In mid-January 2009, I had the privilege of attending and presenting at the Appropriating America Conference in Amsterdam. The conference was sponsored by the European Science Foundation’s European Collaborative Research (Eurocores) program entitled “Inventing Europe: Technology in the Making of Europe, 1850 to the Present.” The event was organized by two of the four collaborative research projects currently funded through Eurocores—European Ways of Life in the American Century (EUWOL), led by University of Eindhoven’s Ruth Oldenziel, and Software for Europe: Constructing Europe through Software (SOFT-EU), led by University of Amsterdam’s Gerard Alberts.

Oldenziel and Alberts skillfully crafted an intriguing and deeply meaningful three-day conference (from January 15 to 17) that brought in leading scholars on Americanization from around the world to present at daily plenary sessions. They coupled these with regular sessions from scholars within the two research groups and other historians of science and technology. The regular sessions were organized thematically rather than topically to promote a dialogue between scholars researching different areas in the history of science and technology. Lively discussions and debates took place on Americanization, American hegemony, technology and economic development (the Marshall Plan), Cold War politics, the circulation of knowledge, modes of technological adaption and adoption, and numerous other topics and themes.

I am very pleased to announce two new additions to the IEEE Annals of the History of Computing editorial board: Craig Partridge, chief scientist at BBN Technologies, and Andrew Russell, assistant professor in the College of Arts and Letters at Stevens Institute of Technology. Craig Partridge serves as research director for BBN’s Networking Business Unit, a group of roughly 100 scientists and engineers conducting research in transport protocol design, wireless networks, traffic analysis, high-speed networks, protocol performance, and other areas of computer networking. He also holds an adjunct professorship in the Computer Science Department at the University of Michigan and is a past chair of ACM SIGCOMM. Partridge has long had a deep interest in history: He majored in the field (with concentration on Medieval European history) before completing his MA and PhD in computer science (all from Harvard University). He also brings a great wealth of editorial experience, having served as editor in chief of both ACM SIGCOMM’s Computer Communication Review and IEEE Network Magazine, as well as series coeditor of Addison-Wesley’s Professional Computing Series. Partridge will help recruit article and department content for the Annals.

Andrew Russell is a leading scholar on the important topic of the history of technical standards, having researched and published path-breaking scholarship on computer networking standards. After completing his BA (Vassar University) and MA (University of Colorado) in history, Russell earned his doctorate in the history of science, medicine, and technology from Johns Hopkins University. He was a postdoctoral fellow at the John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute, Duke University, before joining the faculty at Stevens Institute of Technology. Dr. Russell has a long list of fellowships and other honors, including the Adelle and Erwin Tomash Fellowship at the Charles Babbage Institute, University of Minnesota; IEEE Life Members’ Fellowship in Electrical History; and Finalist, Herman E. Krooss Prize for Best Dissertation in Business History. He will serve as an associate editor of the Annals, helping to manage the peer-review process.
In all, more than 60 were papers presented with roughly a dozen on the history of computing and software. (See the conference website, http://www.histech.nl/appram2009/ for the program and paper abstracts. For a more detailed discussion of the overall conference with a focus on the history of computing and software papers, see Helena Durnova’s ‘‘Appropriating America, Making Europe: Conference Report’’ in the Annals April–June 2009 Events and Sightings department [pp. 77–79].)

We are fortunate that Gerard Alberts took the opportunity to bring together a selection of history of computing and software papers from that event, advised authors on their revision, and guest edited this special issue of the Annals that bears the same name as the broader conference. The articles that follow insightfully explore the organizational history of European computing (Ksenia Tatarchenko on the International Federation for Information Processing and David Nofre on Algol), computing in the context of the Cold War (Helena Durnova on Sovietization of Czechoslovak computing and Simon Donig on East German computing), and a contextualization of the early US computer industry (Thomas Haigh). For a fuller introduction to these articles, see Gerard Albert’s guest editor introduction.

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