

Winner of the 2007 Graduate Prize

Jeff Hoppes (UC Berkeley), "The Formation of the New Model Army Dragoon Regiment"

The Prize Committee for the Best Graduate Essay by a member of PCCBS awards Jeff Hoppes of UC Berkeley this year's award for his essay, "The Formation of the New Model Army Dragoon Regiment." Jeff's advisor is Thomas Barnes, Professor Emeritus of the Department of History and Boalt Hall School of Law, University of California, Berkeley. The prize-winning essay was presented at a panel of the 2006 PCCBS meeting at UC Irvine.

Jeff Hoppes's essay was distinguished by its clarity of argument, the density and variability of its evidence, and the feasibility of its topic given the scope provided. His paper synthesizes material gleaned from numerous secondary and archival sources to trace the careers of dozens of dragoons and their commanding officers during the 1640s. Hoppes's careful sleuthing allows him to confirm the long-held view that, in his words, "the New Model's political activism arose only after the defeat of armed royalism." But perhaps more significant a conclusion is Jeff's finding that the New Model Army from 1645 forward was not a monolithic force held together by ideology and nascent patriotism, but was, as he describes, "a remarkably heterogeneous force, not merely in the sense that it recruited men from all over England or men of varying social standing, but in the sense that generalizations about the men who filled its ranks obscure as much as they reveal." The committee found Jeff Hoppes's sensitivity to the sources, nuanced analysis of the New Modal Army, combined with his ability to build a provable argument and breathe new life into the often neglected field of military history an impressive tour de force.

Prize committee

Lisa Cody, Claremont McKenna College (Chair); Jennifer Andersen, Cal State University, San Bernardino; Dennis Dworkin, University of Nevada, Reno