

PRESS RELEASE

Professor Honored for Research on History of Addiction in America

CONTACT: Joseph M. Gabriel
(850) 645-8151
joseph.gabriel@med.fsu.edu

By Barry Ray
March 1, 2009

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.-- A Florida State University historian who specializes in the history of medicine, cultural history and intellectual history has received a major award given to young scholars in his field.



Joseph Gabriel Ph.D.

Joseph M. Gabriel, an assistant professor in Florida State's College of Medicine and a courtesy professor in the Department of History, has received the Jack D. Pressman-Burroughs Wellcome Award from the **American Association for the History of Medicine**. The association is North America's oldest continuously functioning scholarly organization devoted to the study of all aspects of the history of the health professions, disease, public health and related subjects. Gabriel was honored for his scholarly project "Gods and Monsters: Drug Addiction and the Origins of Modern America." In its award citation, the association stated in part that Gabriel "sets out to trace what it means to be addicted in the United States. Through graceful writing and powerful research, he incorporates intimate aspects of personal experience alongside piercing analysis of the central role of addictive substances in American military, medical, and commercial life. Gabriel's manuscript argues that the physical experience of use of strong substances is a product not simply of social constraints but also of market forces and political anxieties." The award and a stipend of \$1,000 are given yearly for outstanding work in 20th-century history of medicine or medical science, as demonstrated by the completion of a Ph.D. and a proposal to turn the dissertation into a publishable monograph. For his part, Gabriel described himself as "both honored and humbled to be given this award. It's really exciting for me to be recognized by my peers in this way. Jack Pressman was a wonderful historian, and I'll do my best to live up to his legacy." Pressman was a distinguished historian of medicine and an associate professor of the history of the health sciences at the University of California, San Francisco until his death in 1997. "Joe Gabriel brings a wonderful perspective to our young College of Medicine's students and faculty," said Myra Hurt, the college's senior associate dean for research and graduate programs and a professor of biomedical sciences. "His interests and his colleagues in the area of the history of medicine have enlivened the college's 'Grand Rounds' seminar series and the medical education courses in which he participates. He is a bright young colleague whose development is exciting to watch!" Gabriel received his Ph.D. in history from Rutgers University in 2006. His dissertation was titled "Gods and Monsters: Drugs, Addiction, and the Origins of Narcotic Control in the Nineteenth-Century Urban North." In it, Gabriel argues that the feeling of "loss of control" that is at the heart of the addictive experience grew out of complicated changes in the culture and economy of the

19th century, and that the emergence of this type of individual experience was fundamentally intertwined with the origins of narcotic control as both a scientific and political project. Among other topics, Gabriel is interested in the changing experience of health and illness, the history of medicine and psychiatry, the history of pharmacy and pharmaceuticals, cultural history, the history of technology, and the history of pragmatism and neo-pragmatism. He will be presented with the Jack D. Pressman-Burroughs Wellcome Award at the 2009 meeting of the American Association for the History of Medicine, which is scheduled to be held in Cleveland on April 23-26.