuses on "Contacts, Comparisons, and Contrasts." The only real limitation is the time period, roughly 1300-1800. The scope brings a wider horizon into view for the period. Especially as we students begin writing our dissertations, our energies necessarily become more and more focused on a single country, region, city, or even person. We must keep the broader picture in mind to make our work relevant, but even this broad picture is generally limited to a few countries in Western Europe.

The JEMH pushes us to view the broader picture on a global scale. For example, a recent article by Andrian Gerber compared the German communes that were so important during the Reformation to the commune in Japan at the same time. Such comparisons widen our own viewpoints, and force us to ask new questions of our texts. They also provide a corrective to an unfortunate tendency among many historians of trying to find single, long-term processes to explain history. When subjected to close, comparative scrutiny, these monolithic 'processes' often fall apart.

The real meat of the journal comes in book reviews. As Professor Oberman is fond of saying, "We are getting dumber all the time." New books are being published every day, and we cannot possibly read them all. We must rely on good

book reviews to learn the arguments presented in new books and decide which ones are worth reading. The journal's substantial number of review articles reflects its interest in comparisons. The reviewer examines a number of different books on the same topic, evaluating each of them individually and in relation to one another. These review articles are invaluable to students of history. Rather than reading 1,000 pages of material, we can learn the major new theses being published on a particular topic in the space of three or four pages.

The *Journal of Early Modern History* is sure to find a place on the shelves of research universities all over the country and around the world. Its success furthermore brings greater visibility to the Division for Late Medieval and Reformation Studies. With Professor Oberman as Editor-in-Chief, early modern scholars specializing in fields outside of late medieval and Reformation studies may begin to recognize the University of Arizona as much more than just the home of Lute Olsen and last year's (but sadly not this year's) NCAA basketball champions.

From Tucson to Orange City, Iowa: Changes and Continuities

by Scott Manetsch

What a difference a year can make! A year ago, my wife Cathy and I were enjoying a beautiful, temperate spring in Tucson. Twelve months later we find ourselves 'climatically challenged' in Orange City, Iowa, adjusting to a veritable environmental barrage of sub-zero weather and curious odors drifting from nearby swine farms. A year ago I was in the final, exhausting weeks of completing my dissertation on sixteenth-century French Protestantism under the careful direction of Professor Heiko A. Oberman. Today, as an assistant professor of church history at Northwestern College, my life is both less frantic and more complex: in place of daunting dissertation deadlines, I now face the regular demands of lecture preparations, a myriad of committee meetings, and many enriching contacts with colleagues and students. Finally, last year at this time I was still a member of Professor Oberman's (in)famous Thursday night, sleep-depriving seminar, stimulated by rich texts, good food, and challenging conversations. Now, twelve months later, I battle the urge to sleep — not just on Thursday evenings — but almost every night, sharing baby formula and baby talk with our



Life can't be all work! Scott Manetsch shares a laugh with Professor Bruce Gordon at the Division's *combibium*.

beautiful daughter, Hannah Jean (born February 4th). Indeed, our life in this cold, flat, cloudy corner of the world is very different from what we had grown accustomed to in sun-baked Tucson!

But our new lives in Iowa are not entirely disconnected from the graduate school years of the past. As a young professor, I continue to be grateful for the significant ways in which my training in the Division for Late Medieval and Reformation Studies at the University of Arizona prepared me for the challenging life of teaching and research at the college level. Professor Oberman's intensive program gave me much more than academic credentials. Every time I read a student term-paper or a recent book on sixteenth-century studies, I draw on tools of critical analysis and evaluation that I acquired in Arizona. Graduate school challenged me to ask new questions, treat texts with respect even as I subjected them to probing scrutiny ('cui bono' -- "Who benefits from this particular historical interpretation?"). Likewise, my training at the University of Arizona provided access to an international community of scholars and scholarship; even in rural America, I have contact with this broader world through regular email correspondence, annual conferences, and journal articles. Finally, Professor Oberman's influence on my professional development has a more personal side. In my eight years at the University of Arizona, Professor Oberman was a mentor who was passionately interested in the matters of the heart as well as the mind. His example gave me a vision for teaching that transcends the classroom, encompassing the stuff of 'real life' (as my students say) as well as the matters of the intellect. In these ways, then, my graduate school years in the dry Arizona desert continue to produce a bountiful harvest, even in this farmbelt of Iowa!

In the Shadow of the Grand Inquisitor

by John Frymire

During this past year, we found ourselves 'between grants', which in academic circles is a polite way to connote something between short on cash and desperately down and out. With the support of the Division in Tucson and my work as an assistant in the Department of Medieval Latin Philology in Tübingen, we managed to feed the family and pursue our studies. With the exception of our two-year-old son, everyone welcomed the arrival of our daughter Kay on February 18. My wife Christina, in addition to that bit of labor, will complete her thesis in a few weeks and thus obtain her degree. The entire family will be moving to Mainz, where following in the footsteps of former Division members Pete Dykema and Michael Milway, I'll be a (funded!) research fellow at the *Institut für Europäische Geschichte* during the upcoming academic year.

My work took an unexpected turn last Spring when I stumbled upon a group of Reformation authors who stood between Luther and Rome, maintaining their loyalty to the 'old' religion while integrating some of the fruits of Protestant theology and critique into their vision of a renewed Catholic Church. Thus I have begun writing what amounts to a history of a failure. In its day, however, their movement made a tremendous impact. One of their representatives, the Franciscan preacher Johannes Wild (the protagonist of my dissertation), enjoyed popularity reflected by the publication of over 200 editions of his works between 1550 and 1600. From his pulpit in Mainz, Wild poured scorn on Roman Catholics for their abuses and on evangelicals for their excesses, sparing no one his venom. In what amounts to a piquant irony, just as those loyal to Rome were recommending Wild's works to counter Lutheran heresy, others no less orthodox were condemning them as heretically Lutheran.

Heresy, of course, is a matter of perspective. And from the heights of perceived *doctrina pura* at Rome, that step-child of the Inquisition, the Congregation for the Index of Prohibited Books, eventually forbade the fold to read the works of Johannes Wild. Shrouded in secrecy and safe from scholarly scrutiny in the basement of the Palace of the Roman Inquisition for the last 400 years, one could only speculate on the documents that would reveal just what led Roman prelates to condemn the Franciscan from Mainz, along with a host of other 'catholic' authors who campaigned

against the reformation movement.

A few months ago, however, speculation began to yield to scientific inquiry when Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger opened the secret archives in Rome. Thanks to a line of contacts extending from Tucson to Tübingen to the heart of the curia, I had the supreme luck to be admitted to the archives, along with a handful of others, one year before their official opening. With the honor of being the first American to work there came the dubious distinction of being not only the youngest, but also the sole non-professor (a point especially relevant here, since European academics tend toward tyrannical hierarchy). Assisted by a few German and Italian scholars, I uncovered and read the manuscripts that narrate the history of the censorship and condemnation of those German authors who stood between Luther and Rome.

The opportunities and challenges of the last year have led me time and again to appreciate the training and support of the Division for Late Medieval and Reformation Studies. For without both, my work here and in the eternal city would not have been possible. Indeed, I see my travels as a testament to the exceedingly scholarly -- and thoroughly Dutch -- backing of Professor Oberman: while providing the means for several research trips, he offered me not so much as a farthing to join in the three days of Roman revelry that accompanied the official opening of the archives. Who knows -- perhaps the next time I'm in Rome, I'll discover the censures of *his* works!

March Sees a Steady Stream of Scholars Descend on Tucson

On March 10, Notre Dame Professor and Theologian **Thomas F. O'Meara**, O.P. delivered this year's Town and Gown Lecture. Entitled *Religion Looks Beyond the Year 2000*, Professor O'Meara focused on issues confronting religion in general and the Catholic Church in particular.

O'Meara noted that interest and apprehension concerning the approaching millennium have already begun to grow, causing the future to be a source of great concern for some. Rejecting this position, O'Meara pointed to the arbitrary nature of the Julian calendar and provided numerous examples from history where apocalyptic scares came to naught. The future need not be feared.

In the future, suggested O'Meara, the Catholic Church must rededicate itself to the goals of Vatican II and address tough, practical issues

such as medical ethics, divorce, and the public ministry of women. Christianity in general must recognize that God has revealed himself to members of other world religions, and seek to understand all people's encounters with an active God. Finally, humankind need not fear the possibility of extraterrestrial life. If it exists, the Omnipotent God created and governs it.

The future, concluded O'Meara, will be a time of beginning and expansion, not finality and destruction.

Professor O'Meara had not yet boarded his airplane back to South Bend, when the Division had the pleasure of welcoming **James M. Estes**, Professor Emeritus of history at the Reformation Studies Institute of the University of Toronto. Professor Estes is currently a member of the Editorial Board and Executive Committee for the English language edition of Erasmus' Collected Works. Casting a wide net, Estes' other research interests include a careful study of various reformer's views toward the proper role of the civil magistrate in a Christian society.

On Thursday, March 12, Estes shared his most recent findings with the seminar, in which he traced the political thought of Philip Melancthon through three distinct stages as he responded to the changing pressures and historical circumstances of the Reformation.

The seminar was greatly enriched by his visit, and we especially thank him for his frank and candid answers to our questions.

Professor Estes' departure left us two weeks to prepare for the arrival of **Thomas A. Brady, Jr.**, Professor of European history at the University of California, Berkeley. Brady's presence in our midst always brings with it the expectation of stimulating discussion and revealing insights. As usual, on this occasion we were not disappointed.

Our discussion focused on that important, but often maligned 19th century German historian Leopold von Ranke. Ranke, one of the founders of the modern discipline of history, has commonly been caricatured as a man interested in presenting only dry, tedious facts and unconcerned with meaning and interpretation. Brady, however, uncovered for us a scholar distinguished by his subtlety and vision, a consummate stylist, and a man lucky enough not to see the day when his unitary vision of history crumbled in the face of historical reality.

Thanks again to Professor Brady for yet another fruitful evening.



Professor Thomas A. Brady, Jr. with his wife Kathy at last fall's *combibium*.

Report from the Front Lines

The academic year 1997/1998 was an exciting one, bringing with it changes in the Division. We were all glad that the powers that be decided to officially accept **Victoria Speder** as a new member of the Division. Victoria had been a part of our seminar already last year, but then her status was that of a non-degree seeking student. She comes to us from St. Helens, England, by way of Harvard University and her first few years in Tucson were spent teaching history at St. Gregory's Preparatory School. Currently she is studying the fifteenth-century Dutch Reformer, Wessel Gansfort, particularly his views on papal power and penance.

This spring, **Peter Dykema** successfully defended his dissertation in which he examined the roles and expectations of parish priests in late-medieval Germany. He is currently gathering his energies to face the job market. Best of luck Pete!

Jonathan Reid is finishing up his research in Paris on an influential French court faction centered around King Francis I's sister, Marguerite of Navarre. Active during the Reformation, the group was spiritually engaged with the religious ideas of Luther, and embroiled in the political events of that age. We are looking forward to Jonathan's return to Tucson at the end of the summer for one more year as a member of our Thursday night seminar.

John Frymire (see his article, p. 5) has had an especially exciting year. On a personal level, a second child, Kay, joined the family this past winter. Professionally his research took a turn when he discovered a group of reformers who stood between Luther and Rome. Although

they remained faithful to Rome, this group, centered around a Franciscan from Mainz named Johannes Wild, condemned the abuses of the Catholics and the excesses of the Protestants with equal vigor. His research has taken him from his home base in Tübingen to Rome and Vienna, and will soon take him to Mainz.

Mike Bruening passed his comprehensive exams last fall and is now concentrating full time on his research which centers on French Reformer, Pierre Viret, a close associate of John Calvin. This summer, Mike will leave us for a stretch in the Ivy League -- Princeton in particular, which has Viret's complete works in its library.

After bouncing around between various topics, **Robert Christman** seems to have found his niche. He has become interested in a second generation German reformer named Erasmus Sarcerius, and especially in Sarcerius' role in a series of church visitations that took place in Saxony in the mid-1550s. Comprehensive exams also loom on his horizon.

Last year's freshman class has shed its rookie status and become an integral part of the Division. This past fall, **Derek Halvorson** tied the knot in North Carolina and returned to Tucson with his bride, Wendy. While we heartily congratulate him on his marriage, we can't help but wonder how he reconciles it with his research interest, the Carthusian monastic order. During the late middle ages and early modern period, the Carthusians were one of monasticism's strictest orders. Suffice it to say, women had no place in their program.

Joel Van Amberg has decided to pursue the Eucharistic controversy that erupted during the Reformation. The topic has been well covered on an intellectual and theological level, but Joel hopes to take scholarship a major step forward by penetrating the social dimensions of the controversy.

Most recently **Atila Vékony** has examined the great sixteenth-century humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam's views toward women. For his long-term research goals, however, it appears that Atila will follow his heart back to his native Hungary, focusing on the Reformation in that country.

In addition to the members of the Division, our Thursday night seminar has been enriched by cross pollenization from closely related fields. **Michael Crawford**, a student of Department Head and scholar of Renaissance Spain Helen Nader, and **Scott Taylor**, a student of Medievalist Alan Bernstein, bring added perspectives to our work on Thursday evenings. As always, we thank them for their participation.