

the Roosevelt review



The Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s was one of the pivotal events in 20th century American history. It would re-shape post-War America completely. Martin Luther King, Jr., shown here making his historic "I Have A Dream" speech at the March on Washington, August 28, 1963, came to epitomize the principle of peaceful revolution and echoed the ideals of FDR's Four Freedoms Speech which had been pronounced two decades earlier.


Entering the 21st Century

Four years after its official opening in 1986, the Roosevelt Study Center was officially recognized by and became affiliated with the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. This year, the last of the century, was the occasion of the second assessment of the RSC by that organization. The 1999 report stated that in a short period of time the RSC had developed into "the most important center of American Studies in the Netherlands." It is an appropriate moment, just prior to entering the next century, to recognize the RSC's role, inspired by the legacy of the Roosevelts, in the European study of 20th century American history.

For many years the RSC has served as the venue for the biennial Four Freedoms Awards ceremony, the annual presentation of the Theodore Roosevelt American History Awards, the annual meeting of the Netherlands American Studies Association and the distinguished historians' conferences of the European Association for American Studies.

As a study center, the RSC offers a unique archive and library for students of American history. This year fourteen scholars were given research grants and many others simply came to use this resource. In addition, RSC's own staff members are involved in serious scholarly projects.

Obviously the importance of constantly acquiring new materials cannot be emphasized enough. The RSC therefore is grateful for both the financial and in-kind contributions which allows us to expand our collections. *The Records of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* from 1954 to 1970 is one such significant acquisition which took place this year. In addition, a number of our conferences have resulted in some excellent academic books which have recently been published.

Whether or not the 21st century will be an "American Century," the RSC will be there, ready to assist European scholars in their studies of the United States. 

Newsletter of
the Roosevelt
Study Center

1999



*The 1999 activities of the Roosevelt Study Center
in Middelburg, the Netherlands have been
made possible by financial and in-kind contributions.*

*The RSC gratefully acknowledges
the generosity of the following contributors:*

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Mr. Leendert van der Pool
Mr. Pim Hiemstra
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*The Roosevelt Stichting, which organizes and raises
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"History, taught for a directly and immediately useful purpose to pupils and teachers of pupils, is one of the necessary features of a sound education in democratic citizenship."

Theodore Roosevelt, Presidential Address, American Historical Association, Boston, Massachusetts, 1912

The Theodore Roosevelt American History Awards

Started in 1987, the annual Theodore Roosevelt American History Awards aim to promote the study of American history in the Netherlands in general and to encourage the use of the RSC's unique historical collections by Dutch university students in particular. The program is sponsored by the Theodore Roosevelt Association in Oyster Bay, New York, and each year recognizes the three best Masters theses on an American history topic written by Dutch graduate students. Theodore Roosevelt not only served as the twenty-sixth president of the United States. He was also a prolific writer of history books, and in 1912 was elected president of the American Historical Association. It is fitting that these American history awards presented by the RSC should be named in his honor.

Since its inception, including this year's entries, a total of 109 M.A. theses have been submitted. This time the American Studies Departments of the universities of Leiden, Amsterdam, Utrecht, Nijmegen and Groningen each nominated two M.A. theses as being the best of the past academic year. Eduard van de Bilt, who is affiliated with the universities of Leiden and Amsterdam, chaired the jury of three historians. The other two jury members were Jaap Verheul of the University of Utrecht and Marja Roholl of the Erasmus University Rotterdam.

On April 16, 1999 the awards ceremony at the RSC began with oral presentations by the ten graduates on their research topics and their most important conclusions. This was followed by the jury report presented by the chair of the jury, in which all ten theses were reviewed. Eduard van de Bilt explained the criteria for the selection of the winning theses, indicating that originality of subject matter as well as stimulating theories and lucid presentations are highly regarded by the jury. He remarked that most of this year's nominated theses shared a demythologizing goal, with subjects ranging from people such as Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, to policies such as encouraging the flexible work force, foreign assistance and war-time propaganda, and including movements such as Sabbatarianism, the self-image of Irish Americans and abstract expressionism. The quality of the theses was high, and the jury emphasized that all nominees deserved recognition for their efforts.

First prize was won by Mette Gieskes (Leiden) for her thesis "John Cage and the Visual Arts:




Standing in front of Theodore Roosevelt's portrait in the RSC exhibition hall are the three jury members. All have served with distinction for six consecutive years (left to right): Eduard van de Bilt, Marja Roholl, and Jaap Verheul.

The Position of an Experimental Composer in the Arts Around Mid-Century."

Gilleske Kreyns (Utrecht) received the second prize for her thesis "The Place of NAGPRA: Native American Cultural Identity and the Adoption of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act." The third prize was given to Rogier van Kuyk (Groningen) for his thesis, "Just Irving? Four New York Intellectuals and their Alleged Neo-Conservatism."

All nominees were given a diploma and a photographic history of Theodore Roosevelt's life. In addition the three prize winners received a Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Medal, and the winners of the second and third prize also received NLG 500 and NLG 250, respectively. First prize winner Mette Gieskes won a trip to the United States where in August she visited several "Roosevelt sites" in New York State: Theodore Roosevelt's birthplace in New York City and his house "Sagamore Hill" and other TR sites in the Oyster Bay, Long Island area, as well as the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and Museum and Eleanor Roosevelt's house "Val-Kill" in Hyde Park, New York.

About her trip Mette Gieskes reported that it was "an unforgettable experience. Not only did I have the opportunity to visit many sites of historical importance, to meet some lovely people and to enjoy the natural beauty of Long Island and the Hudson River Valley and Hudson Heights, above all my trip brought to life 20th century American history. These experiences have given an added dimension to my Ph.D. study in the United States which will last another four or five years." 

First prize winner Mette Gieskes with Theodore Roosevelt Association Director John A. Gable on the porch of TR's house "Sagamore Hill."



A Word About the Roosevelt Study Center

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The Roosevelt Study Center is a research institute and conference center on twentieth century American history and European-American relations. It is named after three famous Americans: President Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945), and Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962), whose ancestors emigrated from the Province of Zeeland to the New World in the mid-seventeenth century.

The Roosevelt Study Center is affiliated with the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. In developing its activities and building its collections the RSC is supported by the Provincial Government of Zeeland, the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, the Theodore Roosevelt Association, the Roosevelt Stichting, as well as by an advisory board of prominent American and European scholars, top government officials and representatives from the private sector.

The RSC offers European students and advanced scholars of American history:

- a research library with collections of historical documents and books on U.S. modern history not available anywhere else in Europe;

- a grants-in-aid program for European researchers;
- an annual prize for the best Dutch M.A. theses on American history topics;
- a program of exhibitions, international conferences and seminars on American history, U.S.-European relations, and the contemporary meaning of FDR's Four Freedoms;
- conference rooms with audio-visual facilities;
- a publication series;
- an annual newsletter.

The RSC library may be used year round for research, but by appointment only. Please call or write the secretariat. Office and library hours: 9.00 to 12.30 and 13.30 to 17.00. The RSC exhibition hall is open April through October, Monday to Friday, from 11.00 to 12.30 and 13.30 to 16.30.

For information on the RSC holdings and its activities, please visit our homepage on the internet: <http://www.knaw.nl/rscuk00.htm> or contact the Roosevelt Study Center, Abdij 9, P.O. Box 6001, 4330 LA Middelburg, the Netherlands, tel. (31)(0)118-631590, fax (31)(0)118-631593, e-mail rscc@zeeland.nl. 

Dutch-American fine artist Leendert van der Pool donated a pastel drawing to the RSC.

Contributions-in-kind to the RSC


In 1997 the RSC assembled a unique exhibit entitled "Exodus to the New World: Ellis Island and the Zeelanders in America." It consisted of many historical documents, photos, maps and memorabilia on loan from the Ellis Island Immigration Museum in New York and from various Dutch and American archives and libraries. In addition, it featured twenty-five large-scale Ellis Island drawings by Dutch-American artist Leendert van der Pool.

Following the exhibit at the RSC, Mr. van der Pool's works were returned to the U.S. where in 1998 and 1999 they were displayed at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum, Hofstra University Museum in Hempstead, New York and at the Dekker Huis Museum in Zeeland, Michigan. As an expression of his gratitude for the instrumental role the RSC played in contacting these museums, the artist has donated one of his works from the Ellis Island Series to the permanent collection of the RSC. On August 4th, RSC Director Cornelis van Minnen received Leendert van der Pool's pastel drawing "Abandoned Luggage." It is now on display – together with



Leendert van der Pool's "Abandoned Luggage (1998)," one of the pastel drawings in his Ellis Island Series.

Norman Rockwell's famous Four Freedoms posters – in the RSC's vanden Heuvel conference room.

Another contribution-in-kind given to the RSC in 1999 was the popular American weekly *Saturday Evening Post* from the years 1948 through 1968. The magazine, which ceased publication in 1968, was donated by Mr. Pim Hiemstra and is a valuable addition to the periodicals and magazines at the RSC library. 

To strengthen the network among European scholars of American history, the RSC hosted the Fourth Middelburg Conference.

Federalism, Citizenship and Collective Identities in U.S. History

The initiative for a meeting of European historians studying American history was taken in 1990 by a group of these historians – most of them members of the European Association for American Studies – who felt the need for a professionally dedicated conference. Their efforts were brought to fruition in 1993 when the RSC hosted the First Middelburg Conference of European Historians of the United States.

The success of the First Middelburg Conference led to a pattern of biennial meetings at the Roosevelt Study Center. It also resulted in the publication of a selection of the papers delivered at the Middelburg meetings in 1993, 1995 and 1997. Edited by conference organizers David K. Adams of Keele University and RSC Director Cornelis A. van Minnen, the acclaimed “European Papers in American History” series includes: *Reflections on American Exceptionalism* (Keele, 1994), *Aspects of War in American History* (Keele, 1997), and *Religious and Secular Reform in America* (Edinburgh, 1999).

“Middelburg 4”

On April 21–23, 1999 some forty historians from eleven European countries met at the RSC for the Fourth Middelburg Conference. The theme of this year’s conference was “Federalism, Citizenship and Collective Identities in U.S. History.” In the course of three days a total of twenty-two papers were presented in five sessions covering a time span from the eighteenth century to the present.

Various aspects of the development of a national identity in the early American republic, including the adoption of the U.S. dollar, were considered by Colin Bonwick and Robert Garson (U.K.) as well as by Zbigniew Mazur (Poland) and Thomas Clark (Germany). The U.S. Constitution of 1787 and the role of the federal government up to the 1870s were discussed by Frits van Holthoon (Netherlands) and the French historians Naomi Wulf and Jean-Marie Ruiz.


The continuing emergence of identities during the Progressive Era and World War I was the topic of papers presented by Daria Frezza and Alessandra Lorini from Italy and British historian Melvyn Stokes. Twentieth-century identities of ethnic and professional groups, including a special session on Native



Sessions at the Fourth Middelburg Conference were chaired by (from left to right): Axel Schäfer (Germany), Frits van Holthoon (Netherlands), Cornelis van Minnen (RSC), Melvyn Stokes (U.K.), Sylvia Hilton (Spain), Serge Ricard (France), David Adams (U.K.), Steve Ickringill (Northern Ireland) and Knud Krakau (Germany).

Americans, were described by Steve Ickringill (Northern Ireland), Joanna Jastrzebska (Poland), Benedicte Deschamps (France), Ole Moen (Norway) and British historians Howell John Harris, Giles Scott-Smith, Peter Ling and Joy Porter. The last session of the conference focused on recent developments in the U.S. Constitution and featured papers by John Zvesper (U.K.), Niels Thorsen (Denmark), Bohdan Szklarski (Poland) and Dominique Daniel (France).

The conference, which like the preceding ones in this series combined excellent quality with a most congenial ambience, was sponsored by the Roosevelt Study Center and the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute in Hyde Park, New York. Conference organizers Cornelis van Minnen and Sylvia L. Hilton of Complutense University in Madrid, Spain will edit a selection of the papers presented at Middelburg 4.

In due course, the theme of Middelburg 5 (April 2001) will be announced in *The Roosevelt Review*, as well as in the newsletters and homepages on the internet of appropriate professional organizations and journals in Europe and the United States. 

What has America gained from the urban explosion in this century? What has it lost? A conference at the RSC examined the significance of the Big City.

Big City: Conference and Photo



From left to right, the organizers of the 1999 American Metropolis conference: Marja Roholl, Hans Krabbendam, and Tity de Vries with U.S. Public Affairs Officer Stephen Rounds and NASA President Hans Bak.

On June 2-4, 1999 the Netherlands American Studies Association (NASA), as has become customary, held its annual meeting at the RSC. In recognition of the impact of urbanization in this century, the conference theme was "The American Metropolis: Image and Inspiration." Over the past two decades, the rediscovery of "the city" by scholars of history, social sciences, film and tv studies, musicology, art history and cultural and literary studies, has generated a wealth of information about the American metropolis and its representation.

The metropolis conference at the RSC was well attended by some sixty persons from several European countries (the Netherlands, Belgium, United Kingdom, Poland and Italy) and the United States. Especially the involvement of representatives of urban research groups from the universities of Birmingham/ Nottingham and of Ghent, enhanced the program with interdisciplinary comparisons.

One of the highlights of the conference was the evening lecture by Professor Portia Maultsby from Indiana University. Sharing her rich collection of funk music tapes with an attentive audience, she described the development of funk music in industrial cities. Other speakers addressed the impact of the metropolis on post-modern science fiction, life style, advertising and the entertainment industry. Almost all paper presenters used illustrations, slides, musical fragments and/or video tapes to show the versatility of the images of urban America. While discussing the difficulties and dangers of modern city environments, the conference participants greatly enjoyed the peaceful charm of historic Middelburg.

A selection of the papers presented at the American metropolis conference is scheduled to be published in 2000 in the series "European Contributions to American Studies" of the VU University Press in Amsterdam.

Changing New York: A Photo Exhibit

On the first day of the conference John Raeburn, Professor of English and Chair of the American Studies Program at the University of Iowa, offered an enlightening comparison of the photographs of Berenice Abbott and the paintings of Edward Hopper. This was the prelude to the opening of the RSC summer photo exhibit entitled "New York in the 1930s: Photographs by Berenice Abbott" by Mr. Stephen Rounds, Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy in The Hague.

The exhibit featured a representative selection of thirty-five photographs taken from Abbott's more than three-hundred-picture series "Changing New York." They depict architectural landmarks, the contrast in the housing of the upper and lower classes, the city's shops, factories and churches, and its main traffic and transportation hubs. Viewed together, Abbott's pictures reveal how New York City in the 1930s was transformed into a modern metropolis while still retaining pockets of the past.

Wall Street District (1938). Looking down the full length of Wall Street towards the East River, the top of the Bankers Trust pyramid to the left is in rhythm with the stepped tower of 120 Wall Street at water's edge. The tower between them is the Bank of the Manhattan Company building.

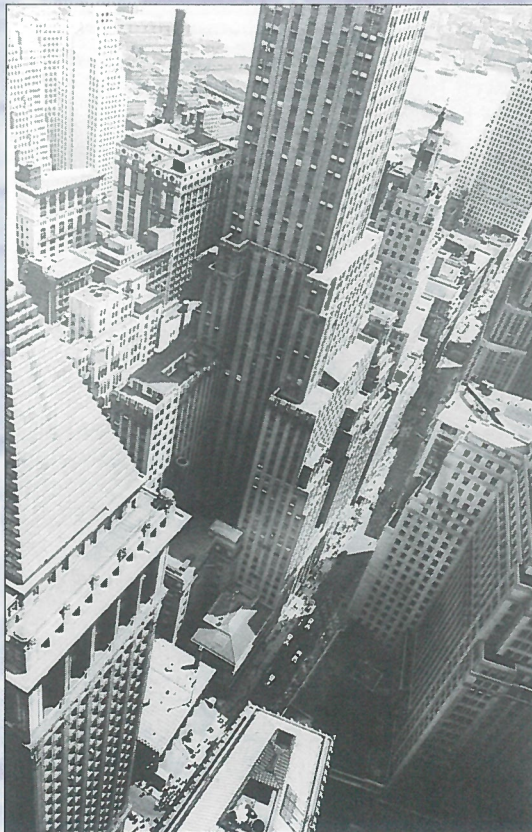


Exhibit on the American Metropolis

Berenice Abbott was born on July 17, 1898 in Springfield, Ohio. At the age of 20 she set out for New York City seeking to become a writer. After a severe illness in the winter of 1919, however, Abbott felt dissatisfied with the bohemian lifestyle in Greenwich Village, abandoned writing and took up sculpting. In the spring of 1921, Abbott moved to Paris to further pursue her sculpting. There, in 1924, she met photographer Man Ray and was soon learning this new craft. By 1926, with her reputation rivaling his, she forwent sculpting and opened her own portrait studio, where she photographed Europe's cultural elite.


In January 1929, Abbott returned to the United States for what was planned as a short visit. During her absence New York had experienced a skyscraper boom. Abbott was astounded by the changes in the city and felt a strong desire to document this change photographically. Then, in October 1929, the U.S. economy collapsed. Despite financial difficulties and a declining market for portrait photography, Abbott gained recognition as an artist. In September 1935, Abbott received a commission from the Federal Arts Project (FAP) to make a comprehensive photographic overview of New York. The FAP was part of

Pike and Henry Streets (1936). Abbott created the illusion that the great structures in the background were closer than they appeared to be. The effect is that the tenements on Pike Street seem to dwarf the gigantic Manhattan bridge, a declaration that poverty is a greater force than public works.



Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration (WPA), aimed at providing relief for artists during the Depression, while simultaneously demonstrating that art contributes to the general welfare.

Abbott's photographs record the overwhelming presence of the skyscraper in relation to smaller buildings of an earlier design: the past competing with the present. She devoted half of "Changing New York" to Lower Manhattan, as the backdrop of Wall Street's financial district and the waterfront with their skyscrapers and bridges contrasted sharply with the immigrant neighborhoods of the Lower East Side. Although New York was well populated, few people appear in her prints. As the project progressed, Abbott developed a more daring, experimental style, and often returned to a site with a new compositional idea in mind.

In October 1937, the Museum of the City of New York, a co-sponsor of the project, opened an exhibition featuring Abbott's first series of photographs of "Changing New York." With glowing reviews from press and public alike, the exhibition established her even more firmly as a celebrity. Interest in Abbott intensified with the popularity of documentary photography, and when she died in 1991 she was considered one of the leading and most innovative American photographers of the twentieth century. 

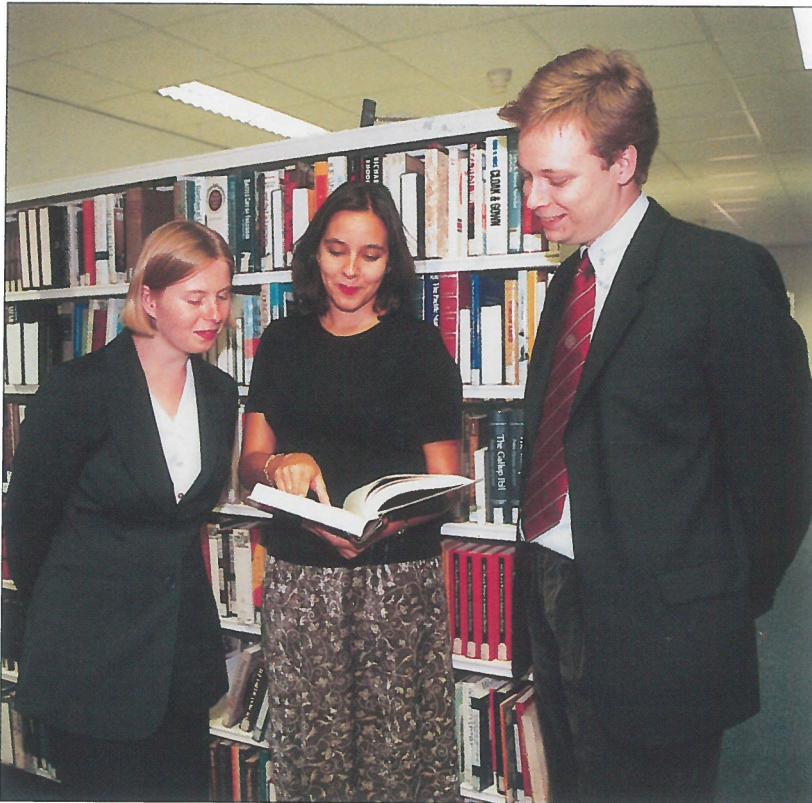


Tempo of the City (1938). The tempo of the city was – and is – fast, and Abbott used small cameras to capture it. The intersection of Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street was the city's main shopping district, which counted 30,000 pedestrians at rush hours. Even today, more than 60 years later, it remains a pedestrian hub.

In the background: City Hall Park, "Newspaper Row" (1936). The massive Victorian skyscrapers on Park Row were built by New York City's nineteenth-century newspaper publishers.

The RSC and the Catholic University of Nijmegen have started a new research project.

Research Projects by RSC Staff Members



The three current RSC Ph.D. candidates in the RSC library (from left to right): Elke van Cassel, Usha Wilbers and Erik van den Berg.

Last year saw the successful completion of a joint RSC-Erasmus University of Rotterdam research project that resulted in two published Ph.D. theses on the differences and similarities between Dutch and U.S. corporate cultures. Utilizing the same type of matching principle, in January 1999 the RSC embarked upon a new four-year research project for two Ph.D. candidates with the Catholic University of Nijmegen. The overall theme of this long-term project is entitled "Magazines and Periodicals as Instruments of Twentieth-Century American Culture." The subject is a perfect fit within the research policies of both the RSC and Nijmegen's American Studies Department.

One Ph.D. candidate, Elke van Cassel, is studying *The Reporter Magazine* (1949-1968) which in the 1950s and 1960s was a very influential periodical, covering a broad spectrum of political, social and cultural topics. The second Ph.D. candidate in this joint RSC-Nijmegen project, Usha Wilbers, is studying the first twenty-five years of the internationally renowned literary quarterly *The Paris Review* which was launched in 1953 in Paris but soon moved its editorial offices to New York. The objective of these two young scholars, both of whom obtained a *cum laude*

M.A. in American Studies at Nijmegen, is to write internal and external histories of the two periodicals and to assess their influence on post-World War II American culture.

Another Ph.D. candidate, who has been affiliated with the RSC since 1997, is the historian Erik van den Berg. Based on a matching principle between the RSC and the University of Leiden, his Ph.D. research project should culminate in a political biography of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. Despite the fact that FDR, Jr. lived in his parent's shadows, he participated in U.S. national politics in the 1950s and 1960s. Special attention in this thesis will be given to his attempts to play an important role in American Liberalism as well as his positions in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. Erik van den Berg has studied archival materials extensively on his topic at the Roosevelt, Kennedy and Johnson libraries in the U.S. as well as at the RSC library. ☞

In cooperation with the University of Leiden, the RSC is organizing a conference on U.S. and Dutch government strategies to control moral behavior.

Conference on the State and Morality

On September 23-24 the RSC organized a conference on "Regulating Morality: A Comparison of the Role of the State in Mastering the Mores in the Netherlands and the United States." The objective of the conference was to compare the experiences of the efforts of each of these nation states to control its citizens' moral behavior. In each of the two countries nineteenth- and twentieth-century developments and contemporary efforts to implement moral policies were examined. The two-day gathering featured a program of eleven Dutch and American speakers representing disciplines such as law, history, political science, sociology and philosophy.

Keynote speakers Professor James Kennedy (Hope College, Holland, Michigan) lecturing on "The Cultural Climate as Explanation for the Differences in Morality in the Netherlands and the U.S." and Professor Paul van Seters (Tilburg University, the Netherlands) discussing "Recent Ethical Developments in the Netherlands and the U.S." opened the conference.

The next speakers addressed the history of prostitution and abortion policies in each

“Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1932

The RSC Research Grants Program

Thanks to a generous contribution from the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, the RSC is able to offer European students of American history a unique opportunity to do research in the attractive and pleasant ambiance of the RSC library. The library holdings include numerous U.S. historical documents not available anywhere else in Europe. In addition to a per diem of NLG 50, the RSC grant covers travel expenses and a lump sum of NLG 100 for photocopies. The research period at the RSC ranges from a minimum of one week to a maximum of four weeks. The maximum grant is NLG 2,000.

In 1999 the following persons received an RSC Research Grant for their projects:

- Gelinada Grynchenko (Kharkov State University, Ukraine), “The American Occupation Policy in Germany and Austria, A Comparative Analysis” (Ph.D.);

- Olaf Stieglitz (University of Bremen, Germany), “We May Be Losing this Generation: Talking about Youth and the Nation’s Future During the New Deal Era” (article);
- John Simon Rofe (University of Wales Swansea, United Kingdom), “The Anglo-American Relationship and Sumner Welles, 1938-1941” (Ph.D.);
- Collin J. Cox (University of Cambridge, United Kingdom), “Presidential Initiatives to Promote Health Insurance Reform, 1952-1963” (M.A.);
- Douglas M. Charles (University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom), “The FBI, Franklin Roosevelt, and the Anti-Interventionist Movement, 1939-1945” (Ph.D.);
- Andrew Johnstone (University of Birmingham, United Kingdom), “The Role of Private Interest Groups in the Formulation of American Foreign Policy During World War II” (Ph.D.);
- Valeria G. Lerda (University of Genoa, Italy), “Eleanor Roosevelt as Woman Reformer” (article);
- Florence Degand (University of Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium), “Belgian-American Relations Between the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962 and President Kennedy’s Assassination in November 1963” (M.A.);
- Michael Ottolenghi (University of Cambridge, United Kingdom), “Truman and the Recognition of the State of Israel” (undergraduate dissertation);
- Aneta Bilinska (Warsaw University, Poland), “The Dust Bowl Region in Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Policy, 1932-1940” (M.A.);
- Joachim Verhoeyen (University of Ghent, Belgium), “The FBI Responsibilities Program, 1951-1955” (M.A.);
- Wendy Toon (University of Keele, United Kingdom), “U.S. Re-education in Germany and Japan, 1944-1948” (Ph.D.);
- Catherine Callard (University of St. Andrews, United Kingdom), “John F. Kennedy’s Handling of the Laotian Crisis, 1961-1962” (M.A.);
- Jakub Tyszkiewicz (University of Wroclaw, Poland), “The Relations Between Poland and the United States, 1956-1968” (book).


Left, Keynote speakers Professors James Kennedy and Paul van Seters at the Conference on the State and Morality.

organized a conference
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country, the course and contents of family law (divorce, adoption, gay and lesbian marriage), and the legislation and jurisprudence on euthanasia, an ongoing debate in both countries. These cases revealed the strategies, successes and (unintended) consequences of state regulation. The conference concluded with a discussion on the importance of a national myth in effecting changes in morality.

The papers presented at this meeting will be edited by the conference organizers, RSC Assistant Director Hans Krabbendam and Leiden University’s Hans-Martien ten Napel, and published in a series of Leiden’s E.M. Meijers Institute of Legal Studies. 

European students seeking a masters or doctorate in American history as well as advanced scholars are invited to apply for the 2000 Research Grants. Application forms and relevant information on the RSC archival collections are available upon request. 

Every five years a committee composed of international scholars is asked to evaluate the work of the RSC.

Assessment of RSC by Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences




The assessment committee at the director's office, (left to right): Bert Warmelink, Professor Hans Bertens, RSC Director Cornelis van Minnen, Professor Serge Ricard, and Professor Frits van Holthoorn.

Once every five years all of the research institutes affiliated with the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences are subject to peer review by an independent external committee of national and international experts. The assessment is oriented towards determining the national and international position of the institute as a whole based on its research and acquisition policies and its concrete academic achievements in the past five years. Also, the quality of the internal management (including staff and financial policies as well as the infrastructure of the building) forms part of the assessment.

The committee members of the RSC 1999 assessment were Professor Hans Bertens of the University of Utrecht who served as chair, Professor Frits van Holthoorn, emeritus of the University of Groningen, Professor Serge Ricard of the University of Paris III, Sorbonne Nouvelle, and Bert Warmelink of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences who served as the committee's secretary. The committee, which had received from the director an extensive information file on the RSC's activities from 1994-1999, paid a site visit to the center on June 9 and 10.

In its evaluation report the committee wrote that the RSC in a relatively short period of time had developed into "the most important center of American Studies in the Netherlands." At the same time it expressed concern about

the position of American Studies at Dutch universities. The committee was very positive about the RSC's academic achievements and "proven capability" of cooperation with universities, often based on matching funds, and about the prominent role the RSC plays in Europe owing to its unique archival collections and its success as a conference center.

The relatively small size of the center and its in some ways uncertain funding were considered topics warranting the attention of the boards of both the Royal Academy and the RSC. Reinforcement of its position as a leading center in the Netherlands and expansion of its European role were seen as the main challenges for the next five years. 

The RSC's holdings of U.S. primary reference sources

New Acquisitions a

The microform collections at the RSC form an invaluable primary reference source for scholars of American history. At present they cover many aspects of U.S. twentieth-century history during the presidencies of Theodore Roosevelt through Richard M. Nixon. Also at the RSC are the U.S. State Department records on U.S.-Dutch diplomatic relations from the 1780s through the 1960s. In 1999 grants from the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute and the Zeeland Library enabled the RSC to add an important new collection to its already unique holdings.

Records of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, 1954-1970

No organization was more pivotal to the modern civil rights movement than the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Founded in 1957 by a group of southern ministers, the SCLC energized the struggle for civil rights with its emphasis on direct but nonviolent action. It also provided the civil rights movement with its most charismatic and inspirational leader, Martin Luther King, Jr. who headed the organization from 1957 until his assassination in 1968.

Produced in cooperation with the King Library and Archives of the Martin Luther King,

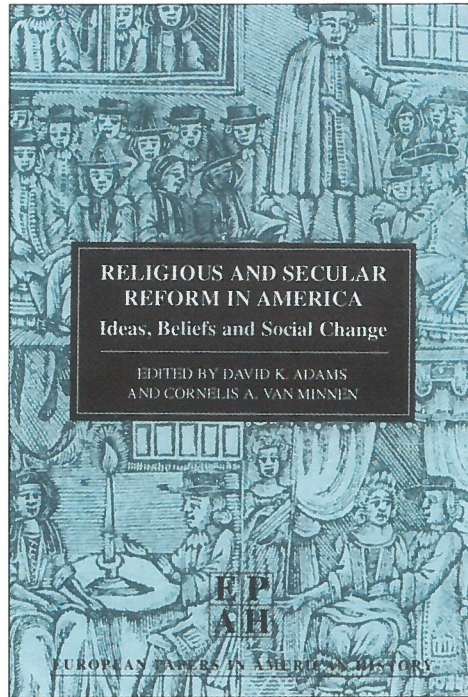
Just Published

Beat Culture: The 1950s and Beyond (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1999). The nineteen essays in this volume, edited by Cornelis A. van Minnen, Jaap van der Bent and Mel van Elteren, were presented by both Americans and Europeans at the 1998 Netherlands American Studies Association Beat conference at the RSC. They discuss the Beat Generation and its legacy from historical, literary and autobiographical perspectives, offering fresh insights into Beat authors such as Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg and Lawrence Ferlinghetti, the subculture of the Beats and its reception in Europe, as well as the role of gender and ethnicity.

European Perceptions of the Spanish-American War of 1898 (Bern-Berlin-New York: Peter Lang, 1999).

The ten essays in this volume, edited by Sylvia L. Hilton and Steve J.S. Ickringill, focus on reactions in different parts of Europe to the Spanish-American War of 1898 as primarily expressed by journalists, publicists, politicians and other self-conscious framers of public

opinion. The publication is the result of a pan-European research project which had its origins at the 1993 First Middelburg Conference of European Historians of the United States. The participants of this project held their final meeting to present and discuss their papers, again at the RSC, in April 1998.



Cover illustration:
Wood cut from
Anonymous,
The Quakers'
Art Courtship
(London, 1710).

Religious and Secular Reform in America: Ideas, Beliefs and Social Change (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press and New York: New York University Press, 1999). Published by both presses in hardcover and paperback editions.

In this volume, edited by David K. Adams and Cornelis A. van Minnen and covering the eighteenth through twentieth centuries, twelve eminent historians offer a mix of general overviews and specific case studies to illuminate various aspects of religious and secular reform – a central issue in the American experience. The papers were presented in 1997 at the RSC's Third Middelburg Conference of European Historians of the United States.


Through the Cultural Looking Glass: American Studies in Transcultural Perspective (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1999). Edited by Hans Krabbendam and Jaap Verheul, this volume offers nineteen essays that discuss past, recent and future developments within American Studies as manifested in the United States and in various European countries.

Central to the book is the question: Is American Studies a form of cultural self-reflection in the U.S. and Europe? The papers form a timely assessment of current discussions on the position of American Studies. They were delivered in 1997 at the RSC when the Netherlands American Studies Association celebrated its twentieth anniversary.

inue to grow.

the RSC Library

Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc., this collection in four parts provides researchers at all levels with access to primary source materials from the epicenter of the modern civil rights movement. Included are organizational papers of such legendary figures as Ella J. Baker, Andrew J. Young, Ralph David Abernathy, Septima Clark and Martin Luther King, Jr. The records also comprise field reports from civil rights activists at the front lines of the movement, correspondence with SNCC, NAACP and other groups, fund-raising and financial records and public relations materials. Background files on many of the SCLC projects – from its earliest organizational meetings to the sit-ins, freedom rides, mass demonstrations, voter registration drives and antipoverty programs – are also included. This collection is a valuable addition to the other civil rights collections at the RSC covering the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

To facilitate research, printed finding aids accompany the microform collections. A complete list of the RSC archival materials and audio-visual collection on twentieth-century American history is available on the RSC website on the internet, www.knaw.nl/rscuk00.htm, or will be sent upon request. 

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Information

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For free copies and information on the Center's activities, please contact the Roosevelt Study Center, Abdij 9, P.O. Box 6001, 4330 LA Middelburg, the Netherlands, tel. (31) (0)118-631590, fax (31) (0)118-631593, rsc@zeeland.nl <http://www.knaw.nl/rscuk00.htm>.

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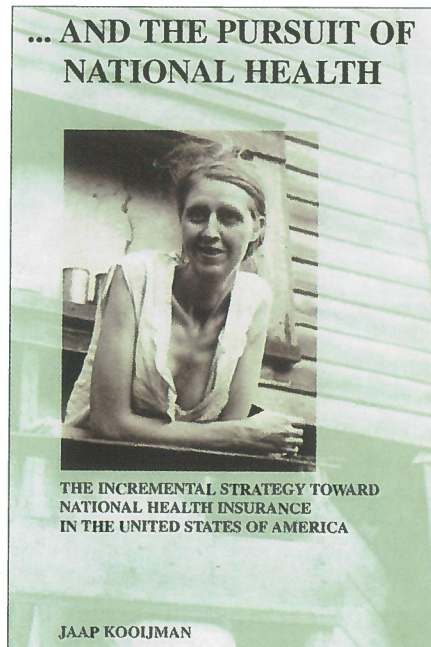
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Cornelis A. van Minnen

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Just Published continued

...*And the Pursuit of National Health: The Incremental Strategy Toward National Health Insurance in the United States of America* (Amsterdam-Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1999).

This well-researched volume was authored by Jaap Kooijman, who was affiliated with the RSC as Ph.D. candidate from 1994-1998 and awarded a *cum laude* doctorate by the University of Amsterdam. It offers an excellent overview of the development of public health insurance from the early twentieth century through the Clinton administration. It is especially noteworthy for its history of the health insurance debate during the Franklin D. Roosevelt and Lyndon B. Johnson administrations.



Cover illustration: *The wife of an unemployed coal miner in Marine, West Virginia, suffering from tuberculosis (September 1938).*

The Roosevelt Years: New Perspectives on American History, 1933-1945 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999). This collection of twelve essays by leading experts on the Roosevelt era has been edited by Robert A. Garson and Stuart S. Kidd. An up-to-date presentation of scholarship it covers such issues as social welfare policy, the politics and bureaucracy of the Roosevelt administrations, the culture of the New Deal years, foreign policy and external relations during the Depression and World War II years, and the Roosevelt legacy since 1945. The essays in this volume serve as a Festschrift in honor of Professor David K. Adams, founder and former director of the David Bruce Centre for American Studies at Keele University. The papers were originally presented in Middelburg in 1997 at a colloquium organized by the Bruce Centre in association with the RSC. 

A Look Ahead

Upcoming events at the RSC in 2000



The Roosevelt Study Center is located in the medieval Abbey of Middelburg in the Province of Zeeland in the Netherlands.

Theodore Roosevelt American History Awards, March 24

Selected by a distinguished jury, the RSC presents an annual prize for the three best M.A. theses on an American history topic written by Dutch university students in the preceding academic year. Replicas of Theodore Roosevelt's 1905 Inaugural Medal and prize money will be awarded to the winners, as well as a trip to "Roosevelt sites" in the U.S. for the first prize winner.

RSC Lecture Series on the Roosevelts, April 5-26

In cooperation with the Zeeland University for Adult Education, the RSC staff will offer four evening lectures on "The Roosevelts: America's First Family, 1880-1980." The lectures, enhanced by the extensive RSC video collection, will focus on the life and times of Presidents Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and Franklin Roosevelt, Jr.

Four Freedoms Awards Ceremony, May 27

Middelburg's Abbey is the venue for the biennial presentation of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Awards to a number of world citizens who are honored for their commitment to FDR's Four Freedoms.

Conference on Ideas of the American Future, June 14-16

"Dreams of Paradise, Visions of Apocalypse: Utopia and Dystopia in American Culture" is the theme of the 2000 Netherlands American Studies Association conference. The conference aims to explore the cultural significance of utopian and dystopian perceptions of the American future throughout American history. Working from a multi- and interdisciplinary angle, it seeks especially to emphasize revisionary interpretations and projects in the fields of religion, media, gender, and popular and minority cultures.

Conference on the Dutch relations with California, October 5-6

This two-day conference, entitled "California Dreams: Historical and Contemporary Relations Between the Netherlands and California," will examine such topics as Dutch emigration to and settlements in California, business relations, and cultural influences as expressed in literature, music, the Hollywood film industry, and life styles like flower power and New Age.