Geographer Alberto Giordano will use computerized tools to gather new information about the Holocaust: the evolution of the concentration camp system, the deportation of Jews from France and Italy, and the death marches from Auschwitz. The study, funded with a $430,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, should reveal geographical patterns explaining Nazi strategy.

Forensic research made a leap forward when Texas State recently unveiled its new Forensic Research Facility, the largest such facility in the world. There, scientists will study problems related to outdoor crime scenes and decomposition rates for human remains, providing information useful to law enforcement agencies.

A gift of $100,000 from Dr. Grady Early, Distinguished Professor of Computer Science Emeritus, has established an endowment for graduate fellowships in forensic anthropology. The endowment will provide stipends for several graduate students each year to conduct research projects at Texas State’s new Forensic Research Facility. Dr. Early, who retired in 2000 after almost three decades of teaching math and computer science, has been an enthusiastic supporter of the forensic anthropology program for many years.

For ancient Native Americans, the insect motif on the famous Willoughby Disk (A.D. 1300, discovered at Moundville, Ala.) was more than a skillful doodle. Anthropologists meeting at Texas State recently interpreted the symbol as the Sphinx Moth that pollinates the tobacco plant, a key figure in the cosmology of the Mississippian peoples of the Southeast (note the colored wings and the curly proboscis that points downward). The anthropologists, whose work is known as the San Marcos School of Iconographic Interpretation, are creating the “Rosetta Stone” of Native American symbols, returning the symbols’ lost meanings to present-day Native Americans. The anthropologists have met annually at Texas State for 15 years, in a workshop led by Texas State Anthropologist Kent Reilly.
The Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. featured two books by Texas State History faculty and students in an exhibit on Texas: The History of Texas Music, by Professor Gary Hartman and The Handbook of Texas Music, compiled by students.

Since the publication of her book Silent Racism: How Well-Meaning White People Perpetuate the Racial Divide, Sociologist Barbara Trepagnier has been interviewed on NPR about her model for improving race awareness, appeared on a panel sponsored by Glamour Magazine, and been invited to speak at several universities.

In Central Texas’ growing high-tech corridor, Texas State’s M.A. Program in Technical Communication is helping to meet the demand for expert communicators who can make technical language understandable to those who need it. The program, directed by Libby Allison, is celebrating its 10th anniversary. It has graduated 51 technical communicators since 2001.

Breathtaking illustrations by Matisse thrilled Texas State students and faculty when they got a private viewing of them during study abroad in Ireland. The illustrations appear in a rare edition of James Joyce’s Ulysses, at the Glucksman Gallery, University College-Cork. Study abroad in Ireland is directed by Steve and Nancy Wilson.

Inset: Matisse’s illustration of Ulysses blinding Cyclops.

Black Theatre companies in Texas, such as Austin’s Pro Arts Collective, for decades have produced outstanding performers and plays. Professors Elvin Holt, English, and Sandra Mayo, Theatre, are writing a history of Black Theatre in Texas and collecting plays by Black Texas playwrights, many of whom have never been studied.

International Studies grads are landing diplomatic jobs abroad such as vice consul, U.S. Embassy in Moscow, Russia; management officer, U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana, Slovenia; and security officer in the U.S. Consulate General in Munich, Germany. Dennis Dunn directs the International Studies program.

The Faculty in 2007:
- Won 54 awards for teaching
- Won 63 awards for scholarly and creative activity
- Published 25 books, 255 book chapters, articles, essays, poems and short stories
- Gave 399 scholarly papers, conference presentations, and public readings
- Received $6.58 million in grants and contracts
- Mentored 147 students who published, gave papers, or won awards
During the 2008 Presidential campaign, Professor Hyun Jung Yun is surveying Texas State students to gather data on their responses to candidates' campaign messages. She is studying the messages' impact on student attitudes toward the candidates and how the attitudes change over time. Her study, sponsored by the non-partisan group UVote2008.org, considers the students' party affiliation, age, gender, ethnicity, media consumption patterns, and levels of media bias and political cynicism. The study's goal is to find ways to encourage young people to vote. Results will be published after the election.

The Americanism Medal, given by the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, was awarded recently to Professor and History Department Chair Frank de la Teja. The medal recognizes naturalized American citizens for outstanding service, leadership, and patriotism. De la Teja, originally from Cuba, is the author of various works on early Texas history. He is currently serving as State Historian of Texas, and he just finished a term as president of the Texas State Historical Association.

Various cultural forces in Spain have excluded most women's voices from its literary canon, says Hispanist Sharon Keele Ugalde, who has published a new anthology of works by 33 Spanish women poets. The poets, who wrote from the 1950s to the 1970s, are largely absent from the canonical anthologies of the period. "Under the Franco regime—and in the previous centuries—women were silenced and couldn't participate fully in the public sphere, simply because they were women. But, in spite of such circumstances, some did write poetry," said Ugalde. The collected works, titled En voz alta: los poetas de las generaciones de los 50 y los 70, reflect the evolution of the poets' craft as they explore women's roles in society.

Mark Busby has been named the Jerome H. and Catherine E. Supple Professor of Southwestern Studies at Texas State University-San Marcos. Busby is director of Texas State's Center for the Study of the Southwest and the Southwest Regional Humanities Center and a professor of English. The Supple professorship is named in honor of Texas State's ninth president, Jerome Supple, and his wife, Cathy, who worked tirelessly in support of the Southwest Regional Humanities Center.

Is the Constitution worth keeping? Are books a better approach than bombs to ending terrorism? Is time real? These are some of the 40 discussion topics offered this semester by the Philosophy Department in its Dialogue Series. The discussions, open to the campus community, give students and faculty the opportunity to examine issues from a variety of philosophical viewpoints. This semester, discussion topics will range from democracy, patriotism and LBJ's legacy to global sustainability, philosophy and sport, and philosophy and healing.

Brock J. Brown, Geography, has been named Piper Professor for 2008 by the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation. The award, given annually to 15 faculty in Texas, recognizes superior teaching at the college level. Since 1958, seventeen Texas State professors have been named Piper Professors, 11 of them on the Liberal Arts faculty.