

BRETT J. GARY

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Current Position

2003-present: Associate Professor, Department of Culture and Communication,
Steinhardt School, New York University.

2005- present: Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Culture and Communication

Previous Faculty Positions

1998-2003: Assistant Professor, Department of History and Graduate Program in Modern
History and Literature, Drew University. Convener of Modern and History and
Literature Graduate Program. Tenured, spring 2003.

1996-1998: Adjunct Professor, Department of Culture and Communication, New York
University.

1992-1996: Instructor, American Studies Program, University of Colorado, Boulder.

1988-1989: Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of History and Philosophy, Montana
State University.

Education

Ph.D., 1992. University of Pennsylvania, Department of American Civilization.

M.A., 1985. University of Pennsylvania, Department of American Civilization.

B.A., 1982. Montana State University, English Literature, Highest Honors. Honors
Program.

Research Interests

I am engaged in an extensive book-length research project on the history of the conflicts between political liberalism and cultural and sexual modernism against the forces of cultural, sexual and political censorship in American culture in the first half of the 20th century. Focusing on the legal career of Morris L. Ernst and his affiliation with the American Civil Liberties Union (he was the ACLU's general counsel from 1927-1954),

this project will consider the history of literary, theatre, film, birth control, and political censorship battles from the late 1920s through the height of the Cold War.

A study of the Commission on Freedom of the Press (1944-1947), its critique of the problem of media ownership concentration in post-WWII American culture, and its articulation of a social responsibility theory of the press.

General Research Interests: modern American cultural history; history of liberalism; propaganda and censorship; media criticism and popular culture studies; consumerism; intellectual history.

Honors and Awards

Recipient of Teaching Excellence Award, Steinhardt School, New York University, 2005-2006.

Dorot Research Fellowship 2003-2004, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin, for project titled "Defending Modernism: Morris L. Ernst's Struggles Against Intolerance"

Visiting Fellowship 2002-2003 Princeton University Library, sponsored by the Friends of Princeton University Library, for project titled "Morris L. Ernst and Cultural Libertarianism in the ACLU."

New York University Humanities Council, Grant-in-Aid award for project on Morris L. Ernst, Censorship, and American Liberalism, 2004.

Publications

Books:

The Nervous Liberals: Propaganda Anxieties from World War I to the Cold War.

Columbia University Press, 1999. Selected for inclusion in the series Columbia Studies in Contemporary American History, William Leuchtenburg and Alan Brinkley, general editors.

Articles in Edited Collections:

"Morris Leopold Ernst," Yale Biographical Dictionary of American Law, edited by Roger K. Newman, forthcoming Fall 2006.

"The Search for a Competent Public: The Hutchins Commission and post-WWII Democratic Possibilities," in Democracy and Excellence, Praeger Books, Greenwood Press, 2005, edited by Joseph Romance and Neal Riemer, pp 75-90.

"The Pitiless Spotlight of Publicity: LIFE Magazine and the Pre-war Surveillance of American Extremists," in Erika Doss, ed., Looking at LIFE: Framing the American

Century in the Pages of LIFE Magazine, 1936-1972, Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001, pp 77-99.

"Modernity's Challenge to Democracy: The Lippmann-Dewey Debate," in Cultural Transmissions and Receptions: American Mass Culture in Europe, edited by Rob Kroes, Robert W. Rydell, and Doeko F.J. Boeschler, VU University Press, Amsterdam 1993.

Journal Articles:

"Private Interests Versus Public Goods: The Problem of Media Oligopolies for Democratic Theory in the United States," in translation as "Intereses privados vs bienes publicos. El problema d los oligopolios de los medios de commicacion para la teoria democratica en los Estados Unidos," Ecuador Debate, 49 April 2000, pp 235-266.

"Communication Research, the Rockefeller Foundation, and Mobilization for the War on Words, 1938-1944" Journal of Communication, Summer 1996, Vol. 46, No. 3.

Co-author "Introduction and Overview," and co-editor, "Visions of Society: Perspectives from the Social Sciences," The American Behavioral Scientist, Vol. 34 No. 5, May/June 1991 (Sage Publications).

Book Reviews:

Review of Thomas Doherty, Cold War, Cool Medium: Television, McCarthyism, and American Culture (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), forthcoming, Ohio History Journal.

Review of Shawn J. Parry-Giles, The Rhetorical Presidency: Propaganda and the Cold War, 1945-1955, Westport: Praeger, 2002), Journal of American History, June 2004.

Review of Douglas B. Craig, Fireside Politics: Radio and Political Culture in the United States, 1920-1940 (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), Journal of American History, June 2002.

"A Disappointing War Against Fascism: Left-Liberals Journalists and WWII," a review of Frank A. Warren, Noble Abstractions: American Liberal Intellectuals and World War II (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999), H-Net Review, June 2000.

Review of Oliver Zunz, Why the American Century? (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), American Historical Review, December 2000, pp 1777-1778.

"Dueling Deweys: Moralism, Scientism, and American Social Science History," Reviews in American History, Vol 23, Winter 1995.

Grants and Fellowships

New York University Humanities Council, Grant-in-Aid award for project on Morris L. Ernst, Censorship, and American Liberalism, 2004.

Dorot Research Fellowship, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas, Austin, 2003-2004

Visiting Fellow, Princeton University Library, sponsored by the Friends of Princeton University Library, 2002-2003.

Predocctoral Fellowship, Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Washington, D.C., 1991-1992.

University Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania, 1991.

The Rockefeller University Archives Research Fellowship, 1989-1990.

The Rockefeller University Archives Research Fellowship, 1988-1989.

Recent Professional Lectures and Conference Papers

Respondent to Jayson Harsin, "The Rumor 'John Kerry is French,' i.e. Haughty, Foppish, Elitist, Socialist, Cowardly and Gay: Anti-American," Dean's Conference, American University in Paris, May 2006.

Proposal for Special Session accepted by Modern Languages Association for December 2006 meeting: "Cold War-Era American Publishing and Ideas of Cultural Democracy"

Panel Chair and Respondent, "Libraries in American Culture" panel American Studies Association Annual Conference, November 2004, Atlanta, GA.

"Comstocks and Communists: Morris Ernst Wages War on Two Fronts," Organization of American Historians annual meeting, Boston, MA, April 2004.