From the Editor

The 2013-14 academic year was extraordinarily busy and productive. We’ll get right to the updates, but if you have updates of your own, please mail them to the editor at lschweikart1@udayton.edu or mail your updates to: Editor, Past . . . and Future, Department of History, University of Dayton, 300 College Park, Dayton, OH 45469-1540.

We also appreciate the generous support we receive from alumni and friends. Thanks to your generosity, this year’s Beauregard-King Lecture was a tremendous success, as you’ll read about on page 3. If you would like to contribute to next year’s Beauregard-King Lecture, or support other areas in the Department of History or the University, please visit givenow.udayton.edu or call 1-888-253-2383.

As always, thank you for your continued support!
Larry Schweikart, editor

A Word from the Department Chair

The 2013-14 academic year was both fruitful and exceedingly busy with a sustained level of activity that seems to be increasingly the norm rather than the exception. As you will see from some of the highlights below, our activities throughout the College and University, and especially in teaching and scholarship, have been tremendous.

In terms of scholarship, it is impossible to summarize the importance of the work that the department carries out and the impact of that scholarship. Annually we carry out research in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. This year, as in most years, department faculty collectively published in important journals — or presented at major international conferences — dozens of articles. While that work alone is extraordinary, a particular highlight has been the publication this past year of several new books by department faculty. Most recently, John Heitmann’s Stealing Cars: Technology and Society from the Model T to the Gran Torino (with co-author Rebecca Morales; Johns Hopkins University Press) and Dorian Borbonus’s Columbarium Tombs and Collective Identity in Augustan Rome (Cambridge University Press) were published last spring. Larry Schweikart’s A Patriot’s History of the Modern World Vol. II: From the Cold War to the Age of Entitlement, 1945-2012 (with co-author Dave Dougherty; Sentinel) was published in December. Una Cadegan’s All Good Books Are Catholic Books: Print Culture, Censorship, and Modernity in Twentieth-Century America (Cornell University Press) was published last fall. And just before arriving on campus, Haimanti Roy published Partitioned Lives: Migrants, Refugees, Citizens in India and Pakistan, 1947-65 (Oxford University Press) in March 2013. As you will no doubt recognize, the record of scholarship from department faculty has been simply astonishing.

In terms of teaching, a core part of what we do as faculty, it is equally impossible to summarize the extraordinary work, innovation and sometimes life-changing moments that take place during the year in our classrooms and through our scholarship. There are just too many to capture. However, perhaps this statistic might illustrate at least the magnitude of our collective enterprise in teaching: during the last academic year, we offered more than 140 courses or sections to more than 4,000 students, covering a good portion of the earth and the broad swath of the chronology of human history from ancient to modern. Our students engage varying methodologies and perspectives, numerous cultures and histories, and are constantly challenged to analyze and problematize how they conceptualize our world. They are also constantly pushed to ask difficult questions and to think about their place within this world and, by implication, the nature of our world going forward. That is profound work and it is our great privilege to be able to directly influence that many students annually. Suffice it to say that we are a department of outstanding teachers and scholars who influence countless lives every year.
Given the start of the Common Academic Program in fall 2013 and various University-wide initiatives taking place at the moment, the Department of History faculty and standing committees worked hard to effectively represent the department and innovate changes for the future. Chaired by Caroline Merithew, the executive committee led conversations on a wide array of topics, from revisions to our bylaws to internal department procedures and policies to departmental responses to initiatives and challenges outside of the department. This past year Janet Bednarek led our centralized registration advising and mentoring program, resulting in dramatically improved efficiency and effectiveness by providing students a single and consistent adviser who coordinates everything from registration to assigning mentors to placing students in internships and courses.

Other committees and individuals also achieved a great deal, from monthly faculty research colloquia to hiring committees to a very successful and exceedingly well-attended Beauregard-King Emeriti Lecture. In terms of the search committee, this year we hired Bobbi S. Sutherland (Ph.D., Yale University) as a new tenure-track assistant professor. Sutherland has been a lecturer in the department the last two years and after an extensive national search was the finalist for our new medieval history position. We are very pleased that she will continue to carry out during the year. This marks another successful search — two years in a row — that our colleagues remarked that the talk was “the epitome of historical power.”

In addition, the skills of department faculty are evident as they work on many committees around campus and lead an array of programs and committees around the University. To name just a few: Laura Hume continues as director of the Prelaw Program, Mary Carlson as director of the international studies program, Bill Trolinger as the director of the CORE Program and David Darrow as director of the University Honors Program. Julius Amin leads the Africana studies minor; Caroline Merithew is the coordinator of the Humanities Commons CAP first-year program; and Ellen Fleischmann now serves as the University’s Alumni Chair in Humanities. John Heitmann continues to contribute to the sustainability, energy and the environment minor; Todd Uhlman teaches various American studies courses and is leading the effort to redesign and revitalize the major; and Michael Carter and Bill Trolinger both contribute to the graduate program in the religious studies department. While just a sampling, it is representative of the wide number of activities and leadership roles department faculty carry out during the year.

Again last year, one of our longtime members of the department retired to a life of further historical study but with no deadlines. Paul Morman began his distinguished association with the University of Dayton first as an undergraduate student in the early 1960s and then as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for more than a decade. He also served as professor of history and dean emeritus. In the 50 years since he first arrived on the UD campus, Paul Morman has been dedicated to nurturing and developing the life of the mind: the search for beauty, truth and insight into the complexities of our world — the life of the university. Countless students and colleagues have been the beneficiaries of that noble pursuit that brought all of us to the University.

By any measure we are collectively and individually involved in a dizzying array of activities, and we contribute in vital ways to the intellectual life of the University. But perhaps most important of all, through our scholarship, teaching and mentoring, we are engaged daily in the privileged role of helping students learn, helping them become engaged citizens and helping them excel in the work they will do after leaving the University.

While there is no way to acknowledge or summarize properly the richness of an environment where one has had countless conversations with colleagues and students of diverse interests and life experiences, perhaps this brief summary provides a glimpse of the extraordinary nature of what goes on in a university. To our alumni, we would like to hear from you. And to our faculty, we wish you all the best for a productive academic year. Thanks for all your work and for making last year a success.

Juan C. Santamarina

You can contact me at: santamar@udayton.edu

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**Phi Alpha Theta Scholarship**

*By Janet Bednarek, Faculty Adviser*

PhD Alpha Theta held a successful initiation ceremony on Tuesday, October 1, 2013. This marked a change from the time and place of previous ceremonies and the entire event was more of a department “welcome back” picnic. Eight students joined Phi Alpha Theta that evening. The initiates, returning students and faculty all enjoyed a relaxed dinner on the terrace outside of Torch Lounge. Happily, the weather cooperated! The Delta Eta Chapter – 20 strong – also published the next edition of 

**Old News** in late fall 2013, with articles contributed by Louis Arreche, Hallie Frenzel, Anna Kinnen, Jim McDaid, Patrick Nicollo, Erin Phillips (who also served as editor), Shaughn Phillips and Elizabeth Wilhelm. The group also took a couple of trips during the semester. And at the senior dinner on April 14, 2014, Erin Phillips, who also served as president of the chapter, received the PAT Outstanding Service Award.

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*Left to right: Dr. Janet Bednarek, Erin R. Phillips (winner of Phi Alpha Theta Outstanding Service Award) and Dr. Juan Santamarina*
News from Students and Alumni...

- **Mallory Hoos** (2012) was accepted into the Master of Library and Information Science program at Dominican University.

- **Tony Demchak** (2005), a doctoral student at Kansas State University, has been in St. Petersburg this past year, doing research for his dissertation in Russian military history. Kansas State awarded him its Colonel Peter Cullen Military History Fellowship, which will allow him to go to The National Archives in London for research on the cruiser Rurik, which Vickers built for the Russians. If you want more details, Demchak posts on Facebook with regularity.

- **Tom Herman** (2006), now a captain in the U.S. Army, was accepted to the graduate history program at the University of North Texas.

Beauregard-King Emeriti Lecture

In recognition of the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I in 1914, and in conjunction with other activities commemorating the Great War, we thought last year’s Beauregard-King Lecture should address this topic. We found an outstanding speaker in Professor Sir Hew Strachan of All Souls College, Oxford. Strachan delivered the lecture “Ideas of War 1914” and examined eight major points that reflected the changing attitudes toward war — not just in England, but in all of Europe — between August and December 1914. Britain, Sir Hew observed, began the war by justifying it on grounds of national security, but soon moved to wider arguments about the conflict being in the interest of humanity as a whole. Among Strachan’s other points were that, everywhere, peoples’ attitudes began to change; that the war became a political instrument everywhere to claim that the gains outweighed the sacrifices; that each local “front” was a fight of self-interest; that opposition was rapidly neutralized in the patriotic fervor; and that the Left in most countries relinquished its ability to oppose the war, thinking that support would strengthen its subsequent position in the postwar world. In addition, Strachan argued that the position of the Church was re-established; that the war became all things for all men; and that, finally, the armies soon seized control over the war from governments. Strachan spoke before a more-than-capacity crowd in Sears Recital Hall, and students were highly attentive, with probing questions during the Q-and-A period. Earlier the department hosted a well-attended reception for Strachan in Kennedy Union that included members of the King and Beauregard families, including Caroline Beauregard Shinkle, Robert Shinkle and Loretta King.

Professors Larry Flockerzie and Larry Schweikart

Beauregard-King Lecture, Sears Recital Hall – March 2014

Sir Hew presenting “Ideas of War 1914”
News from the Faculty . . .

An update of faculty interests, publications and activities.

**Julius A. Amin:** Julius Amin took students to Cameroon as part of the University’s immersion programs and spoke to groups there about the immersion programs and aspects of African-American history. His comments on the death of Nelson Mandela and the significance of the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington were carried by several media outlets. He presented “A Foreign Policy of Pragmatism: Sino-Cameroon Relations” at the African Studies Association annual meeting in Baltimore in November 2013. His article “Cameroonian Youths and the Protest of February 2008” was published in *Cahiers d’Études africaines* in fall 2013. He continues to coordinate the Africana studies minor.

**Janet Bednarek:** Janet Bednarek spent summer 2013 revising, revising and revising her book manuscript. Finally in August the editors felt it was ready to go out to the reviewers. She then spent the next few months waiting to hear how she would be spending summer 2014. And the answer was: She spent the summer answering the reviewers’ questions and comments. With luck, she’ll have another version of the manuscript ready to go out soon. In the meantime, the academic year 2013-14 marked the first full school year in which she had the responsibility for advising all history majors. This also meant taking over the ASI 150 section for incoming majors. It made for a very busy semester. In between advising and teaching, she wrote a few book reviews, reviewed a couple of manuscripts for publication and began work on the Urban History Association’s next biennial conference, which will take place in Philadelphia in October 2014. Perhaps the biggest accomplishment of the year was successfully moving the American Urban History course through the CAP process. In addition to working on her book manuscript, she spent the summer preparing other courses for CAP, revising HST 300 and working with Cengage Learning on a project to digitize many of the documents in the archives of the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. On this last project, she’ll serve as a consultant and write an essay on the history of American aviation to go with the documents.

**Dorian Borbonus:** Dorian Borbonus is happy to report that his book *Columbarium Tombs and Collective Identity in Augustan Rome* is now in print! In the meantime, he has started a new research project that will visualize the growth of the Roman Empire and its effects on the capital city through its tomb monuments. He has obtained a research fellowship at the German Archaeological Institute in Berlin, where he started the project in summer 2014. During the spring semester Borbonus gave two invited lectures, at the Dayton chapter of the Archaeological Institute of America and at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Ill. He also delivered a paper at the University at Buffalo at the conference Inequality in Antiquity: Tracing the Archaeological Record. In the classroom, Borbonus is currently offering Identity in Ancient Greece, a new course for the Common Academic Program that traces the origins, development and impact of the notion of “Greekness” in ancient literature and material culture.

**Michael Carter:** Last year, Dr. Carter was appointed an associate editor of the academic journal *U.S. Catholic Historian* and was also appointed by the dean as co-chair of the Forum on the Catholic Intellectual Tradition Today at UD. He presented his research on U.S. revolutionary-era state constitutions to the American Historical Association annual meeting in Washington, D.C. in January. He continues to referee manuscripts for various journals and work on his own research and publications, as well as teach and advise graduate students in religious studies. Last year he was chair of the Department of History’s curriculum and assessment committee. He has also taught summer study abroad for UD in Florence, Italy. Last October, he was the guest speaker for the Sons of Italy annual Columbus Day dinner in Dayton. He continues to serve as faculty adviser to a few student organizations on campus, such as Beta Theta Pi and the women’s lacrosse club. This past year he also served as volunteer assistant coach for a high school boys’ lacrosse team, and played in tournaments in Detroit, Columbus and Dayton with his own adult men’s lacrosse team. He enjoys hearing updates from former students — gone but not forgotten — so drop him a line at mcarter1@udayton.edu.

**David Darrow:** Dr. David Darrow is working on the last chapter of a book manuscript, *Inventing the Moral Economy: Statistics, Land Norms and Agrarian Reform in Russia, c. 1861-1924*. He presented a draft of the final chapter in Moscow in March and another piece at an international conference on populism in Florence, Italy, in April. Dr. Darrow continues to serve as the director of the University Honors Program and appear occasionally at open mic nights around town.

**John Heitmann:** John Heitmann’s book (with co-author Rebecca Morales) *Stealing Cars: Technology and Society from the Model T to the Gran Torino* was published by Johns Hopkins University Press in April 2014. Always eager to share his knowledge — from a historical perspective — on how to steal cars, Heitmann addressed...
student and faculty groups at Stanford University and Washington and Lee University during spring 2014 and also has a presentation scheduled this fall in Detroit, although that will be like taking coal to Newcastle! He is the current president of the Society of Automotive Historians and is mulling over what to write about next — the automobile and culture in the 1970s or a road book involving one of his older cars.

Laura Hume: Laura Hume has been appointed to another four-year term as director of the University’s Prelaw Program and is proud to report that the program had a very successful year. The prelim studies minor was approved and became a part of the official University curriculum on August 1, 2014. She particularly enjoyed working and traveling with the University of Dayton mock trial team, which continues to grow and improve, as evidenced by the success of Callum Morris ’14 (B.A., history), who earned an All Region Attorney Award at the American Mock Trial Association Regional Tournament February 2014 in Cincinnati. Last spring, Hume focused on building the new in-house legal intern program and prepared for site coordinator duty with the summer study abroad program in London. She encourages any history alumni who went on to earn a J.D., and were or are in a career using their J.D., to contact her (lhume1@udayton.edu) to lend your expertise and become involved in the development of UD students’ exploring and preparing for legal careers. Pretty please?

Caroline Merithew: Caroline Merithew’s 2013-14 academic year started with helping to take more than a thousand first-year students to the 100th anniversary performance of Igor Stravinsky’s The Rite of Spring (played by the Dayton Philharmonic). This was part of the inaugural year celebrations connected with the new Common Academic Program (which replaces the old general education requirements that UD’s history alumni will be familiar with). Merithew saw the publication of an article, “Navigating Body, Class and Disability in the Life of Agnes Burns Wieck,” in the Journal of Historical Biography and participated in the Social Science History Association’s annual meeting. As part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Civil Rights Act on campus and a Roesch Library initiative, Merithew gave an invited talk to campus and community, “Civil Rights Before the Movement.” During the spring semester she served as interim director of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program and continues to head the history department’s executive committee. Dr. Merithew participated in the Thinking Transnational Feminism summer institute at The Ohio State University and took part in the National Endowment for the Humanities’ Doing Digital History seminar — both awarded through peer-reviewed competitions. When Merithew is not teaching, researching or serving on the Honors Advisory Board, the Leadership Development Action Team, as the University’s AAUP president or on other ad hoc committees she is assigned to, she enjoys spending time with her family and eating the darkest chocolate she can find.

Patricia Reid: Patricia Reid returned to the University of Dayton during summer 2013 with great enthusiasm. Soon after her arrival, Michael Dunekacke with University of Dayton Magazine contacted her to discuss the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. They collaborated on publishing the column titled “Freedom Rings.” She also participated in the proposal to bring to the University of Dayton the National Endowment for the Humanities’ “Created Equal” program and the library curriculum designed by The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance and Abolition at Yale University. Reid facilitated a discussion about Mildred and Richard Loving following an on-campus screening of The Loving Story, a movie about the United States Supreme Court case that repealed anti-miscegenation laws and the impact of the court case on the family of those who brought the case to court. In addition, soon after the 2013-14 academic year began she was again invited by Patty Alvarez of the Office of Multicultural Affairs to present and discuss the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington with our colleague Verb Washington.

Her current article, “Democracy in Retreat: Restricting Citizenship in Maryland’s Early Republic,” is under review with the Journal of Southern History. She argues that Maryland legislators during the Early National Period inaugurated a pro-slavery jurisprudence that began to grip the state and African-Americans began to lose the constitutional rights they had achieved just after the American Revolutionary period. This summer she worked on her book proposal and manuscript titled Between Slavery and Freedom: Maryland in the Making of the Black Atlantic (1680-1860). This research has been presented at a number of professional conferences, ranging from the Southern Historical Association to the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. Reid also began teaching the U.S. Legal and Constitutional History course, which had not been taught in several years. Related to that work, she was awarded two highly esteemed opportunities to participate in workshops and seminars on constitutional history. The Institute for Constitutional History, a National Endowment for the Humanities grant, offers seminars taught by prolific scholars in the field of legal and constitutional history and this summer sponsored a workshop, “Embedded Histories in Constitutional Argument,” held at the Stanford Constitutional Law Center and led by Robert W. Gordon, Professor of Law at Stanford Law School. The second seminar, “Slavery and the Laws of War,” takes place at the New-York Historical Society on Fridays during the 2014 fall term and is led by two distinguished
professors of history: James Oakes (The Graduate Center at The City University of New York) and John Fabian Witt (Yale Law School).

Haimanti Roy: Dr. Roy plans to introduce new courses on Gandhi and the British Empire in the near future. She specializes in the social and political history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century South Asia. Her first book, *Partitioned Lives: Migrants, Refugees, Citizens in India and Pakistan, 1947-1965* (Oxford University Press, 2013) focused on the aftermath of the partition of British India in 1947, which created the new states of India and Pakistan. In particular, the book, which went into a second re-print this year, examined how these new nations defined and identified their new citizens and the ways in which such citizens contested and negotiated these identifications. She continues to write on different themes related to the partition, but her current interests have shifted to focus on everyday practices of citizenship in postcolonial India, in particular, how people and the state construct and negotiate citizenship through documents such as passports and identity certificates. She was invited to present part of that research at a conference at the University of Toronto’s Munk School of Global Affairs in October 2013. While movement has been a defining feature of both her personal and academic life, she is excited to be a part of the Dayton community. Her transition to the Midwest has been smooth so far, primarily because she has found a close-knit and welcoming community of scholars and a bunch of intellectually curious students at the University of Dayton.

Juan C. Santamarina: Juan Santamarina writes: ‘After two years as chair of the Department of History, I am finally feeling more settled in the role and comfortable with the almost daily and always unique challenges the position brings. The number and diversity of faculty and their needs, the complexities of a large department with many students and the constant challenges of keeping everything running more or less smoothly is something that takes quite a bit of time to get used to! That said, my approach has been centered on the idea that what is best for my colleagues and our students is always best for the University as well. Supporting good student work, supporting faculty scholarship and innovation, and creating a space wherein the life of the mind can flourish, from my perspective, is the cornerstone of the job. That is, to create the possibilities where others can do their work and do it well. I’ve also carried that perspective to other work (which also takes a significant amount of time and energy). It is a privilege to be able to work in an intellectually rich environment and to work with colleagues who, each in his or her own way, are uniquely interesting to engage with. Days are very few wherein something really interesting hasn’t happened! In terms of research projects, revision of my completed book continues and I also continue to work on a new film and book on Cuba, albeit at a snail’s pace these days. Finally, I’ve continued to travel a significant amount; this past year focused more on the U.S., Canada and South America.”


Bobbi Sutherland: Bobbi Sutherland writes: “In the last year, I have continued to acclimate myself to UD, teaching HST 103, Medieval Europe, Old Regime and Seminar in European History. Last spring, the students in my seminar also presented their work at the Stander Symposium, which was an exciting capstone to their work in the course and the major. I also had the opportunity to teach an honors section of HST 103. In place of a traditional term paper, these students worked together to write a ‘book’ on the history of food. They discussed this experience in a panel at the Stander Symposium and presented some of the book’s content. In addition to teaching, I also served on the colloquium committee in 2012-13, helping to bring Adam Davis, a medieval social historian, to campus as 2013’s Beauregard-King lecturer. This was especially exciting for me as the lecture added to things we were discussing in Medieval Europe and the Seminar in European History. During summer 2013, I taught HST 103 as an honors course – my first such – and found it a good learning experience. Throughout last summer and fall, I also honed my book proposal and began work on a paper examining medieval cookbooks. I am excited to continue my work at UD in the capacity of assistant professor.”

James Todd Uhlman: During the last year, Dr. Uhlman completed the article “Exploring Hypocrisy: Authorship and the Other in Herman Melville and Bayard Taylor” and began “Delivering Men: 1970s Trucker Movies and the Politics of Magical Manhood.” He and Professor John McCombe from the UD English department formed a panel at the American Culture Association that discussed the intersection between American auto culture and music. He continued revisions of his textbook for his U.S. Social and Cultural History course and began a new one for his History of American Film course. He was asked to become the director of the American Studies Program and to spearhead efforts to reorganize it. After
Book Review
by Bobbi Sutherland


The recent discovery of plague pits in London has brought the Black Death into the news. For those wishing a refresher on this pivotal period of European history, John Kelly’s book is a great choice. The Great Mortality, what contemporaries called the Black Death, ravaged Europe from 1347 to 1352, leaving no area of life unchanged. Numerous books and articles have been written about the Black Death, ranging from scientific studies of the disease itself to explorations of contemporary response and examinations of the plague’s lasting impact, often by region. The genius of Kelly’s work is bringing together all of these strands of scholarship in a coherent and readable whole. While not a scholarly monograph, the term “popular history” does not do credit to Kelly’s thorough use of scholarly research, footnotes of historiographical debates or masterful use of primary sources.

Working chronologically and topically, Kelly begins his story (for story it is, thanks to his narrative writing style), in Caffa, the Crimean city from which the plague made its way to the rest of Europe. He then flashes back — a device he uses frequently and to good effect — to the plague’s origins on the Eurasian Steppe. After discussing developments in *Y. pestis*, the bacterium that causes plague, Kelly turns to examining the conditions that might have contributed to *Y. pestis’* quick and devastating spread throughout Europe. He considers the role the Great Famine of 1315 (and other crop failures) might have played in weakening immune systems through malnutrition, describes the horrific state of sanitation and hygiene in medieval Europe, and explains its constant warfare, noting, “From Caffa to Vietnam and Afghanistan, no human activity has been more closely associated with plague than war” (p. 72).

Continuing this wide-ranging and richly detailed account, Kelly traces the progress of the plague through Europe step by step, region by region. Each section opens with a portrait of the city or region under discussion, complete with topography, economy and cast of characters. For example, when describing Avignon, Kelly imagines figures such as Petrarch, his beloved Laura and the musician Louis Heyligen, among others, crossing the iconic bridge. Wherever possible, Kelly uses the accounts of contemporaries, often chronicles, frequently excerpting their words. When this is not possible, he turns to contemporary accounts of later outbreaks of plague or fleshes out scant information with his imagination or by making analogies to modern events. Whatever method he uses, Kelly paints a vivid picture (too vivid for some readers) of the disease’s symptoms and social effect. As he describes the response of each region’s inhabitants, Kelly notes how the reaction is in keeping with a particular nationality’s character — something that must be taken with a large grain of salt. He notes the utter civic breakdown in some Italian cities and the “keep calm and carry on” attitude of the British. In describing the varying responses, Kelly includes early attempts at public health, social breakdown and cohesion, and the ultimate death toll. Here too, it must be noted that while he warns against taking medieval figures too seriously, he seems readily to accept contemporary death counts when modern research offers no alternative.

Yet while moving with careful chronology, Kelly makes ample use of flashbacks to make each chapter topical as well. The plague’s arrival in Avignon allows for a discussion of the medieval papacy and the Avignon papacy specifically. Here, he notes that Clement VI was not a terrible pope, but simply “ordinary in an extraordinary time … in a situation that called for a Gandhi-like spiritual authority … Clement acted like a head of state” (p. 159). Though hinted at in other chapters, turning to Germany allows Kelly to recount the terrible atrocities committed against the Jewish population, as they were scapegoated for causing the plague. Germany also allows him to discuss the flagellants, an odd religious movement that advocated self-abuse to expiate sin and avert God’s wrath (i.e., the plague). Paris allows for discussions of medieval medicine and the Hundred Years’ War; Spain permits examination of the Arab, Muslim response to the epidemic, as well as a discussion of the Crusades; and so on. At the end of his work, Kelly turns to lasting effects and subsequent plagues. Though briefer than the foregoing accounts, Kelly touches on social, economic, religious and cultural change. In the last area, he oddly omits discussion of the Grim Reaper (which first ap-
peared at the time of the plague) and the rise in treatises on “dying well.”

While writing a history of the impact of plague on human society, Kelly does not lose sight of the fact that he is telling the story of a disease. Here he does what few academic historians are able to do well; he simplifies research in the natural sciences regarding the nature and spread of y. pestis. He explains mutations within the bacterium and the effect of ecological change on rodent populations. Throughout his work, Kelly makes a strong case for the argument – based on recent research – that the Great Mortality was largely an outbreak of pneumonic, rather than bubonic, plague, the traditional culprit. As he argues, this form of the disease fits much better with medieval descriptions of symptoms and spread of the disease. In fact, it can even make the story of the Genoese becoming infected thanks to Mongol attackers flinging infected corpses over the walls of Caffa – something long suspect among historians – believable, if not probable. In the end, while Kelly’s book is very much a story of the fourteenth-century plague, it is also a story of human response to pandemic disease, and under the surface there is the slight suggestion that we might learn from the Black Death.