

February 27, 2008

To Whom it May Concern:

I am pleased to recommend my doctoral student, John Press, for a teaching position in your program. John is a dedicated student, an accomplished teacher, and a fine all-around individual. I am sure he would make a strong addition to your institution.

John recently completed his second full year of study at New York University, where he is obtaining a Ph.D. in the history of education. John's doctoral dissertation will focus upon Frances Kellor, a key figure in the so-called "Americanization" movement of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The movement has come under fire over the past four decades from left-leaning academicians, who indict it for racism and elitism and much else. But John will attempt to mount a defense of Americanization, which helped mold a diverse set of immigrants into a single nation. Looking carefully at Kellor's personal papers, he will show that Kellor took pains to celebrate and even to protect the distinct cultures and histories of newcomers to our shores. But she also tried to meld them together into a shared community, the sine qua non for any successful nation. Bold and original, John's thesis will challenge many years of scholarship about immigration, culture, and assimilation. I'm sure he will produce a fine dissertation, which will evolve into an even stronger book.

John is also an accomplished educator in his own right. As a secondary school teacher in southern California, he taught an enormous range of ages and subjects. Here at New York University, he has also instructed our first-year "Inquiries" course for undergraduate education majors. An inveterate traveler, he has lived and worked in a vast array of countries and cultures. It would be hard to imagine a graduate student with more teaching experience—or success—than John Press.

Last, but not least, John Press is a fine person. Bright and engaged, he is also graced with that most precious (but, alas, rare) attribute in academia: a sense of humor. I'm sure he would be an excellent instructor and—even more—a superb colleague. Please let me know if there is anything else I can do to assist this fine student and individual. I'll be glad to do it.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Zimmerman  
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History  
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Please note: I'm teaching in Ghana this semester, so I asked our department assistant to sign this letter for me. Please feel free to email me directly if you need confirmation.