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Cal Poly History Professor Awarded Dissertation Prize

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly History Professor Sarah Bridger was awarded the Allan Nevins Dissertation Prize by the Society of American Historians.

Bridger, who joined the Cal Poly faculty in September 2011, wrote her doctoral dissertation on "Scientists and the Ethics of Cold War Weapons Research" (Columbia University, 2011). The paper examines debates among scientists and within scientific communities regarding their role in military programs of the post-Sputnik, Vietnam, and late-Cold War eras.

The Nevins Prize is awarded each year to the best-written doctoral dissertation on an American subject. It is intended "to honor dissertations for literary distinction and for making a significant contribution to historical knowledge." The prestigious award included a cash honorarium of \$2,000 and a contract with a major national book publisher. Bridger accepted the prize at the society's annual meeting in New York City in May.

Bridger is a specialist in U.S. history with a focus on Cold War science, weapons research and ethics. Her teaching interests also include 20th century U.S. politics, culture and foreign relations; the transformative and tumultuous decades of 1960s and 1970s; and the history of American labor.

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