

Robert C. Post

Employment:

- 2001-02 Senior Resident Fellow, Dibner Inst. for the History of Science and Technology, Cambridge
- 1996-01 Adjunct Professor of History, University of Maryland, College Park
- 1996- Curator Emeritus, National Museum of American History (NMAH), Washington, D.C.
- 1995-96 Senior Resident Fellow, Dibner Inst. for the History of Science and Technology
- 1994-95 Associate Director, Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation, NMAH
- 1983-94 Curator at Large, NMAH
- 1981-95 Editor-in-Chief, *Technology and Culture*, NMAH/Society for the History of Technology
- 1980-82 Curator, Division of Transportation, Dept. of the History of Science and Technology, National Museum of History and Technology (NMHT), and Senior Management Council
- 1979-80 Senior Editor, Smithsonian Books, Washington, D.C.
- 1977-79 Supervising Historian, Exhibits Task Force, NMHT
- 1974-77 Special Assistant, Office of the Director, NMHT
- 1973-74 Museum Technician, Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering, NMHT
- 1972-73 Historian, National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, Nat. Park Service, Washington, D.C.
- 1971-72 Research Fellow, Division of Electricity, NMHT
- 1969-71 Principal Investigator, Los Angeles Metropolitan History Project, City Hall, Los Angeles
- 1970-71 Teaching Assistant, Department of History, UCLA
- 1966-71 Editorial Assistant, *Pacific Historical Review*, Ralph Bunche Hall, UCLA
- 1957-71 Supervisor, Motor Vehicle Division, Los Angeles County Dept. of Beaches, Redondo Beach

Honors:

- Founder's Award, International Drag Racing Hall of Fame, 2013
- Leonardo Da Vinci Medal, Society for the History of Technology, 2001
- David P. Morgan Distinguished Article Award, Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, 2000
- Distinguished Retiring Editor Award, Council of Editors of Learned Journals, 1996
- Awards in Recognition of Exceptional Services, Smithsonian, 1995, 93, 92, 1989, 81, 80, 1978, 77, 76
- Special Commendation, Society for the History of Technology, 1994
- Award for Distinguished Literary Contributions Furthering Public Understanding of the Profession, United States Activities Board, Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers, 1994
- Certificate of Appreciation, American Consulting Engineers Research and Management Foundation, 1991
- Certificate of Design Excellence, Print Casebooks, 1978
- Certificate of Merit, Art Directors Club of Metropolitan Washington, 1977
- Research Fellowship, John and LaRee Caughey Foundation, Los Angeles, 1972-73
- Predoctoral Resident Fellowship, Smithsonian Research Foundation, 1971-72

Books and Monographs:

Who Owns America's Past? The Smithsonian and the Problem of History (Johns Hopkins, 2013, 2017)

Urban Mass Transit: The Life Story of a Technology (Greenwood, 2007; rev. ed., Johns Hopkins, 2010)

The SAE Story: One Hundred Years of Mobility (Society of Automotive Engineers, 2005)

Technology, Transport, and Travel in American History (American Historical Association, 2003)

High Performance: The Culture and Technology of Drag Racing (Johns Hopkins, 1994; rev. ed. 2001)

Street Railways and the Growth of Los Angeles (Golden West Books, 1990)

The Tanook Whalers: Origins, Rediscovery, Revival (Maine Maritime Museum, 1986)

Physics, Patents, and Politics: A Biography of Charles Grafton Page (Science Hist. Publications, 1976)

Edited Volumes:

Historical Perspectives on Technology, Society, and Culture, series co-editor with Pamela O. Long (American Historical Association/Society for the History of Technology, 2000–14), ten vols.

Yankee Enterprise: The Rise of the American System of Manufactures, co-editor with Otto Mayr (Smithsonian Inst. Press, 1981; rev. ed., 1995; Japanese translation 1984)

The Spirit of American Invention (in Japanese) (Assn. for Japan U.S. Community Exchange, 1989)

In Context: History and the History of Technology: Essays in Honor of Melvin Kranzberg, co-editor with Stephen H. Cutcliffe (Lehigh Univ. Press, 1989)

American Enterprise: Nineteenth-Century Patent Models (Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York, 1984)

Every Four Years: The American Presidency (Smithsonian Books, 1980; rev. ed. 1984)

The American Land, co-editor with Joseph Goodwin and Alexis Doster (Smithsonian Books, 1979)

1876: A Centennial Exhibition (National Museum of History and Technology, 1976)

Peer-Reviewed Articles and Essays:

"Our Mel Kranzberg: Risks He Took, Stumbles, and Sometimes a Second Thought," *ICON: \ Journal of the International Committee for the History of Technology* 20 (2014): 6-16

"Back at the Start: History and Technology and Culture," *Tech. and Culture* 51 (2010): 961-94

"Chance and Contingency: Putting Mel Kranzberg in Context," *Tech. and Culture* 50 (2009): 839-72

"A Narrative for Our Time: The *Enola Gay* 'and after that, period'," *Tech. and Culture* 45 (2004): 373-395

"Urban Railways Redivivus: Image and Ideology in Los Angeles, California," in *Suburbanising the Masses: Transport and Urban Development in Historical Perspective*, ed. Colin Divall and Winstan Bond (National Railway Museum, York, England, 2003), 187-209

"A Very Special Relationship: SHOT and the Smithsonian's Museum of History and Technology," *Tech. and Culture* 42 (2001): 401-35

"Images of the Pacific Electric: Why Memories Matter," *Railroad History* 179 (1998): 30-69

"The Call of Stories at the Smithsonian Institution: History of Technology and Science in Crisis," *ICON* 3 (1997): 44-82, co-author with Arthur P. Molella (also translated and published in *Magyar Muzeumok*)

"Technology in Early America: A View from the 1990s," in *Early American Technology: Making and Doing Things from the Colonial Era to 1850*, ed. Judith McGaw (Univ. of North Carolina,

- 1994), 16-39
- "America's Electric Railway Beginnings: Trollers and Daft Dummies in Los Angeles," *Southern Calif. Quarterly* LXIX (1987): 203-221
- "Von Daimler und Benz zu Garlits und Beck: Woher kommen die allerschnellsten Rennwagen?" *Kultur und Technik* 10 (Heft 2, 1986): 114-23
- "Reflections of American Science and Technology at the New York Crystal Palace," *[British] Journal of American Studies* 17 (1983): 337-56
- "Science, Public Policy, and Popular Precepts: Alexander Dallas Bache and Alfred Ely Beach as Symbolic Adversaries," in *The Sciences in the American Context: New Perspectives*, ed. Nathan Reingold (Smithsonian Inst. Press, 1979), 77-98
- "Stray Sparks from the Induction Coil: The Volta Prize and the Page Patent," *Proceedings of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers* CXIV (1976): 1279-87
- "Liberalizers vs Scientific Men in the Antebellum Pat. Office," *Tech. and Culture* 17 (1976): 24-54
- "Electromagnetism as a Motive Power: Davidson's *Galvani*," *Railroad History* 130 (Spring 1974): 5-22
- "The Page Locomotive: Federal Sponsorship of Invention in Mid-19th-Century America," *Tech. and Culture* 13 (1972): 140-69
- "The Fair Fare Fight: An Episode in Los Angeles History," *Southern Calif. Quarterly* LII (1970): 275-98

Book Reviews:

- American Historical Review* (7), *Annals of the History of Computing* (2), *Annals of Science* (2), *Historical Preservation, IA: Journal of the Society for Industrial Archeology* (2), *Isis* (4), *Jour. of American History* (9), *Jour. of Interdisciplinary History*, *Jour. of Transport History* (2), *Jour. of the West* (3), *Maryland Historical Magazine*, *Pacific Historical Review* (10), *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, *Railroad History* (13), *Southern California Quarterly* (3), *Smithsonian* (3), *Technology and Culture* (10) *The Californians* (3)

Other Publications:

- "Urban Mass Transit," "Technological Enthusiasm," and "Society for the History of Technology," *Oxford Encyclopedia of American Scientific, Medical, and Technological History*, ed. Hugh R. Slotten
- "The Land Speed Record and the Last Green Monster," *Tech. and Culture* 50 (2009): 586-93
- "The Bridge and Mackinac Strits: Another Fiftieth Anniversary," *Tech. and Culture* 49 (2008): 752-63
- "Memorial: Silvio A. Bedini, 1917-2009," *Tech, and Culture* 49 (2008): 522-29
- "Two Enthusiasts: The Temple Street Cable Railway," *Tech. and Culture* 48 (2007): 804-09
- "The Machine in the Garden District," *Tech. and Culture* 47 (2006): 91-94
- "Henry Kaiser, Troy Ruttman, and Madmad Muntz," *Tech. and Culture* 46 (2005): 773-78
- "The Last Steam Railroad In America': Shaffer's Crossing, Roanoke, Virginia," *Tech. and Culture* 44 (2003): 560-65
- "The Tancook Whalers," *Maritime Life and Traditions* 15 (June 2002): 40-53
- "History and the History of Technology," *Tech, and Culture* 43 (2002): 123-27
- "A Corner of the Nation's Attic," *Tech. and Culture* 42 (2001): 519-22
- "Drag Racing," *Boyhood in America: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Priscilla Ferguson Clement and Jacqueline S. Reiner (ABC-Clio, 2001), 1:217-21

- "Presidential Address: No Mere Technicalities: How Things Work and Why it Matters," *Tech. and Culture* 40 (1999): 607-620
- Articles on Acetylene, Acrylics, Alloy Steel, Ammonia, Cable Car, Cast Iron, Cybernetics, Detergents, Diamonds, Enamel, Forging, Glass, Governor, Gunpowder, Gyroscope, Lacquer, Pumps, Servomechanism, Steamboat, Streetcar, Subway, Tanker, Trolleybus, and Technological Enthusiasm, *Encyclopedia of Science, Technology, and Society*, ed. Rudi Volti (Facts on File, 1999)
- "Charles Grafton Page," *American National Biography* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1999), 16:897-99.
- "Fourteenth and G, Washington, D.C., Summer of 1941," *Tech. and Culture* 39 (1998): 728-32
- "The Myth Behind the Streetcar Revival," *American Heritage*, May 1998, pp. 95-100
- "Hot Rods and Customs at the Oakland Museum," *Tech. and Culture* 39 (1998):116-21
- "Remembering Lions," *Full Throttle News* 4 (Sept./Oct. 1997): 8-10+
- "The Founder: Melvin Kranzberg, 1917-1995," *Tech. and Culture* 27 (1996): 421-28
- "The Thrall of the Blue Riband," *Invention & Technology* 11 (Winter 1996): 8-19
- "Passing the Baton," *Tech. and Culture* 36 (1995): 735-38
- "This Was the Year that Was," *Technology Review* 97 (January 1994): 68-69
- "Frank Donovan, Jr., and A Delmarva Branch Line Odyssey," *Railroad History* 170 (1994): 72-94
- "Strip, Salt, and Other Straightaway Dreams," in *Possible Dreams: Enthusiasm for Technology in America*, ed. John Wright (Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, 1992), 98-109
- "Railroad History: What's the Object?" *Railroad History* 167 (1992): 5-11
- "The Machines of Nowhere," *Invention & Technology* 8 (Spring 1992): 28-35
- "Transportation," *World Book Encyclopedia* 19 (1991): 380-97 (and 18 shorter articles for *World Book*)
- "Invention in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Icons of Invention: American Patent Models* (Smithsonian Inst. Press, 1990), 14-18
- "Some Traction Prehistory," in *Pioneers of Electric Railroading* (Electric Railroaders Assn., 1990), 1-6
- "Demolishing a Marvel Built for the Ages," *Invention & Technology* 5 (Winter 1990): 30-31
- "Turning the Century," in *Images of America*, ed. Joseph Goodwin (Smithsonian Books, 1989), 108-37
- "Invention in 19th-Century America," in *The Spirit of American Invention* (Tokyo, 1989), 17-20
- "The Cars Won't Fly," *Air and Space Smithsonian* 1 (August-September 1986): 76-84
- "In Praise of Top Fuelers," *Invention & Technology* 1 (Spring 1986): 58-63
- Preface, *The Wessaweskeag Thorndikes* (Maine Maritime Museum, 1986)
- "Tancook Island: Birthplace of the Tancook Whaler," *Quarterboard*, Spring 1986, pp. 4-5+
- "Patent Models: Symbols for an Era," in *American Enterprise* (Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 1984), 8-13
- "Taking the Baton," *Tech. and Culture* 23 (1982): 1-2
- "A Marvel of Engineering," *Historic Preservation* 33 (July-August 1981): 59-63 (essay review of *The Engineering Drawings of Benjamin Henry Latrobe*)
- Editor's Page, *Railroad History* 143-158 inclusive (1980-88), 5+
- "The President as Popular Tribune," in *Every Four Years* (Smithsonian Books, 1980, 1984), 66-75
- "Indiana Salvage: Oldest American Marine Engine Recovered," *Society for Industrial Archeology Newsletter* 7 (September 1979): 1+
- "The American Genius," in *The Smithsonian Book of Invention*, ed. Alexis Doster (Smithsonian Books, 1978; rev. ed., 1982), 22-31
- "From Pillar to Post: The Plight of the Patent Models," *IA: Journal of the Society for Industrial Archeology* 4 (1978): 58-60
- American Maritime Enterprise: Checklist and Guide* (Nat. Museum of History and Technology,

1978)

"A Look at the Smithsonian's 1876," *Tech. and Culture* 17 (1977): 480-82

"Manuscript Sources for Railroad History," *Railroad History* 137 (1977): 38-63

Introduction, *1876: A Centennial Offering* (Iowa State Univ. Press, 1977)

Signers of the Constitution, contributing author (Nat. Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, 1976)

"Steel Ropes into the Howling Wilderness," in *Los Angeles: Biography of a City*, eds. John W. Caughey and LaRee Caughey (Univ. of California Press, 1976), 192-97

"A Look Backward: 233 Years of Electricity in America," *Electrical Contractor* 31 (July 1976): 26-35+

"Louis Agassiz, Scientist and Teacher," in *A Nation of Nations*, ed. Peter Marzio (Harper, 1976), 324-25

"Story of the Pacific Railway," *Outlook West (Santa Monica Evening Outlook)*, Sept. 11, 1976

"Benjamin Dearborn's Railroad Memorial of 1819," *Railroad History* 132 (1975): 84-86

Formal Instruction in Industrial Archeology, History of Technology, and Related Fields in North American Colleges and Universities (Society for Industrial Archeology, 1975)

"Arno Reprints Reconsidered (Again)," *IA: Journal of the Society for Industrial Archeology* 1 (1975): 68-69

"Film and the Historian of Technology," *Tech. and Culture* 16 (1975): 435-37

"Coppertown U.S.A.," *Society for Industrial Archeology Newsletter* 3 (January 1974): 3+ (and seventeen other articles for the *SIA Newsletter*, 1973-74)

The Washington Career of Charles Grafton Page (University Microfilms, 1974)

Sites Associated with Social and Humanitarian Movements in America, contributing author (Nat. Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, 1974)

Los Angeles and its Environs in the Twentieth Century: A Bibliography of a Metropolis, principal investigator (Ward Ritchie Press, 1973)

Symposia, Lectures, and Program Sessions (selected):

SHOT Plenary Session: The Past, Present, and Future of *Technology and Culture*, Tacoma, Wash, 2010

Melvin Kranzberg Keynote, International Committee for the History of Technology, Victoria, B.C., 2008

Soc. for the Hist. of Tech., 2012, 07, 05, 03, 2000, 99, 98, 97, 96, 93, 92, 89, 87, 84, 82, 80, 1977, 76, 74

Lecture Series, Talbot County Free Library, 2004

Workshop Series, Department of History and Sociology of Science, University of Pennsylvania, 2003

Keynote, Technology Studies: New Frontiers and Uncharted Territory, Stevens Institute, Hoboken, 2002

Science and Technology Studies Seminar Series, Colby College, Waterville, Maine, 2002, 1996

Resident Fellows Colloquium, Dibner Institute, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2002, 1996

Department of History/History Associates, Case Western Reserve University, 2000

Ivan Allen College, Georgia Institute of Technology, 2000

International Committee for the History of Technology, Prague, 2000

Transportation Research Board, National Research Council, Washington, DC, 1999

Business History Conference, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1999

Keynote, Detroit Technology and Culture Forum, Dearborn, Mich., 1998

International Summer Laboratory, Dibner Institute, 1998

Institute of Railway Studies, National Railway Museum, York, England, 1997
 Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, Calif., 1997
 Center for the History of Business, Technology, and Society, Hagley Museum, Greenville, Del., 1997
 Centennial Celebration in Honor of Bern Dibner, Dibner Institute, 1997
 Keynote, Advanced Engine Technology Conference, Colorado Springs, 1997
 Symposium on the California Car Culture, Oakland Museum of California, 1996
 Society of Automotive Historians, Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Mich., 1996
 International Committee for the History of Technology, Budapest, 1996
 Society for Commercial Archeology/Automobile Club of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1996
 History of Technology Annual Lecture, Loyola College of Maryland, Baltimore, 1996
 Cars and Culture, Pitzer College, Claremont, Calif., 1995, 1992
 STS Colloquium, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass., 1994
 Colloquium on Business, Technology, and Society, Hagley Museum and Library, 1993
 Symposium on the European Backgrounds of the American System, Dibner Institute, 1993
 Keynote, International Drag Racing Hall of Fame, Ocala, Florida, 1991 (also 1993, 95, 97, 99, 2002)
 History Colloquium, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Penn., 1991
 Thomas Jefferson Lecture, National Inventors Hall of Fame, Akron, Ohio, 1990
 Graduate Colloquium, University of Akron, 1990
 Series on Material Aspects of American Civilization, George Washington University, 1988, 1984
 History Colloquium, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1985
 Kolloquium, Forschungsinstitut des Deutschen Museums, Munich, 1984
 Colloquium Series, National Museum of American History, Washington, D.C., 1984
 Series on American Patent Models, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York, 1984
 Series on *The People's Choice*, based on *Every Four Years*, NBC Television, Hollywood, 1980
 History Colloquium, University of Delaware, Newark, 1979, 1975
 Organization of American Historians, Atlanta, Georgia, 1977
 Series on American Culture, Smithsonian Associates, Washington, D.C., 1976
 The Sciences in America: A Bicentennial Retrospective, Am. Assn. Advance of Science, Boston, 1976
 Symposium on Using and Abusing the American Past, Old Sturbridge Village, Mass., 1975
 Crystal Palace Symposium, City University of New York Graduate Center, 1974
 Nineteenth Century Seminar, Joseph Henry Papers, Smithsonian Institution, 1974
 Missouri Valley Historical Assn., Omaha, Neb., 1974
 School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1974
 Joseph Henry Symposium, Am. Assn. Advance of Science, Washington, D.C., 1972
 Graduate Students History Colloquium, University of California, Los Angeles, 1971, 1970, 1969

Interviews:

"This Is the History People Care Most About: An Interview with Ruth Schwartz Cowan,"
Invention & Technology 19 (Summer 2003): 59-62
 "What Engineers Know: An Interview with Walter Vincenti." *I&T* 12 (Winter 1997):20-26
 "Renaissance Man: An Interview with George Krambles," *Railroad History* 175 (Autumn 1996):
 69-91
 "The Frailties and Beauties of Technological Creativity: An Interview with John M.
 Staudenmaier,"
I&T 8 (Spring 1993): 16-24
 "A Life With Trains: An Interview with John H. White, Jr.," *I&T* 6 (Fall 1990): 34-40
 "Missionary: An Interview with Melvin Kranzberg," *I&T* 4 (Winter 1989): 34-39

Exhibitions (selected):

Ft. Wadsworth (New York) Visitor Center, Howard-Revis /Nat. Park Service (1997-),
 scriptwriter
 Science in American Life, NMAH (1994 -), scriptwriter
 A Material World, NMAH (1988-2002), curator and scriptwriter

Swamp Rat: The Making of a Drag Racing Legend, NMAH (1987), curator and scriptwriter
Lobstering and the Maine Coast, Maine Maritime Museum (1985 -), project humanist
American Enterprise: Nineteenth-Century Patent Models, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, (1984),
curator
The *Indiana*: History From the Bottom Up, NMAH (1981), curator and scriptwriter
American Maritime Enterprise, NMHT (1978 - 2006), curator and scriptwriter
1876: A Centennial Exhibition, NMHT (1976-96), historian
American Banking, NMHT (1975), historian
Ornamental Turning Lathes, NMHT (1974), draftsman

Photo and Film Credits (selected):

American Heritage, American Historical Association, Greenwood Press, *Kultur und Technik*,
Invention and Technology, *Locomotive & Railway Preservation*, Museum of Drag Racing, Nat.
Museum of American History, Nat. Park Service, Nat. Railway Museum (York, England),
Quest Productions, *Railroad History*, Smithsonian Books, *Technology and Culture*, Tehabi
Books

Advisory:

Am. Consulting Engineers Council; *Am. Heritage*; *Am. National Biography*; Am. Merchant
Marine Museum; Am. Soc. of Mechanical Engineers; Eisterhold Associates, Inc.; Facts on File;
Franklin Institute; George Washington Univ.; Greenwood Press; Guggenheim Foundation;
Henry Ford Museum; History Now; Howard-Revis Design Associates; Independence Seaport
Museum; Johns Hopkins Univ. Press; Maine Maritime Museum; Motor Sports Hall of Fame;
Museum of Drag Racing; Nat. Air & Space Museum; Nat. Endowment for the Humanities; Nat.
Inventors Hall of Fame; Nat. Park Service; Nat. Public Radio; Nat. Science Foundation; Oxford
Univ. Press; PBS; Smithsonian Inst. Press; Soc. for Industrial Archeology; Stanford Univ.
Press; Staples & Charles Ltd.; Tehabi Books; Univ. of Arizona Press; Univ. of Calif. Press;
Univ. of Chicago Press; Univ. of Texas Press; Woodrow Wilson International Center; *World
Book Encyclopedia*

Biographical:

Contemporary Authors, vol. 148; *Smithsonian*, Jan. 1988; *Pasadena Star News*, Feb. 25, 1990;
Invention & Technology, Fall 1994; *Technology Review*, Jan. 1995; *Iron Game History*, May
1998; *Railroad History*, Autumn 2000; *Technology and Culture*, January 2002