



*Appointment  
Of  
Regents Professorship*

**Dr. Brett L. Walker**

In recognition of his outstanding service to Montana State University, the Montana University System and the State of Montana and in appreciation for his unique contribution to the field of history, especially Japanese environmental history, the Board of Regents of Higher Education for the State of Montana appoints Brett L. Walker as a Regents Professor.

In 1999, Montana State University was fortunate to recruit a young scholar, Brett L. Walker, from Yale University. In his nine years here, Brett has risen rapidly through the ranks to become a full professor and the Department Head of History and Philosophy at Montana State University in Bozeman. He has gone from rising star to mature scholar in record time, making a name for himself and MSU in the fields of East Asian history, the history of science, and Japanese environmental history.

Professor Walker has been a prolific scholar. In eight years, Professor Walker has produced three monographs, five book chapters, five refereed journal articles, and translations of his first two books into Japanese – an outstanding scholarly output. Dr. Walker's two monographs have received award nominations from prestigious national societies. The 2001 monograph *The Conquest of Ainu Lands: Ecology and Culture in Japanese Expansion, 1590-1800*, was nominated for the John Whitney Hall Prize from the Association for Asian Studies. *The Lost Wolves of Japan* (2005) received three nominations: the John Whitney Hall Prize, the George Perkins Marsh Prize from the American Society for Environmental History and the John King Fairbank Prize from the American Historical Association.

One of Dr. Walker's journal articles won the Leopold-Hidy Award for best article published in the journal *Environmental History*. His latest work, *Toxic Archipelago: A History of Industrial Disease in Japan*, will be published by the University of Washington press in 2009. MSU has honored Dr. Walker with the Charles and Nora L. Wiley Award for Meritorious Research and the College of Letters and Science Meritorious Research Award. This year he was nominated for the Executive Committee for the American Society for Environmental History, another measure of his stature in his chosen field.

Since coming to MSU, Professor Walker has given 38 invited lectures at national and international venues, as well as presented papers and served on panels at 17 conferences. He recently organized the conference "Japan's Natural Legacies: Bodies and Landscapes Realized, Idealized, and Poisoned" in Big Sky, MT. This conference, co-sponsored with Harvard and Notre Dame Universities, attracted environmental

historians from around the world. Attendees called it the most significant Japanese environmental history conference in the last decade and credited Dr. Walker for making it a reality.

Professor Walker has been an exemplary university citizen and an outstanding advocate for MSU. He has worked diligently to grow the History Department's graduate programs, including development of the new Ph.D. in American history. He is an outstanding teacher and has been a leader in grant acquisition. He is currently the principal investigator on a three-year NSF Social Studies of Science, Engineering, and Technology Grant for Collaborative Research entitled "Technological Symmetry and Hybrid Environments at the Ashio and Anaconda Copper Mines" which will bring more than \$305,000 to MSU.

Professor Walker is recognized as one of MSU's finest teachers, one who challenges his students to achieve at the highest level. He provides students, graduate and undergraduate, with the tools that make them critical thinkers and, therefore, better able to meet life's formidable career, social, and personal challenges. Professor Walker shares his knowledge, making us all better. He co-authored a Staff Expansion Grant from the Japan Foundation which bridge-funded a new faculty position in Sociology and Anthropology linked to the Japan Studies option and minor. In 2007, he co-authored a successful Title VI grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Education to fund expansion into Asian languages by our Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. The grant will fund Mandarin and lay further groundwork for an Asian Studies program.

Dr. Walker's achievements raise the level of excellence in our universities, inspire our students and faculty, and encourage excellence in all of us. The Regents Professorship is the highest honor in the Montana University System, and it is our distinct honor and pleasure to award this honor on Dr. Brett L. Walker.

*Approved* this 20<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2008

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Geoffrey Gamble, President  
Montana State University

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Sheila M. Stearns  
Commissioner of Higher Education

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Stephen M. Barrett, Chairman  
Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education