

Brian E. Vick, *The Congress of Vienna: Power and Politics after Napoleon* (Harvard University Press, 2014).

Brian Vick's elegant and engaging book, *The Congress of Vienna: Power and Politics after Napoleon* challenges us not only to rethink the Congress of Vienna as an event, but to embrace a new understanding of European political culture during the transition from the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods to the early nineteenth century. Vick transforms the Congress from a diplomatic event characterized by a few political leaders negotiating over territory, into a sweeping European conversation about topics ranging from nationhood and liberalism to slavery, religious rights, and European relations with the Islamic World. He makes the compelling argument that a diverse international public shaped the debates—and political results—of the day. Men and women, nobles and the bourgeoisie, Christians and Jews, political luminaries and state bureaucrats debated and performed their visions of post-Napoleonic European politics at balls and in salons, in the popular press, in material culture, and in the symbolic language of religious celebrations and military parades. In the process, they redefined the relationship between European publics and their monarchies. Deeply researched in fourteen archives and four countries, Vick's book breaks down the disciplinary walls dividing diplomatic and international history from histories of sociability, popular culture, and the public sphere. He offers a model of rich and wide-reaching historical writing.

Prize Committee:

David Blackbourn (Vanderbilt University)

Michael Meng (Clemson University)

Caitlin Murdock (California State University, Long Beach)