Faculty Notes

Benjamin Railton (English) saw his book The Chinese Exclusion Act: What It Can Teach Us About America published. The book highlights how remembering the CEA can help us connect to histories of legal/illegal immigration, American diversity, and inspiring American stories that would all significantly shift our understanding of American identity and communities, past and present.

Walter Jeffko (Humanities) will have the third edition of his book Contemporary Ethical Issues: A Personalist Perspective published by Humanity Books (an imprint of Prometheus Books). In addition to its numerous revisions and updates, the book has a new chapter on the moral treatment of civilians in war, which is an expanded version of his Harrod Lecture delivered in October 2016.

María Mercedes Jaramillo (Humanities) presented a paper about Afro-Colombian theatre at the XVI Internacional Congress of the Latin American Studies Association in San Francisco. Also, she presented a paper about Afro-Colombian writers at the X Jornadas Andinas de Literatura Latinoamericana (JALLA) held at Universidad del Valle, Cali, Colombia. During her trip to Colombia she was invited by Universidad Autónoma de Cali to present Hijas del Mauro: biografías críticas de mujeres afrodescendientes de América Latina, a book she co-edited with Dr. Lucía Ortiz. Jaramillo’s paper “El teatro como terapia colectiva” was published in Teatro contra el olvido, a book edited by Dr. Laurietz Seda (Lima: Universidad Científica del Sur, 2012).

Robín Dinda’s (Humanities) composition “Casey at the Bat” for organ and narrator was selected to be performed at the Kotzschmar Centennial Competition for organ and narrator. The Kotzschmar organ in the City Hall of Portland, Maine, is one of the last two municipal pipe organs in the U.S. that still has an official municipal organist. In honor of the centennial celebrations of the organ, the Friends of the Kotzschmar Organ held a national competition for a composition written for organ and narrator. Dinda’s winning composition uses the famous 1888 poem and is also a set of variations on the 1908 popular song “Take Me out to the Ball Game.” The composition was premiered in front of several hundred middle school students and was performed again during the centennial week. Wayne Leupold Editions published the work.


Charles H. Sides (Communications Media), the executive editor of the Journal of Technical Writing and Communication, was presented an award of Merit by the Society for Technical Communication, Washington, D.C. Los Alamos National Laboratories and Westinghouse Electric Company were among other recipients of this distinction at the 2012-2013 Summit Competition. The award is the second presented to the journal in the past five years.

Michael Hoberman (English) will have several essays published in the coming months. “The Confidence placed in you is of the Greatest Magnitude: Representations of paternal authority in early Jewish American Letters” has been accepted for publication in the spring 2014 edition of Studies in American Jewish Literature. “Preppees” and “Boarding School” essay entries in The Encyclopedia of Youth Cultures in America, edited by Simon Bronner, Mary Napoli, and Cindy Dell Clark, will be published by M.E. Sharpe in 2014. Hoberman is also the author of additional essays that will be published this fall by the Springfield Republican newspaper on the Jews of Western Massachusetts. The working title for the book is Linking Courage: the Jews of Western Massachusetts.

Jane Fiske (Humanities) coordinated a visit from the Massachusetts Music Teachers Association when the group presented its 45th annual Bay State Competition at the university for the ninth consecutive year. More than 200 piano, string, and voice students, ranging in age from 5 to 18 from all around the state, competed for trophies and the chance to be named the best in the state.

Eric Budd (Economics, History and Political Science) had his new volume on the struggle for peace in the Middle East—Conflicted are the Peacemakers: Israeli and Palestinian Moderates and the Death of Oslo—published by Continuum, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing. The 1993 Oslo Accords were a key attempt to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, whose failure was largely attributed to extremists on both sides. Budd’s book challenges this conventional wisdom by examining the role of Israeli and Palestinian peacemakers themselves in derailing the peace process.

The current conflict over the Gaza Strip shows how far apart the two sides remain,” said Budd. “As the Oslo Peace Process has bogged down, the extremists have been empowered. With the moderates too conflicted to make peace, the extremists don’t need to sabotage the peace process because the moderates have already done that for them, so the cycle of violence continues.

Looking at the role of moderates before and after Oslo, the different agreements and peace proposals they negotiated, and their rhetoric, the book shows that these peacemakers retained an inherent ambivalence toward the peace process and one another. This prevented them and their constituents from committing to the process and achieving a lasting peace.

This unique survey shows how the people who drive the peace process can not only undermine it, but also prevent its successful conclusion. By dealing with such an important aspect of negotiation, the book will foster a better understanding of the role of moderates and why peace processes may fail.

Budd, one of the founders of the university’s Center for Conflict Studies, is the author of Democratization, Development and the Patrimonial State in the Age of Globalization (Lexington Books, 2003) as well as many articles and book reviews.

Budd also attended the annual meeting of the Northeastern Political Science Association in Boston. He was the chair/discussant for a panel on the Arab Spring, participated in a panel of former presidents of the association on the 120 elections, and attended the executive committee’s meeting. Budd is now the president emeritus of the association.

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