

Sean Brennan

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Department of History
University of Scranton
Saint Thomas Hall 308C
Scranton, PA 18510

EDUCATION

Ph.D., History, May 2009

University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN

Historical Fields:

Twentieth Century Russia, emphasis on Religious, Diplomatic, and Political History

Nineteenth Century Russia

Twentieth Century Germany

History of American Foreign Relations

Dissertation: "The Politics of Religion in Soviet-occupied Germany: The Case of Berlin-Brandenburg 1945-1949"

Advisor: Dr. Semion Lyandres

M.A., History, 2003

Villanova University, Villanova, PA

Historical Field:

Modern European History 1750-1991

Master's Thesis: "Building Situations of Strength: Dean Acheson, the Korean War, and German Rearmament June 1950-May 1952"

B.A., History, 2001, magna cum laude, with honors

Rockhurst University, Kansas City, MO

TEACHING POSITIONS

Professor of History, University of Scranton, 2009-

Adjunct Instructor, University of Notre Dame, 2008-2009

Teaching Assistant, University of Notre Dame 2004-2006

Teaching Assistant, Villanova University, 2002-2003

PUBLICATIONS

(Books)

The Essential Speeches of the Cold War Routledge Press (September 2024)

Look Out Below!: The Story of the Airborne by a Paratrooper Padre by Francis Sampson, The Catholic University of America Press (June 2023) *Introduction Only for the New Edition*

Warren Austin, Henry Cabot Lodge Jr, and the Cold War at the United Nations 1947-1960 Lexington Books (December 2022)

The KGB and the Vatican: Secrets from the Mitrokhin Files Catholic Education Press (August 2022)

The Priest Who Put Europe Back Together: The Life of Rev. Fabian Flynn, CP The Catholic University of America Press (December 2018)

The Politics of Religion in Soviet-Occupied Germany: The Case of Berlin-Brandenburg 1945-1949 Lexington Books (November 2011)

(Journal Articles and Articles in Edited Volumes)

“Father Fabian Flynn, CP, Pius XII and Catholic Relief Services: A Resource for Refugees and a Tool Against the Communists” *A Vatican-Atlantic Alliance: Pius XII and the Role of US Papal Diplomats in the Cold War* Massimiliano Valente, eds. Rome: Viella Press, January 2025. 113-120.

“William Warren Scranton and the United Nations 1976-1977” Athens Journal of History Volume 8, Number 4, October 2022 (Online version available: [Proceedings Template - WORD \(athensjournals.gr\)](#))

“George H.W. Bush, James Baker, Nursultan Nazarbayev and American Recognition of Kazakh Independence August-December 1991” Farabi Journal of Social Sciences Volume 8, Number 1, June 2022 (Online version available: [GEORGE H.W. BUSH, JAMES BAKER, NURSULTAN NAZARBAYEV, AND AMERICAN RECOGNITION OF KAZAKH INDEPENDENCE AUGUST-DECEMBER 1991 | Farabi Journal of Social Sciences \(kaznu.kz\)](#))

“General Dwight Eisenhower and the Soviet Alliance During the Second World War” Kazakh National University Bulletin: International Relations and International Law Series, Volume 91, Number 3, September 2020 (Online version available: [GENERAL DWIGHT EISENHOWER AND THE SOVIET ALLIANCE DURING](#)

[THE SECOND WORLD WAR | International Relations and International Law Journal \(kaznu.kz\)](http://kaznu.kz)

“Henry Cabot Lodge Jr and the Catholic Church” US Catholic Historian February 2019

“Land Reform Propaganda in Soviet Occupied Germany” Munitions of the Mind Blog, Centre for the Study of War, Propaganda, and Society, the University of Kent, November 23, 2016. (Online version available: <http://blogs.kent.ac.uk/munitions-of-the-mind/2016/11/23/propaganda-in-soviet-occupied-germany/>)

“From Harvard to Nuremberg: Father Fabian Flynn and his service with the Big Red One’s 26th Infantry Regiment 1942-1946” US Catholic Historian April 2015

“Relations between American and Russian leaders and their effect on the rivalry between Washington and Moscow since 1991” Our Past and Present in the Shadow of the Cold War: The Legacy and Reemergence of a conflict between the United States and Russia Budapest: Antall Jozsef Knowledge Center Imprint 2014. 104-112. (Online version available: <http://ajtk.hu/en/our-past-and-present-shadow-cold-war-essay-collection-and-video-series>)

“‘Christianity and Socialism are Not Opponents’: The Propaganda Offensive in Berlin-Brandenburg under Soviet occupation concerning ‘Religious Freedom’ under Communism” Religion in Eastern Europe Volume XXIX, February 2009 (Online version available at: <http://www.georgefox.edu/academics/undergrad/departments/soc-swk/ree/09index.html>)

“A Constant Chill Throughout the Cold War: The Recent Historiography of Soviet/Japanese Relations from 1945-1991” Concept, The Journal of the Villanova Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Spring 2002

“The Little School on the Hill: The Founding of Rockhurst College” The Missouri Historical Review Volume 16, Number 1, October 2001 32-45.

(Editorial Work)

The Cold War Encyclopedia-Routledge Press
(Editorial Board 2023-)

(Book and Documentary Reviews)

Gulag Boss: A Soviet Memoir by Fyodor Mochulsky, translated by Deborah Kaple History: Reviews of New Books Volume 39, Number 3, Page 90 July 2011

Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume E–15, Part 1, Documents on Eastern Europe, 1973–1976 edited by Peter Kraemer and Edward Keefer [H-Diplo](#) December 2011

The German Democratic Republic by Peter Grieder [Central European History](#) December 2013

The Origins of Christian Democracy: Politics and Confession in Modern Germany by Maria Mitchell [The American Historical Review](#) December 2013

Lyuchshii Drug Nemetskogo Naroda: Culti Stalina v Vostochnoi Germanii 1945-1961 by Aleksei Tikhomirov [The American Historical Review](#) February 2017

With God in America by Walter Ciszek [Journal of Jesuit Studies](#) Spring 2017

The League of Nations and Refugees from Nazi Germany: James G. McDonald and Hitler's Victims by Greg Burgess [German Studies Review](#) October 2017

Richard M. Nixon and European Integration: A Reappraisal by Joseph Siracusa and Hang Thi Thuy Nguyen [H-Fedhist](#) August 2018

Soldiers of a Different Cloth: Notre Dame Chaplains in World War II by John Wukovits [American Catholic Studies](#) Spring 2019

Catholic Modern: The Challenge of Totalitarianism and the Remaking of the Church by James Chappel [Europe Now](#) June 2019

Britain and the German Churches 1945-1950: The Role of the Religious Affairs Branch in the British Zone by Peter Howson [Church History](#) March 2022

Nazis of Copley Square: The Forgotten Story of the Christian Front by Charles Gallagher [American Catholic Studies](#) Summer 2022

The Gates of Hell: An Untold Story of Faith and Perseverance in the Early Soviet Union by Matthew Heise [Church History](#) December 2022

Hollywood Priest: The Story of Fr. "Bud" Kieser, Pray: The Story of Patrick Peyton, and Taking a Chance on God [American Catholic Studies](#) Summer 2023

The DJ Who "Brought Down" The USSR: The Life and Legacy of Seva Novgorodsev [Journal of Radio and Audio Media](#) Spring 2024

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

(University Workshops)

“World War I: The Watershed Event of the Twentieth Century” The Schemel Forum, University of Scranton, March-April 2014

“A Century of Russian Foreign Relations” The Schemel Forum, University of Scranton, October-December 2014

“The German Century in Six Years” The Schemel Forum University of Scranton, October-December 2015

“The Romanovs 1613-1917” The Schemel Forum, University of Scranton, March-May 2017

“The Habsburg Monarchy 1519-1918” The Schemel Forum, University of Scranton, March-May 2018

“Dwight Eisenhower and the American Century” The Schemel Forum, University of Scranton, September-November 2019

“Berlin: The Capital of the Twentieth Century” The Schemel Forum, University of Scranton, August-September 2020

“James Bond and the Cold War” The Schemel Forum, University of Scranton March-May 2022

“Indiana Jones and the Twentieth Century” The Schemel Forum, University of Scranton, September-October, 2023

“CS Lewis and JRR Tolkien: Christian Mythology in Literature and Film” The Schemel Forum, University of Scranton, September-October 2024

(Chair/Commentator/Panel Participant/Speaker)

“Compromise, Collaboration, and Dissent: Christians and Church-State Relations in the Shadow of the Cold War” Association for Slavic, Eastern European and Eurasian Studies Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, November 22, 2024

“Friendships, Rivalries, and Personal Networks as Factors in the 1917 Russian Revolution” Association for Slavic, Eastern European and Eurasian Studies Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 30, 2023

“Christians Navigate Changing and Challenging Situations: A Polish, Czech and East German Case” Association for Slavic, Eastern European and Eurasian Studies Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 30, 2023

“Catholics and the Second World War” American Catholic Historical Association Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, January 7, 2023

“Catholics and Education” American Catholic Historical Association Spring Meeting, University of Scranton, April 22, 2022

“War and Cold War” American Catholic Historical Association Spring Meeting, University of Scranton, April 22, 2022

“Cooperation and Opposition between Communist Regimes and Religious Institutions in Eastern Europe in the 1960s and 1970s” Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 18, 2021

World Congress of School History Teachers, Sponsored by the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia, October 4-7 2021

“Stresses and Tensions between Christians and Communists in ‘Developed Socialism’: The Cases of the GDR and Poland” Association for Slavic, Eastern European and Eurasian Studies Conference November 7 2020. Virtual Conference

“The Brief Life of Socialism With a Human Face: The 1968 Prague Spring” Villanova University, November 7 2018
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgGHTuvrtoM&t=3s>

“The Life of Rev. Fabian Flynn” Fall Keynote Speech, American Catholic Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, October 16 2018

“Fear and Loathing in the Postwar” German Studies Association Conference, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, September 30 2018

“Winning their Place in the United States: Asian Pacific Americans in the Second World War and the Cold War” Keynote Speech Wilkes-Barre VA Hospital, May 24 2018

“Permanent Enemies of the State?: Religious Institutions and Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe during the Cold War” Association for Slavic, Eastern European and Eurasian Studies Conference, Chicago, Illinois, November 12, 2017

“Building Communism in the Soviet Union” Midwest Slavic Conference, Ohio State University, April 8, 2017

“European Catholic Thought in Modern Europe” American Historical Association Conference, Atlanta, Georgia January 8 2016

“Catholicism in Modern Poland: Church, State, and Culture” Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Conference, San Antonio, Texas November 22 2014

“The United States, the Russian Federation, and the United Nations since 1991” Keynote Speech at U.N. Day, United Nations Association of Northeastern Pennsylvania, October 24 2014

“Catholic Oppression: Poland, Ireland, Puerto Rico, Japan” American Historical Association Conference, Washington DC, January 5 2014

“Darkness and Light at Noon: Different Ways Intelligence Organizations Saw, and Missed, Central Europe’s Revolutions” Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, November 23, 2013

“Christians and Communists in Eastern Europe under the Shadow of the Cold War” Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Conference, Los Angeles, California, November 19, 2010.

“Faith and Politics in 20th Century Italy” American Catholic Historical Association Spring Meeting, Princeton University, March 13, 2010.

(Paper Presentation)

“American Presidents and their Commencement Addresses at the University of Notre Dame” American Catholic Historical Association Spring Meeting, Saint Norbert’s College, Wisconsin, March 28, 2025

“The Russo-Ukrainian War: The International Response” Keynote Address for the Sevent World Conference on Social Sciences, Zurich, Switzerland, July 5, 2024

“The Endgame of the Cold War: The Speeches of Reagan, Bush, Gorbachev, and Yeltsin 1987-1991” Seventh World Conference on Social Sciences, Zurich, Switzerland, July 5, 2024

“The Effect of Ronald Reagan’s ‘Tear Down This Wall’ Speech” Broadcast Educators Association Conference, Las Vegas, Nevada, April 14, 2024

“The Opening Speeches of the Cold War: Churchill, Truman, Stalin and Zhdanov, 1946-1947” Sixth World Conference on Social Sciences, Pepperdine University, Malibu, California, August 17, 2023

“Fabian Flynn, CP, Pius XII, and Catholic Relief Services: A Resource for Refugees and a Tool against the Communists” A Vatican-Atlantic Alliance: Pius XII and the role of papal diplomats in the Cold War Conference, Notre Dame Global Gateway, Rome, Italy, November 18, 2022

“William Warren Scranton and the United Nations” 20th Annual International Conference on History & Archaeology: From Ancient to Modern, Athens Institute for Education and Research, Athens, Greece, May 30, 2022

“General Dwight Eisenhower and the Soviet Alliance during the Second World War.” 75th Anniversary of the End of the Second World War Virtual Conference Russian Academy of Sciences, June 23, 2021

“On the Edge of the Cold War: Henry Cabot Lodge Jr’s Official Visit to the Soviet Union, January-February 1960” Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Summer Meeting, University of Zagreb, Croatia, June 14, 2019

“The KGB vs the Vatican: Revelations from the Vasili Mitrokhin Archives” Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, December 7, 2018

“An American in Bonn: Henry Cabot Lodge Jr’s Service as US Ambassador to West Germany 1968-1969” German Studies Association Conference, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, September 30, 2018

“An American in Rome: Henry Cabot Lodge Jr ‘s Service as US Ambassador to the Vatican 1970-1974” American Historical Association Conference, Washington DC, January 6, 2018

"George H.W. Bush, James Baker, Nursultan Nazarbayev and American Recognition of Kazakh Independence August-December 1991" Midwest Slavic Conference, Ohio State University, April 8, 2017

“Relations Between the United States and Kazakhstan 1991-2016: From Independence to Cooperation” International Research Conference on Kazakh Foreign Relations after Independence, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan October 21 2016

“The Origins of the War on Terror” International Youth Forum on Regional Extremism and Terrorism, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan, October 15, 2016

“True Refugees from Communism?: Catholic Relief Services and Yugoslav Refugees in Austria 1955-1967” Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 18 2015

“Charitable Aid as the Best Weapon Against Communism: Catholic Relief Services and Charitable Assistance to Poland and Hungary 1955-1962” American Catholic Historical Association Spring Meeting, University of Notre Dame March 27, 2015

“The German and Austrian Question at Yalta and Beyond” The 70th Anniversary of the Yalta Conference, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, February 26, 2015

“Nothing Left Behind: Catholic Relief Services and Hungarian Refugees 1956-1961” Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Conference, San Antonio, Texas November 22, 2014

“Relations Between American and Russian leaders and their effect on the rivalry between Washington and Moscow since 1991” Foreign and Security Policy Conference, Antall Jozsef Knowledge Center for Political and Social Sciences, Budapest, Hungary November 7, 2014

“Confessor to the Nazis: Father Fabian Flynn’s role as the first Catholic Chaplain of the International War Crimes Tribunal at Nuremberg” American Historical Association Conference, Washington DC, January 3, 2014

“The Tragedy of Cardinal Mindszenty and the building of Hungarian Communism through the Eyes of the American Cold Warrior, Father Fabian Flynn” Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, November 22, 2013

“The Cold War as a Catholic Battlefield: Father Fabian Flynn and his service with the 26th Infantry Regiment 1942-1946” American Catholic Historical Association Spring Meeting, Stonehill College, April 5, 2013

“Depictions of the Soviet Union in Herge's 'Tintin in the Land of the Soviets' and interwar Catholic anticommunism” Association for Slavic, East

European, and Eurasian Studies Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 16, 2012

“A Hateful Enemy, a Despised Ally, an Imprisoned People' The Sign magazine and its representations of the Soviet regime and the Russian people before, during and after the Second World War” American Catholic Historical Association Spring Meeting, Tulane University, March 24, 2012

“Father Fabian Flynn of Boston, Cardinal Jozsef Mindszenty of Budapest, and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution” Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies Conference, Washington, DC, November 19, 2011.

“Reviving Christian Europe: Catholic Missions in Occupied Germany and Austria” American Catholic Historical Association Spring Meeting, University of Toronto, April 15, 2011.

“History Should Be on Our Side: Soviet Frustration with Their Communist ‘Friends’ and Their Inability to Overcome Western Influences in Occupied Austria, 1945–55” American Historical Association Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, January 7, 2011.

“Not One Step Back: Bishop Otto Dibelius’ Understanding of Communism and the Necessity of Christian Civil Disobedience in the German Democratic Republic” American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, November 12, 2009.

“The Only True Antifascists: The competition between socialist and religious youth and women’s organizations in Berlin-Brandenburg 1945-1949” American Historical Association Conference, New York City, New York. January 4, 2009.

“‘Christianity and Marxism are Not in Opposition: The Soviet Propaganda Offensive in East Germany Concerning ‘Religious Freedom’ in the Soviet Union” American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. November 20, 2008.

“Ten Years in Afghanistan: The Soviet-Afghan War 1978-1988” Phi Alpha Theta Lecture, Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas. October 20, 2008.

“‘Unity Schools are Secular Schools’: The Struggle Over Religious Education in the Secondary Schools of Berlin-Brandenburg 1945-1949” American Catholic Historical Association Spring Meeting, St. Mary’s College. April 5, 2008.

“A Subversive Activity: The Conflict over Charitable Activity by the Protestant and Catholic Churches in Berlin-Brandenburg 1945-1949” American Historical Association Conference, Washington DC. January 6, 2008.

“The Constant Enemies Within: The Policies of the Soviet Military Administration towards the Protestant Church and the Christian Democratic Union in Berlin-Brandenburg 1945-1949,” American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana. November 18, 2007.

“Finding the Truth about the Soviet Occupation Zone of Germany in the Archives of Moscow and Berlin” Phi Alpha Theta Lecture, Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas. September 26, 2007.

"The Limits of Cooperation: The Allied Religious Affairs Committee in Germany, 1945-1948," American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies Conference, Salt Lake City, Utah. November 5, 2005.

“Religion and Society in Early Modern and Modern Germany” Midwest German Historians’ Workshop, University of Minnesota. October 15, 2005.

“Creating Situations of Strength: Dean Acheson, the Korean War, and German Rearmament June 1950-May 1952” James W. Barnes conference for Graduate Research in History, Temple University. April 6, 2003.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Provost Office Intersession Grant January 2021

Provost Office Summer Travel Grant March 2017

American Catholic Historical Association Junior Faculty Travel Grant April 2014

Provost Office Internal Research Grant October 2012

CTLE Development Grant for online version of HIST 120: Europe 1500-1815
2013

CTLE Development Grant for online version of HIST 121: Europe 1815-Present
2012

Language Across the Curriculum Grant, Department of Undergraduate Studies,
The University of Notre Dame, 2009

Dominica and Frank Annese Dissertation Fellowship, Nanovic Institute for
European Studies, The University of Notre Dame, 2006

Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship, Indiana University, 2003

Graduate Student Service Award, Villanova University, 2003

UNIVERSITY SERVICE WORK

University of Scranton

Royals Historical Society
 Faculty Advisor (2009-2014)
 Alpha Sigma Nu Advisory Council
 Faculty Representative (2009-2019)
 Education Department
 Content Supervisor at Area High Schools (2010-)
 Office of Community Outreach
 Chaperon for Spring Break Service Trip for Christian Appalachian Project
 Kentucky (2011-2012, 2014-2015, 2017-2018, 2022, 2024)
 Chaperon for Spring Break Service Trip in New Orleans, Louisiana (2013)
 Chaperon for Spring Break Service Trip to the McKenna Center,
 Washington DC (2016)
 Chaperon for May Service Trip in Baton Rouge, Louisiana (2019)
 Faculty Senate
 Curriculum Committee (2013-2015, 2018-2019)
 Faculty Representative (2018-2020)
 Honors Program Advisory Council
 Faculty Representative (2014-2015, 2019-2025)
 Co-Director (2025-)
 Irish Culture Society
 Faculty Moderator (2024-)
 National History Day
 Northeastern Pennsylvania Regional Program Judge (2016-2018)
 Pennsylvania State Program Judge (2016-2024)
 United States National Championship Judge (2023-)
 Northeastern Pennsylvania Regional Program Director (2018-)
 Pennsylvania State Program Director (2024-)
 New Sommervogel Jesuit Archive Project, Boston College
 Journal Examiner (2016-2017)
 The Global Undergraduate Awards
 Program Judge, History Entries (2021-)
 American Catholic Historical Association
 Executive Council (2021-2024)
 Spring Meeting Program Committee (2022, 2025)
 Pennsylvania Anthracite Heritage Museum
 Executive Board (2023-)

University of Notre Dame

Union of Graduate Historians
 Academic Vice-President (2004-2005)
 Graduate Student Council
 Representative (2004-2005)

Endowed Chair in European History Search Committee
Graduate Student Representative (2008)

Villanova University:

Graduate Student Council
Representative (2001-2002)
President (2002-2003)
Villanova University Senate
Graduate Student Representative (2002-2003)
Academic Policy Committee
Ex Officio Member (2002-2003)
Villanova Quality Improvement Council
Graduate Student Representative (2002-2003)
Staff Member for Concept, the Villanova Graduate School Journal
Peer Reviewer (2001-2002)
Editor (2002-2003)

Rockhurst University:

Alpha Sigma Nu
Member (1999-2000)
President (2000-2001)
Phi Alpha Theta
President (2000-2001)

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies
American Catholic Historical Association
American Catholic Historical Society
Broadcast Educators Association

LANGUAGES

Reading and Speaking Near-Fluency in German and Russian

