

# Department of History Annual Newsletter 2020-2021



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES | UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

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**NEWSLETTER DESIGNED & EDITED BY:**  
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# CHAIR'S REPORT

The pandemic might have upended social and economic life around the globe, but the Department of History masked up and got to work. In fact, during the 2020-2021 pandemic, our enrollment increased, our faculty won more national awards for research and creative activities, our graduate students flourished, and our undergraduates graduated and achieved distinction. Adversity solidified our resolve to do better and to work harder. But it was still an exceptionally difficult year. As we head into Academic Year 2021-22, we know that the pandemic will continue to affect the University and that historians have even more important work to do.



Some of the highlights of the past year include: Professor Amy Burnett winning a Guggenheim Fellowship to research the Reformation's publishing history; Professor Will Thomas winning the 2021 Mark A. Lynton History Prize from Columbia University's School of Journalism for *A Question of Freedom* (Yale 2020); Professor Margaret Jacobs becoming the Charles Mach Professor of History and being awarded the 2021 system-wide Outstanding Research and Creative Activity Award; Professor Carole Levin earning the 2021 Louise Pound-George Howard Distinguished Career Award; Professor Jeannette Jones being chosen to be a Distinguished Visiting Scholar with the Center for Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Buffalo; Professor Margaret Huettl serving as an advisor for

a new edition of the classic *Oregon Trail* game, which now integrates the perspective of Native Americans during the Westward expansion; and my feature documentary film, *The Art of Dissent* (2020), winning 5 international film festival awards.

I especially want to congratulate our recent graduate students for completing their degrees this year:

- Courtney Herber, Ph.D.; adviser: Carole Levin; December 2020
- Susana Geliga-Grazales, Ph.D.; Margaret D. Jacobs; May 2021
- Sara (Andrea) Nichols, Ph.D.; Carole Levin; May 2021
- Danielle Alesi, Ph.D.; Amy Nelson Burnett and Julia Schleck (ENGL); August 2021
- Baligh Ben Taleb, Ph.D.; Margaret D. Jacobs; August 2021
- Angela Bolen, Ph.D.; Jessica Coope; August 2021
- Sean Scanlon, Ph.D.; Tim Borstelmann; August 2021
- Alexis Cruz, M.A.; adviser: William G. Thomas III; May 2021
- Gregory Payne, M.A.; Kenneth J. Winkle; May 2021
- James W. Pieper, M.A.; Timothy R. Mahoney; May 2021
- Emily Wendell, M.A.; James A. Garza; May 2021

And I want to congratulate the 52 undergrads who completed their degrees and 17 students who graduated with Distinction from our Department.

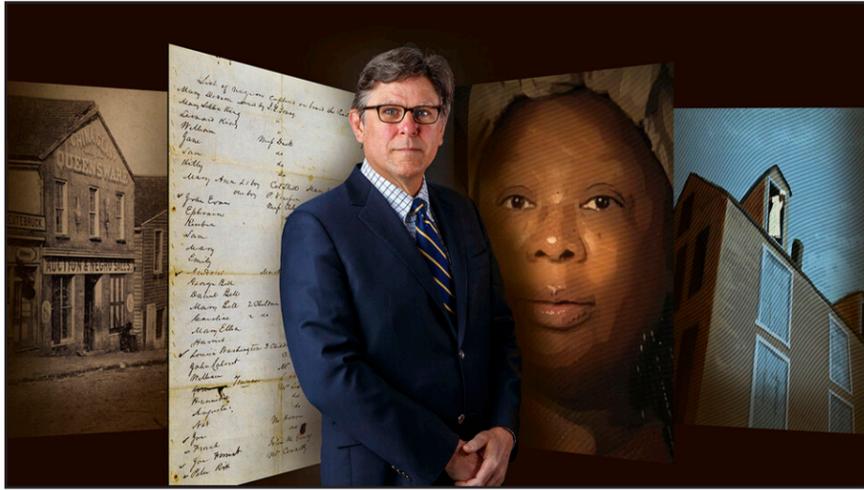
If anything, AY 2020-21 proved that the Department of History has never been stronger and that history has never been more important. With this in mind, I hope you will enjoy reading about the many successes of our faculty and students and that you will continue to support our Department and the University of Nebraska Foundation. We cannot do this without your generosity and trust.

Thank you.

With kind wishes,

Samuel Clark Waugh Distinguished Professor  
& Chair of the Department of History

# NEBRASKA LECTURE



University of Nebraska–Lincoln historian William G. Thomas III presented a 6 Oct. 2020 Nebraska Lecture titled “A Question of Freedom: The Families Who Challenged Slavery from the Nation’s Founding to the Civil War.”

Part of the Chancellor’s Distinguished Lecture Series, the lecture and live Q&A were broadcast at 3:30 p.m. CDT [here](#). Viewers submitted questions for Thomas to [unresearch@unl.edu](mailto:unresearch@unl.edu) or via the chat function during the virtual lecture.

The talk was a preview of a book by the same title, published in November 2020 by Yale University Press. The book chronicles the history of Black, white, and mixed families in Prince George’s County, Maryland, and the burst of freedom suits and release from slavery in the Chesapeake after the American Revolution. For over 70 years, the enslaved families there filed hundreds of lawsuits for their freedom against a powerful circle of slaveholders, beginning with the Jesuit priests who owned some of the largest plantations in the nation and founded a college at Georgetown on the Potomac River.

“This was a desperate battle between enslaved families and slaveholders in the United States over the meaning of law, rights, and freedom,” Thomas said.

An intensely human and intricate story about the moral problems of slavery, the book uncovers evidence long overlooked by historians and often dismissed in court to piece together these families’ stories. *A Question of Freedom* asks us to reckon with the moral problem of slavery and its legacies in the present day.

The talk also featured excerpts from an upcoming feature film based on the book. The film, *The Bell Affair*, is

funded by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and is in production with partners Michael Burton and Kwakiutl Dreher at Nebraska.

Thomas is the Angle Chair in the Humanities and professor of history. He joined the Nebraska faculty in 2005 and served as department chair from 2010–16. He has been a Guggenheim Fellow and a Lincoln Prize finalist. He also was co-founder and director of the Virginia Center for Digital History at the University of Virginia.

Thomas has published widely recognized essays in *Civil War History*, *The Journal of Historical Geography*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *EDUCAUSE Review*, and *Inside Higher Education*.

Thomas is a graduate of Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, and received his master’s and doctoral degrees in history from the University of Virginia. He currently serves on the National Historical Publications and Records Commission of the National Archives and Records Administration and is a Center for Digital Research in the Humanities faculty fellow.

The Nebraska Lectures are typically offered twice a year and feature faculty discussing research, scholarly, and creative activity. All talks are free and open to the public. The talks will be streamed online and made available via podcast. Regular updates, as well as videos from each lecture, are available through the [Nebraska Lectures website](#).

The Nebraska Lecture series is sponsored by the Research Council, Office of the Chancellor, Office of Research and Economic Development and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

**Sources:** Heidi Uhing | Research and Economic Development, “Thomas to give Nebraska Lecture on families who challenged slavery,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/thomas-to-give-nebraska-lecture-on-families-who-challenged-slavery/>, 29 September 2020; <https://research.unl.edu/nebraskalectures/a-question-of-freedom-the-families-who-challenged-american-slavery-from-the-nations-founding-to-the-civil-war/>

# OREGON TRAIL REVAMP



Jazz Halfmoon, 38, remembers playing the educational video game Oregon Trail as a reward for doing well in class. “It was on a super-old computer,” she says. “The green screen was like the only color.”

She says it was really exciting, and the kids would often clamor and fight over who could [play the game](#) at their school on the [Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation](#), in northeast Oregon.

Halfmoon says, “I remember being like, ‘Oh, like the Indians killed off somebody in your wagon train...and then being like, ‘Oh, we’re Indians, you know.’ ”

A generation of kids like Halfmoon grew up playing settlers heading west on the Oregon Trail. They remember it mostly for the moment — wait for it — their party died of dysentery. Now, a [new spin on the wagon train game](#) focuses on more accurately representing Native Americans and includes new storylines and playable Native American characters.

The company Gameloft tackled the redesign of Oregon Trail for [Apple Arcade](#) just in time for the increase in worldwide play because of the coronavirus pandemic. The game came out in April. Its target audience: the now-40-year-old original fans and their kids. And more Native American players.

Gameloft Brisbane creative director Jarrad Trudgen had to root out historical inaccuracies and clichés about Native American culture.

“Well, as a white, middle-class Australian, I don’t think I can really speak to that,” he says. “I’d like help with that. And I’d like to talk to some Native Americans and some Native American history professors.”

So he brought in three Indigenous historians.

They listened to early test music for the game and said, back off the drums and flutes! And don’t use broken stilted English.

Trudgen got it. “It’s like a trope to make Native American people seem primitive somehow,” he says, “when actually there were a lot of bilingual or polylingual Native Americans at that time.”

The team of historians came up with more appropriate names for game characters and advocated for new roles for Native Americans, not just roles as guides or trappers.

University of Nebraska historian [Margaret Huettl](#) has [Lac Courte Oreilles](#) tribal ancestors. She researched old photos and drawings for accurate depictions of different tribes’ clothing and style. “Initially, all of the Native people [in the revamped game] had braids,” Huettl says. “And I think we suggested, maybe they don’t all have to have braids.”

One major teaching moment for Trudgen was about bows and arrows. He definitely wanted them.

“There are a lot of popular games out there, Tomb Raider and *Last of Us*, and like these big games — where bow and arrows are sick,” Trudgen says.

But historian Huettl explained that if you were a Native

American trapper at the time of the Oregon Trail, you were more likely to have a rifle, so bows and arrows are an outdated stereotype.

“That wasn’t our intention at all, obviously,” Trudgen says. “We were just coming to it sort of as a naive ‘bow and arrows are cool’ angle.”...

It’s hard to encapsulate all of that [history] into a video game. But historian Huettl says the designers were serious about getting it right. The prairies she knows well are beautiful in the game.

“[And] there’s no bow and arrow,” Huettl says. “That’s not in the game. They listened to what we were saying.”

The flutes are mostly gone too. But they did leave one old moment in the new version — players can still die of dysentery.

.....



Nebraska’s Margaret Huettl is helping erase stereotypes and expand historical accuracy through an update to the classic Oregon Trail video game.

Enjoyed by millions since its release in 1971, the text-based strategy game allows players to lead a wagon train across the 2,170-mile Oregon Trail route from Independence, Missouri, to Oregon City, Oregon. Much like a real wagon captain in the 1850s, players encounter a litany of perilous challenges — river crossing and critter encounters to supply shortages and disease outbreaks. Make the wrong decision and a hardship leads to a delay, damage, or death (including the infamous dread of dysentery).

“I grew up playing the original green and black version on school computers,” Huettl said. “It’s nostalgic for me. It’s also problematic in the way it depicts Native people as threatening, encountered in the distance, or saying things

like, ‘You are not welcome here,’ in broken English.

“Natives were this scary force that lurked at the edges of the game — counted alongside dangers like rattlesnakes and dysentery.”

### Lessons in history

For many Indigenous people like Huettl (who is from Wisconsin and is a Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe descendant), encountering negative depictions of Natives is nothing unusual.

“Particularly in popular culture there are very few positive or accurate representations of Natives,” Huettl said. “You don’t really think about it as a kid, but growing up Natives are constantly hit with negative connotations of our families. Too often, these depictions leave a lasting impact on self-worth and the value of our heritage.”

The anti-Native messaging is also reinforced within society itself. From her youth, Huettl experienced the Wisconsin Walleye War, a late 20th-century protest of Ojibwe hunting and fishing rights. The conflict sparked strong protests by sports fishermen and resort owners who objected to tribal members being allowed to spearfish walleye during spawning season.

“It was an ugly conflict that eventually ended with the courts siding with tribal governments and existing treaties,” Huettl said. “But, it forever connected some of my earliest memories of being Indigenous to anti-Native sentiments.”

And while she made a stand in fourth grade, crafting (with help from her grandfather) a wigwam rather than a settler’s log cabin as part of a state history lesson, Huettl didn’t enter college planning to pursue a Native-centered career.

“I went into college thinking I was going to study Chaucer and old English literature,” Huettl said. “But, that changed. The more I learned, the more frustrated I became about Native history, literature, and science being erased in dominant culture.”

### Turning point

To help pay for college, Huettl started working at Old World Wisconsin, an open-air museum that depicts the daily life of 19th-century settlers. As the primary focus was on immigration, Huettl grew increasingly uneasy that the stories being told failed to provide a Native representation.

She found a growing desire to tell the stories of tribes in the state. The Oneida, who were forced to relocate from New York to Wisconsin in the early 1800s. The Dakota who once called Wisconsin home, but now are based in South Dakota. The Ojibwe, Menominee, Potawatomi, and Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) who all saw their resource-rich land diminished to a handful of reservations through broken treaties and non-Native encroachment.

“The lack of representation of Indigenous people is what made me change my career path from Chaucer to Ojibwe,” Huettl said. “My grandpa in particular was very supportive of this change. He wanted me to find a way to tell Ojibwe history and rethink how it mixes with traditional American history.”

When she discussed a desire to study from Native American perspectives, a faculty adviser cautioned against the idea, citing a lack of Indigenous sources. Huettl forged on with the transition presenting itself official in her honors thesis, a literature review on Kiowa writer N. Scott Momaday.

With her first real “adventure” into Native history under her belt, Huettl expanded the study at the University of Oklahoma and University of Nevada, Las Vegas, earning masters and doctoral degrees, respectively. She joined faculty at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 2016 and is now an assistant professor of history and ethnic studies.

Along the way, Huettl discovered that the faculty adviser was not entirely incorrect regarding Native voices in historical sources.

“There’s not a lot of data out there because — and this is not a surprise — Native people don’t just want to give out their information to anyone,” Huettl said. “But, if you are patient and ask the right questions to the right people, the source material exists.

“You just have to learn how to read colonial archives through Indigenous perspectives.”

### Redirecting the Oregon Trail

Gameloft, a France-based video game publisher, has partnered with Apple Arcade to update and deliver Oregon Trail to the past, present, and future generations of players. A large part of that work included a push to eliminate historical inaccuracies and stereotypes regarding Native American people.

Realizing the need for expertise, Jarrad Trudgen, a creative director at Gameloft Brisbane, brought in three Indigenous historians to assist with the project. That group included Huettl, William Bauer from UNLV, and Katrina Philips of Macalester College.

“The design team was well aware that the game, as it existed in the past, had problematic representations of Indigenous

peoples,” Huettl said. “They wanted to do better with this update and they asked us to help eliminate the clichés and expand the historical accuracies.”

The team’s

work included gathering historical data to create more appropriate names for game characters, expand roles for Native Americans and people of color, and more accurate depictions of Indigenous clothing, culture, and adoption of modern technology (including their use of rifles rather than bows and arrows).

Each of the revisions is reflected in the game as it was [released in the Apple Arcade earlier this year](#). It also includes a mini-game that includes a Pawnee family impacted by disease and moving to a winter camp and an acknowledgement of the many impacts westward expansion had on Indigenous peoples. The acknowledgement, which appears at the start of the game, was written by Huettl.

“The game no longer shies away from those difficult aspects of history,” Huettl said. “It’s not perfect, but this version of Oregon Trail is a game that is deliberately designed to

depict Native people fully as human beings.

“There’s more to do, but I’m very proud of the work.”

In a statement about the work, the university’s Anti-Racism Journey co-leaders said Huettl’s work on the app project is amazing and necessary.

“Indigenous historians, as well as indigenist historians, must be the storytellers of any video-gamed representations and depictions of the Original Peoples of the land now known as the United States of America,” the co-leaders wrote. “In that way, the stories told about the Oregon Trail will be rich with complexity and authentic representations instead of the stereotypes and caricatures that typically misrepresent Native Americans.”

### Looking ahead

Through the Gameloft project, Huettl has continued to move forward with her own scholarship and teaching. Her first book project, “Our Lands and Our People: Ojibwe Peoplehood on the North American West, 1854-1954,” is nearing completion and being considered for publication.

The book focuses on what is widely considered to be a period of decline in Native American history. It is an era that follows impacts of the Oregon Trail and at the height of American expansion. During these years, tribes continue to be removed from their lands, Native children are being sent to boarding schools, and laws are in place to halt Natives from practicing their religion.

“It looks at all of this from the Ojibwe/Anishinaabe perspective and how they saw a way to maintain sovereignty and their relationship to the land during this low point in Native history,” Huettl said. “Ultimately, my hope is that this book reaches Anishinaabe audiences and can be a meaningful resource on the history of this period.”

Huettl also continues to work with Gameloft on updates and expansions to the Oregon Trail game. A pending

addition features a mini-game about the 1851 Horse Creek Treaty, a document that confirmed Indigenous nations’ rights to the northern Great Plains. Provisions also included an agreement that guaranteed safe passage for settlers along the Oregon Trail.

“It’s amazing that I’ve had this opportunity to improve the historical elements of a game that I spent hundreds of hours playing as a kid,” Huettl said. “It’s the most fun I’ve had with my research. And, it’s exciting professionally because it will reach thousands more than any book I can write, helping further understanding of Native American cultures and histories.”

*Editor’s Note — If readers are interested in exploring more Native American-focused games, Huettl recommends “When Rivers Were Trails,” an Anishinaabe-related, point-and-click adventure about the impact of colonization on Indigenous communities in the 1890s. It was developed via a collaboration with the Indian Land Tenure Foundation and Michigan State University’s Games for Entertainment and Learning Lab. Learn more about the game [here](#).*

**Sources:** Anna King, “A New Spin On A Classic Video Game Gives Native Americans Better Representation,” <https://www.npr.org/2021/05/12/996007048/no-bows-and-arrows-and-no-broken-english-on-the-updated-oregon-trail>, 12 May 2021; Sean Hagedwood | University Communication, “Nebraska in the national news: May 2021,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/nebraska-in-the-national-news-may-2021/>, 2 June 2021; Troy Feddersen | University Communication, “Huettl helps curtail Native stereotypes in Oregon Trail update,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/huettl-helps-curtail-native-stereotypes-in-oregon-trail-update/>, 7 June 2021; “Editorial: Native history a key part of our past; video game right to acknowledge the connection,” 11 June 2021

Jeannette Eileen Jones is an associate professor of history and ethnic studies at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. She is a United States historian with an emphasis in American cultural and intellectual history and African American studies. Her research is focused on how the role of race continues to shape American cultural and intellectual discourse and production.

Jones earned a Bachelor of Arts from Hofstra University, as well as a Master of Arts and doctorate from State University of New York at Buffalo.

Jones’s hall of fame induction included a Dr. Michael W. Combs Legacy Award. In her acceptance speech, Jones said Combs, a professor of political science who died in 2019, made an indelible impact on her as a young Black woman scholar.

“His advice and mentorship was invaluable, as he spoke plainly and unflinchingly about the hurdles and obstacles I would face,” Jones said. “Yet, his voice was one of encouragement and perseverance, boosting me to move towards my professional goals with purpose.”

Jones said she is working to follow Combs’s dedication to mentoring and being engaged with Black student scholars.

**Sources:** “Three CAS Huskers selected to Multicultural



Hall of Fame,” <https://cas.unl.edu/three-cas-huskers-selected-multicultural-hall-fame>, 3 November 2020; University Communication, “Six Huskers selected to Multicultural Hall of Fame,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/six-huskers-selected-to-multicultural-hall-of-fame/>, 3 November 2020

## MULTICULTURAL HALL OF FAME

For outstanding service and dedication to furthering diversity and inclusion, two alumni and one faculty member are among six Huskers who have been inducted into the Jackie Gaughan Multicultural Center Hall of Fame.

Misty Frazier, Jeannette Eileen Jones, and Shannon Teamer were honored 29 Oct. 2020 during a Multicultural Homecoming virtual celebration hosted by the Office of Academic Success and Intercultural Services...

## GENOA INDIAN SCHOOL DIGITAL RECONCILIATION PROJECT

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the U.S. government sent tens of thousands of Native children to boarding schools in the hopes of assimilating them and breaking their ties to families and tribes. More than 300 schools were established for this purpose, including one in Genoa, Nebraska that grew to a 640-acre campus that enrolled thousands of children from more than 40 Indian nations during its 50 years of operation from 1884 to 1934.

The Genoa Indian School Digital Reconciliation Project is a new effort to tell the story of these children through record digitization, oral histories, community narratives, and artifacts. The project is a collaboration between the

University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Genoa U.S. Indian School Foundation, community advisers from the Omaha, Pawnee, Ponca, Santee Sioux and Winnebago tribes of Nebraska, and descendants of those who attended the school. It aims to bring greater awareness of the schools and their legacies while returning the histories of Native children from government repositories back to their families and tribes. So far, project members have digitized, described, and published about 4,000 pages of documents from the National Archives in Denver and Kansas City. Communities and individuals will be able to contribute their own digital content to the record.

The idea for building an online catalog documenting the struggles of attendees didn't hit project co-director Margaret Jacobs until after a trip to Ottawa, Canada in 2015, when she attended the final ceremonies of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

"That was the about their Indian residential schools which is their name for boarding schools," Jacobs said. "They had gathered thousands of testimonies from first nations indigenous people in Canada who had been to the schools and had very horrendous experiences."

At the event, the Canadian government officially recognized that their attempts to force Native American children to assimilate with western-European culture through the boarding schools decimated communities and undermined families.

Jacobs said she found the event moving. "I felt like we weren't anywhere near there in the United States," she said.

That thought nagged at her mind for a year until she met with a colleague from Carlisle, Pennsylvania, who told her people there were creating an online archive of government documents concerning the Carlisle Industrial Indian School; the most infamous of the U.S Indian boarding schools.

Then, an idea.

"I had kind of an 'Aha!' moment," Jacobs said. "I was like, oh, I could be doing this as a scholar in my home state of Nebraska."

In 2016 the Genoa Indian School Digital Reconciliation

project was born.

Over the years, Jacobs has employed several people to help with the project, including Judi gaiashkibos, Executive Director of the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs.

"My mother went (to the Genoa Indian School) during the 20s," said gaiashkibos, who expressed sadness at the situation. "Shortly after the Standing Bear trial of 1879 when we were finally recognized as humans, and here we are being taken away to this boarding school to 'kill the Indian, save the man'"

gaiashkibos says the Project brings to light the many cases of abuse suffered by students, abuses many now refer to as "cultural genocide."

"You were punished if you spoke in your language," gaiashkibos said. "Anything to do with your culture was punished."

The native culture was demonized, assimilation was praised, and so it went until the Bureau of Indian Affairs discontinued the initiative.

gaiashkibos agreed to help with the project because she believes it will stand as a sort of guide linking the abuses of the past with the disparities of the present.

At Nebraska, the project co-directors are Margaret Jacobs, professor of history, and Elizabeth Lorang, associate professor in University Libraries. To ensure the project represents many perspectives and experiences of those who attended the school and their descendants, a council of Native community advisers provides direction and oversight. The advisory team is led by co-chairs Judi gaiashkibos (Ponca), executive director of the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs, and James Riding In (Pawnee), associate professor of American Indian Studies at Arizona State University. Other members include Everett Baxter (Omaha), Ben Crawford, Stuart Redwing (Santee), and Larry Wright Jr. (Ponca). Nancy Carlson of the Genoa U.S. Indian School Foundation also serves as a project adviser. Over its first two years, the project has employed three undergraduates and seven graduate students.

"The Genoa Indian School Digital Reconciliation Project offers public access through its website to thousands of documents and photographs. Through the power of documentation, the project tells the story of

thousands of lives impacted over a 50-year period," gaiashkibos said. "The documents that have been compiled tell the truth about a failed experiment in human cultural reprogramming. They speak for the children who were silenced, restoring their voices and those of their resilient descendants who carry on."

Authorities designed the schools to "kill the Indian to save the man," as Capt. Richard Henry Pratt, founder of Carlisle Indian School, put it. To assimilate Native children and break their tribal ties, most teachers and administrators forbade students from speaking their native languages and required Christian conversion. They formed students into military-style companies, which marched and drilled each day. Memoirs and oral histories of attendees reveal that boarding schools gave some children new opportunities and also subjected many to harsh discipline, abuse, exploitation and disease.

Jacobs says the American government is nowhere near the type of reconciliation she witnessed in Canada but is confident it's a step in the right direction. There's even evidence her work and the work of others may soon bear fruit.

In September of 2020, Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren and New Mexico Congresswoman Deb Haaland, one of the first two Native American woman elected to Congress, introduced legislation that would seek healing for

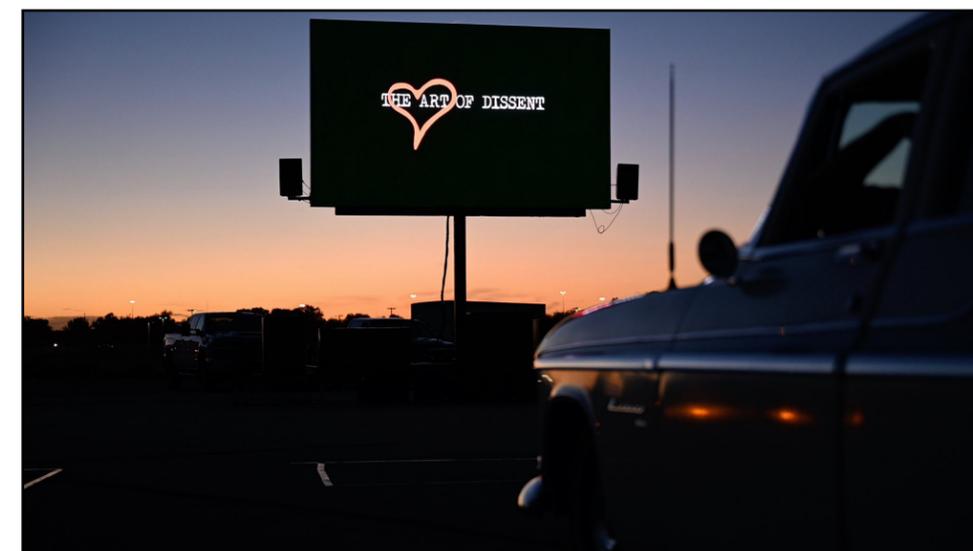
stolen Native children and their communities.

Support for the project is provided by the Council on Library and Information Resources, National Endowment for the Humanities and Nebraska's College of Arts and Sciences, University Libraries, and Center for Digital Research in the Humanities.

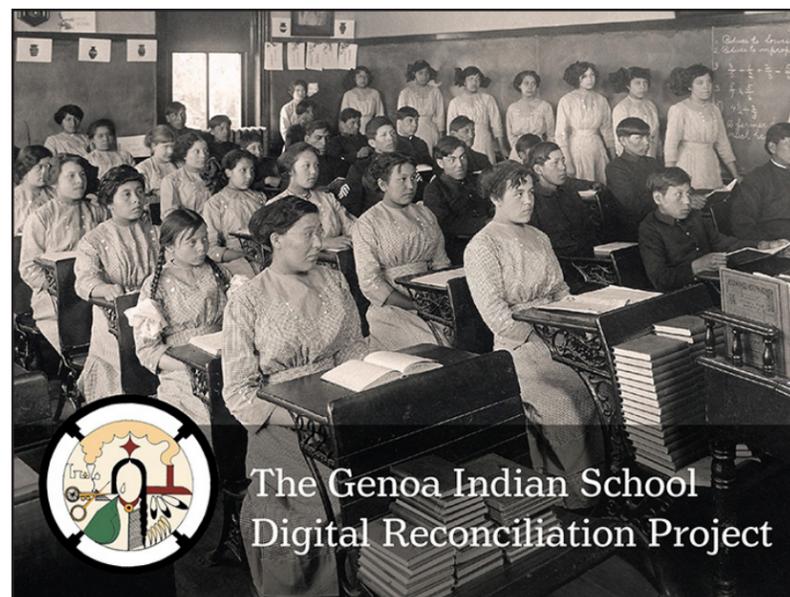
For more information on the project, [click here](#) or email [genoadigitalproject@unl.edu](mailto:genoadigitalproject@unl.edu).

**Sources:** Katie Nieland | Center for Great Plains Studies, "New project examines history of Genoa Indian School," <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/new-project-examines-history-of-genoa-indian-school/>, 27 October 2020; catwhipple, "New project examines the history of Nebraska's Genoa Indian School," <https://thecirclenews.org/history/new-project-examines-the-history-of-nebraskas-genoa-indian-school/>, 3 November 2020; William Padmore-NET News, "Digital Archive Catalogues Abuses Of Genoa Indian School," <http://netnebraska.org/article/news/1241164/digital-archive-catalogues-abuses-genoa-indian-school>, 13 November 2020; Sean Hagedwood | University Communication, "Nebraska in the national news: November 2020," <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/nebraska-in-the-national-news-november-2020/>, 2 December 2020

## AWARDS FOR THE ART OF DISSENT



The pandemic directly impacted the film industry, the film festival circuit, and independent filmmakers like Professor James Le Sueur, chair of the Department of History and Samuel Clark Waugh Distinguished Professor of International Relations. He had just completed his first feature documentary film, *The Art of Dissent* (2020), and sent it off to a dozen international film festivals. After the initial chaos and closures of many festivals,



the movie had its world premiere at the prestigious Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF) in August and won the 2020 Social Spotlight Award, the first of five awards in a dozen official selection appearances around the world.

*The Art of Dissent* celebrates the resilience and power of artistic engagement in Czechoslovakia before and after the 1968 Soviet-led invasion. The documentary's main protagonists – Václav Havel, banned singer Marta Kubišová, and the underground rock group the Plastic People of the Universe (PPU) – became the most recognizable dissidents during the 1970-80s. Havel bridged the disparate clusters of individuals and fused the literary, musical, political, and philosophical nonviolent elements into a hybrid network that eventually toppled the totalitarian regime in 1989.

The film speaks to our contemporary political malaise by underscoring the resolve and courage of dissidents who strove to re-build a battered civil society with artistry, tolerance, and truth.

A unique co-production of NUtech Ventures at the University of Nebraska and Czech TV in Prague, *The Art of Dissent* combines rare archival footage with interviews with key dissidents filmed over three years in the Czech Republic, England, and the United States. Location interviewing began in Prague with associate producer, Mariana Čapková (a young politician), and with second camerawoman, Susan Pahlke (who is working with Le Sueur on several new films) in 2017. Thirty interviews were filmed over three years. Parallel with this, the director began to work closely with Martin Bouda (Czech TV film archivist) and Alena Jirásek (Australian-based researcher and translator whose family went into exile in 1969) to review, select, and edit the archival footage.

*The Art of Dissent* won Le Sueur and his team the First-Time Filmmaker Award at the Newburyport Documentary Film Festival in September, Best Documentary Feature Film at the Big Apple Film Festival in New York City, the Feather Award for Best Documentary Feature Film at the KARAMA Human Rights Film Festival in Amman, Jordan in December 2020, and most recently the Best Documentary Feature Film at the Blackbird Film Festival in Cortland, New York in June 2021 (the film's first in-person

showing). The movie was also screened live and in-person at the Czech Center of New York in New York City in June 2021 and was screened in October 2020 at the University's first outdoor movie theatre event.

Reviewers and audiences have praised Le Sueur's first film. "Director James Dean Le Sueur's feature documentary, *The Art of Dissent*, is an archival masterpiece and stands as a testament to Le Sueur's directorial style and vision... "and will stand as a piece of film history for decades to come.

*The Art of Dissent* won the 2020 Creative Work of the Year award from NUtech Ventures and at the Innovator Celebration. The award recognizes an individual who has developed a creative innovation such as a film, which is typically protected under copyright.



"We're all navigating our work in new ways during this global pandemic, and Nebraska researchers show real grit in their effort to move creative activities forward," said Chancellor Ronnie D. Green, who also serves on NUtech's board of directors. "This is a moment to acknowledge the glory of these innovative research and commercialization accomplishments."

The Czech language of the movie will broadcast in the Czech Republic in December 2021 to commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Václav Havel's death, and Le Sueur's script is read in Czech version by the well-known Czech actor Martin Pechlát.

*The Art of Dissent* is distributed by Gravitas Ventures, which is the largest indie distributor in the United States, and will be available on many of the major platforms including Amazon and Apple in October 2021.

Le Sueur is currently working on a new feature documentary film, *Four Seasons of COVID*, about the COVID-19 pandemic in Nebraska. The film is produced by Fox Hollow Films and NUtech Ventures, which handles Intellectual Property and commercializes Le Sueur's movies.

**Sources:** James Le Sueur, July 2021; "2020 Innovator Celebration," <https://spark.adobe.com/page/2iJhgq6axhi4l/>; <https://www.nutechventures.org/nutech-announces-2020-innovator-award-winners/>; Alyssa Amen | NUtech Ventures, "NUtech Ventures announces Innovator Awards," <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/nutech-ventures-announces-innovator-awards/>, 4 November 2020; "NUtech Ventures publishes 2020 annual report," <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/nutech-ventures-publishes-2020-annual-report/>, 10

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## BOOK AWARDS AND PRESS

In 1857, the chief justice of the United States, Roger Brooke Taney, declared in his infamous *Dred Scott v. Sandford* opinion that since the nation's founding, African Americans — whether free or enslaved — had "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." Taney's opinion was not only inflammatory but based on bad history. It ignored the rights that some Black people had exercised in some states as far back as the Revolution, including the right to vote. More damning, Taney's words denied what he knew from his own legal practice: Black Americans used the legal system to fight for freedom. And sometimes, they won.

In his gripping new book, "[A Question of Freedom: The Families Who Challenged Slavery From the Nation's Founding to the Civil War](#)," historian William G. Thomas III provides a profound and prodigiously researched rebuttal to Taney's lie and to the conventional story that Black people fought for their freedom before the Civil War primarily by risking nighttime escapes or perilous rendezvous with the Underground Railroad. Thomas, a professor of history at the University of Nebraska, describes the legal efforts of a number of African American families who lived in Maryland and D.C. from the colonial period through the Civil War. Thomas shows how families bolstered their claims of freedom through documents, oral histories and accounts of their free ancestors' arrival in America...

*Dred Scott* is one of the few freedom suits that are familiar

to Americans by name, but Thomas makes only passing reference to it. He devotes the rest of his book to the seven decades that preceded the decision, tracing the stories of several enslaved families in Maryland's Prince George's County through the generations. Altogether, the county's families pursued more than a thousand freedom suits, a number of them successful. The defendants included prominent slaveholders, among them priests belonging to the Jesuit order, which happened to hold some of the largest plantations in the United States.

It's a rich, roiling history that Thomas recounts with eloquence and skill, giving as much attention as he can to the specifics of each case while keeping an eye trained on the bigger context. The very existence of freedom suits assumed that slavery could only be circumscribed and local; what Thomas shows in his illuminating book is how this view was eventually turned upside down in decisions like *Dred Scott*. "Freedom was local," Thomas writes. "Slavery was national..."

Thomas paints rich multigenerational portraits of families who used their histories in the legal process and won freedom in suit after suit. "Slaves sued slaveholders in every court available to them and in every jurisdiction they could reach from the very beginning of the United States," he writes.



Descendants of people once enslaved by the Jesuits who founded Georgetown University are buried in the Saint Joseph's Parish Cemetery in Morganza, MD. In 1838, the Jesuits sold hundreds of enslaved people to settle debts. (photo credit: Michael S. Williamson/The Washington Post)

He starts with early freedom suits involving the Butler family, which traced its ancestry to a free white woman from Ireland who arrived in the colony in 1681, as an indentured servant. The complexity of what followed reflected the convolutions and contradictions of the law. She married an enslaved man, which meant — according to the Maryland legislature at the time — that she became enslaved, too. That law was overturned, and two of her grandchildren filed suits in 1770; they lost their initial favorable decision when their enslavers appealed. After the Revolution, Butlers from the next generation filed suits — in this instance winning their freedom, along with hundreds of pounds of tobacco in damages. “Slaveholders,” Thomas writes ominously, “took notice.”...

Thomas convincingly demonstrates the degree to which courts in Maryland and Washington took seriously these petitioners’ claims. It was not mere legal theater when judges appointed commissioners to carry out months of fact-finding, including traveling to obtain witness depositions. Defendants showed up in court. Juries of property-owning White men, many of them enslavers, found in the petitioners’ favor. Judges did not simply order summary judgment. Petitioners and defendants alike paid huge sums to retain lawyers, among them leaders of the Washington bar such as Philip Barton Key, his nephew Francis Scott Key, and future Supreme Court justices Samuel Chase and Gabriel Duvall...

Thomas guides us through other cases that wended their way through the circuitous legal system, along with the

reactions of the slaveholding class. Successful suits made enslavers panic. Their attitudes became more virulent, their justifications more totalitarian and extreme. Fearful of slave revolts, enraged by the abolition of slavery in France and Britain, they saw themselves and their wealth as everywhere besieged.

While some enslaved plaintiffs had argued for their freedom based on the free status of an ancestor, skin color became increasingly used as an excuse to decide against them. Thomas describes how judges, lawyers and juries started focusing on plaintiffs’ physical appearances, whether to sow confusion over claims of white ancestry or to assert that being Black was itself a determinant of enslavement...

Throughout “A Question of Freedom,” Thomas is candid about his personal connection to this history. The last Queens

enslaved in Maryland were held by the Ducketts, a branch of his family. When the Ducketts moved from Prince George’s County to the District of Columbia, they “brought with them the inheritances of many generations,” he writes. “None was more insidious than their presumption of racial superiority.”

There was another kind of inheritance too, Thomas says, one that the enslavers assumed belonged solely to them: “The law, controlled by whites, had upheld the legitimacy of enslavement, granting formal authority to a fragile dominion repeatedly challenged by those they enslaved.”

Those challenges suggested that the enslavers could only hoard the law for themselves by deforming it. “Deployed for a higher purpose and in the right hands, those of enslaved people,” Thomas writes, “the law testified to an inheritance of freedom.”...

Thomas is clear-eyed in his assessment of the forces arrayed against the families. Chief among the institutions resisting their claims was the Catholic Church — specifically, the Jesuit corporation of Maryland. Headquartered at White Marsh plantation in Prince George’s County, the Jesuits were among the largest enslavers in the state. The corporation operated numerous tobacco plantations, kept detailed records of enslaved workers’ productivity and installed as managers priests who lived more like planter grandees than servants of Christ.

Most chilling, perhaps, were the sales. Thomas bookends

his narrative with two moments, in 1789 and 1838, when the Jesuits sold off hundreds of enslaved men, women and children to settle the order’s debts and finance its college, which became Georgetown University. Thomas is unsparing in describing the violence that these sales wrought on the families at the center of his study. In the 1838 sale, 272 enslaved people were packed into custom-made brigs, in conditions like those of the Middle Passage, and shipped from the Alexandria, VA, docks to the sugar plantations of Louisiana.

In 2018, Letitia Clark, a physician and a descendant of the Queens, told Thomas that she was shocked to learn about “the cousins that went to Louisiana” nearly 200 years earlier. Her ancestors had remained in Maryland, and some had gained their freedom in court. Those victories in the early 1800s, Clark reflected to Thomas, were a “fifty-year ‘head start’ on freedom.”

As Thomas’s study powerfully demonstrates, that head start was neither an accident nor a gift from White abolitionists. It was the product of antebellum Black American families documenting, petitioning and arguing for their freedom. In countless cases they claimed the republic’s legal system as their own — and won.

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Columbia Journalism School and the Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University are pleased to announce the 2021 winners for the J. Anthony Lukas Work-in-Progress Awards, the J. Anthony Lukas Book Prize and the Mark Lynton History Prize.

Established in 1998, the Lukas Prize Project honors the best in American nonfiction writing. Co-administered by the [Columbia Journalism School](#) and the [Nieman Foundation](#)

for [Journalism at Harvard](#), and sponsored by the family of the late Mark Lynton, a historian and senior executive at the firm Hunter Douglas in the Netherlands, the Lukas Prize Project presents four awards annually.

The winners and finalists of the 2021 Lukas Prizes were announced on Wednesday, 24 March 2021. The awards were presented virtually at a ceremony on Tuesday, 4 May 2021...

The Mark Lynton History Prize (\$10,000) is awarded to the book-length work of narrative history, on any subject, that best combines intellectual distinction with felicity of expression. Books must have been published between 1 January 2020, and 31 December 2020.

Winner: William G. Thomas III, author, historian, and the John and Catherine Angle Chair in the Humanities and professor of history at the University of Nebraska, has won for *A Question of Freedom: The Families Who Challenged Slavery from the Nation's Founding to the Civil War* (Yale University Press). In this original book, historian William G. Thomas III tells an intensely human and intricate story about the enslaved families of Prince George’s County, Maryland, who filed hundreds of suits for their freedom against a powerful circle of slaveholders, beginning with the

Jesuit priests who owned some of the largest plantations in the nation and founded a college at Georgetown on the Potomac River...

Bio: William G. Thomas III is the John and Catherine Angle Chair in the Humanities and professor of history at the University of Nebraska. He was co-founder and director of the Virginia Center for

Digital History at the University of Virginia, where he was previously a professor. He is the recipient of numerous grants and fellowships, including a 2008 Digital Innovation Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies, grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and most recently, a Guggenheim award to support the writing of this book. Thomas is the author of *The Iron Way: Railroads, the Civil War, and the Making of Modern America* (Yale, 2011), a finalist for the 2012 Lincoln

Prize. His writing has appeared in *Civil War History*, *The Journal of Historical Geography*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *Inside Higher Education*.

Judges' citation: It begins with a bridge. The opening pages of William G. Thomas III's astonishing and monumental book, *A Question of Freedom*, recount his drive to a 2017 religious service at Georgetown University, for which he must first cross the Francis Scott Key Bridge. The service has been convened to force a moral reckoning with ghastly crimes: The enslavement of human beings. The destruction of families. The crushing of souls. Throughout this extraordinary work, Thomas details the court cases brought by slaves to demand their freedom. And he insists that we learn the names of the families — among them, the Queens and the Butlers — whose brave members used the law to require a fledgling nation to live up to its stated ideal of equality.

...“I'm especially honored to receive the Lynton prize,” said Thomas, Angle Chair in the Humanities and professor of history at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. “The past awardees and the authors on this year's shortlist are all writers of great distinction, courage, and accomplishment. I'm thrilled to be among them.”...

For the book, Thomas relied much on the freedom suits he has unearthed from archives, researched and digitized for his digital humanities project, “*O Say Can You See: Early Washington, D.C., Law and Family*,” which has also garnered awards, including financial support from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Since its publication, *A Question of Freedom* has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Publishers Weekly*, and more. The book is also resonating with readers for its focus on individual families and their quest for freedom.

“It has been gratifying and heartening to hear from readers who say that *A Question of Freedom* tells a story they've not heard before and deals honestly with the problem of slavery in American history,” Thomas said. “It's a personal encounter with history and with the descendants of the families who sued for freedom.”

Thomas is developing a feature-length film, *The Bell Affair*, based on the book with Kwakiutl Dreher and Michael Burton, both faculty at Nebraska. This film follows the team's short film, *Anna*, which was shown at multiple film festivals and earned the best animation award at the New Media Film Festival in 2018.

Thomas has been a faculty member at Nebraska since 2005 and was chair of the Department of History 2010-16. He was named a John Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellow in 2016 and now serves as associate dean for research and graduate education in the College of Arts and Sciences.

The George Washington Prize is one of the nation's largest and most prestigious literary awards.

The George Washington Prize honors outstanding new works on George Washington and his times (the Revolutionary and founding eras circa 1760-1820). Works that reach a broad, non-scholarly public audience, are elegantly crafted and intellectually rigorous, and contribute substantially to the ongoing national conversation about the legacy and meaning of America's revolution are eligible for consideration. Publishers and authors are invited to submit books that meet these criteria.

The \$50,000 prize is sponsored by Washington College, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, and George Washington's Mount Vernon. Each year the sponsors appoint a jury of three historians or other qualified scholars who are asked to name up to seven finalists. The finalists for this year will be announced on July 4th. A final selection committee made up of two representatives of each of the three sponsoring institutions, plus an independent historian reviews the finalists and chooses a winner...

William G. Thomas III, *A Question of Freedom: The Families Who Challenged Slavery from the Nation's Founding to the Civil War*

This book combines the author's family history with original archival research on the “freedom suits” that put the institution of slavery itself on trial in U.S. courts between the years 1787 and 1861. During this period, hundreds of suits were initiated by enslaved individuals living in Prince George's County, Maryland against powerful slaveholding families. Describing these freedom suits as the “public counterpart of the Underground Railroad,” Thomas demonstrates how several generations of families such as the Queens, Mahoneys, and Butlers used the legal system to fight for their individual freedom. Their brave actions had wide-ranging repercussions and ultimately challenged the legality of slavery itself. Piecing together evidence from a variety of sources due to the fact that there are no transcripts of the trials, Thomas research debunks the myth that the inhumane institution stood on firm legal ground. Combining personal accounts from the present day with historical research which includes difficult truths about the role the author's own ancestors played in the story, *A Question of Freedom* compels readers to

contemplate how we, as individuals and as a nation, continue to grapple with the bitter legacy of slavery.

**Sources:** Jennifer Szalai, “Remembering the Enslaved Who Sued for Freedom Before the Civil War,” <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/books/review-question-of-freedom-families-challenged-slavery-william-thomas.html>, 24 November 2020; US National Archives, “A Question of Freedom,” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ge10\\_0KUtFU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ge10_0KUtFU), 30 November 2020; Sean Hagewood | University Communication, “Nebraska in the national news: November 2020,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/nebraska-in-the-national-news-november-2020/>, 2 December 2020; Alison L. LaCroix, “The enslaved families who went to court to win their freedom,” [https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/the-enslaved-families-who-went-to-court-to-win-their-freedom/2020/12/11/d126577a-2d94-11eb-bae0-50bb17126614\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/the-enslaved-families-who-went-to-court-to-win-their-freedom/2020/12/11/d126577a-2d94-11eb-bae0-50bb17126614_story.html), 11 December 2020; “The Fight For Freedom Against All Odds,” <https://www.wypr.org/post/fight-freedom-against-all-odds>, 12 January 2021; “Columbia Journalism School and the Nieman Foundation Announce the 2021 J. Anthony Lukas Prize Project Awards Shortlist,” <https://journalism.columbia.edu/2021-j-anthony-lukas-prize-project-awards-shortlist>, 25 February 2021; CAS, “Thomas shortlisted for Lynton History Prize,”

<https://history.unl.edu/thomas-shortlisted-lynton-history-prize>, 25 February 2021; “Achievements | Honors, appointments, publications for Feb. 26,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/achievements-honors-appointments-publications-for-feb-26/>, 26 February 2021; “Emily Dufton, Casey Parks, Jessica Goudeau, and William G. Thomas III Named Winners of the 2021 J. Anthony Lukas Prize Project Awards,” <https://journalism.columbia.edu/2021-lukas-announcement>, 24 March 2021; “Thomas earns Luka Prize from Columbia/Neiman,” <https://cas.unl.edu/thomas-earns-lukas-prize>, 24 March 2021; Deann Gayman | University Communication, “Thomas earns Lynton Prize for ‘A Question of Freedom,’” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/thomas-earns-lynton-prize-for-a-question-of-freedom/>, 29 March 2021; “2021 J. Anthony Lukas Prize” <https://www.c-span.org/video/?511539-1/2021-j-anthony-lukas-prize>, 4 May 2021; “The George Washington Prize 2021,” <https://www.mountvernon.org/library/george-washington-prize/2021/>; CAS MarComm, “Thomas' book named finalist for George Washington Prize,” <https://history.unl.edu/thomas-book-named-finalist-george-washington-prize>, 30 June 2021; “Achievements | Honors, appointments, publications for July 2,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/achievements-honors-appointments-publications-for-july-2/>, 2 July 2021

## NEW SERIES EDITOR



I.B. Tauris (an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing) has announced the launch of a new series titled *Armenians in the Modern and Early Modern World*. Prof. Bedross Der Matossian will serve as the series editor. Recent decades have seen the expansion of Armenian Studies from insular history to a broader, more interactive field within an inter-regional and global context. This series responds to this growth by promoting innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to Armenian history, politics, and culture in the period between 1500-2000. Focusing on the geographies of the Mediterranean, Middle East, and Contemporary Russia [Eastern Armenia], it directs specific attention to imperial and post-imperial frameworks: from the Ottoman Empire to Modern Turkey/Arab Middle East; the Safavid/Qajar Empires to Iran; and the Russian Empire to Soviet Union/post-Soviet territories.

Reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the field, the series welcomes proposals from scholars in Ottoman/Turkish Studies, Iranian Studies, Slavic Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, Mediterranean Studies, and disciplines of History, Political Science, Anthropology, Literature, and Sociology, among others. Topics and themes include, but

are not limited to, the following areas: trade and economy; cultural production; political history; gender; intra and inter-religious relations; diaspora; genocide; nationalism and identity formation; and democratization. The series will publish monographs and edited collections. All proposals and manuscripts are subject to rigorous peer review. “It is an honor to serve as the editor of this exciting series,” said Der Matossian. “We have excellent books in the pipeline. With the support of a highly qualified Advisory Board, I am confident that we will be able to advance the field of Armenian Studies from an interdisciplinary perspective.”...

Bedross Der Matossian is an Associate Professor of Middle East History at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. He is the President of the Society for Armenian Societies (SAS) and the author of the award-winning book *Shattered Dreams of Revolution: From Liberty to Violence in the Late*

*Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2014), and co-editor and editor of *Routledge Handbook on Jerusalem* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2018), *Western Armenian in the 21st Century: Challenges and New Approaches* (2018), and *The First Republic of Armenia (1918-1920) on its Centenary: Politics, Gender, and Diplomacy* (2020).

**Sources:** “I.B. Tauris launches new book series titled Armenians in the Modern and Early Modern World,” <https://armenianweekly.com/2020/11/19/i-b-tauris-launches-new-book-series-titled-armenians-in-the-modern-and-early-modern-world/>, 19 November 2020; Sean Hagedwood | University Communication, “Nebraska in the national news: November 2020,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/nebraska-in-the-national-news-november-2020/>, 2 December 2020

## SOCIETY FOR ARMENIAN STUDIES PRESIDENT

The Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) Executive Council held a meeting on 11 November 2020 to choose its new Executive officers for 2021. Bedross Der Matossian (University of Nebraska-Lincoln) was re-elected as SAS President. Also elected were: Vice-President Dzovinar Derderian (American University of Armenia); Secretary Nora Lessersohn (University College London); Treasurer Barlow Der Mugrdchian (California State University, Fresno); and advisors Vartan Matiossian (Executive Director of the Eastern Prelacy), Christopher Sheklian (Zohrab Information Center) and Varak Ketsemanian (Princeton University). Tamar Boyadjian (Michigan State University), the editor of the Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies (JSAS), serves as an ex-officio officer.

On behalf of the SAS, Der Matossian thanked outgoing Vice-President Alison Vacca (University of Tennessee-Knoxville) for her work in advancing the mission of SAS.

“It is a great honor to have been re-elected as the President of the SAS,” stated Der Matossian. “In the past two years we have realized all of the major goals we have set forward

beginning in 2018. Our membership has increased by 40%; we have produced 45 interviews in our Podcast Series; we have given more than 15 research grants to Graduate Students in the field; we have published two volumes in the SAS Publication Series; innovative articles have been published in our electronic journal E-SAS under the editorship of Dzovinar Derderian; and the first volume of the Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies (JSAS) has been published by the prestigious Brill publishing house under the energetic editorship of Tamar Boyadjian.”

“The SAS is continuing its academic mission by organizing and co-sponsoring conferences, the largest of which was the SAS 45th anniversary conference dedicated to the Armenian Diaspora which took place at the University of California, Los Angeles in October of 2019. Due to the COVID pandemic, SAS adapted itself to alternative ways of disseminating knowledge through Zoom webinars. As a result of the Artsakh war, SAS is raising awareness about the situation through conferences and symposia. As an academic organization our top priority is to preserve the Armenian cultural heritage of Artsakh. We are currently partnering with different organizations to fulfill this task,” added Der Matossian...

The SAS, founded in 1974, is the international professional association representing scholars and teachers in the field of Armenian Studies. The aim of the SAS is to promote the study of Armenian culture and society, including history, language, literature, and social, political, and economic questions.

Information about the SAS can be found on its website at <http://societyforarmenianstudies.com/> or by following the SAS on its Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/>

[societyforarmenianstudies](https://www.facebook.com/societyforarmenianstudies).

**Sources:** “Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) elects new officer for 2021,” <https://www.aravot-en.am/2020/11/28/271491/>, 28 November 2020; Sean Hagedwood | University Communication, “Nebraska in the national news: November 2020,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/nebraska-in-the-national-news-november-2020/>, 2 December 2020

## SOCIAL JUSTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Black women have played a key role in social justice movements in South Africa, and their experience has parallels with the civil rights movement in the United States.

Nebraska’s Dawne Y. Curry has spent much of her academic career, beginning in graduate school, studying 20th and 21st century African history with an emphasis on resistance, and protest struggles in South Africa.

Curry’s first book, “Apartheid on a Black Isle: Removal, and Resistance in Alexandra, South Africa,” explores activism of this northeastern Johannesburg township during the apartheid era. During 2017-18, the associate professor of history and ethnic studies spent 11 months in South Africa as a Fulbright scholar. She researched her forthcoming book, “Social Justice at Apartheid’s Dawn: African Women Intellectuals and the Quest to Save the Nation,” to be published later in 2021. This book unlike the first one goes back earlier in South Africa’s history, from 1910-48, a period of segregation that predated apartheid.

Curry said her research “seeks to examine the ways in which women not only pounded the pavement for racial and gender equality but also used their words as weapons to challenge the domination of men and the white minority which oppressed them.”

Charlotte Manye Maxeke, Lillian Tshabalala, and other female activists left a blueprint to rebuild the African nation. Their editorials, presidential addresses, poetry, and other forms of intellectualism offer proscriptions for combating racial discrimination during the segregation era.

“By politicizing social service, these women became interpreters of the turbulent political climate in which they

lived, and constructors of the society they hoped to build. By recognizing their common humanity, African women bequeathed a rich untapped legacy of political thought that will further our understanding of constructions of identity in segregated and apartheid South Africa,” Curry wrote.

They are remembered in South Africa today in the names of hospitals and schools and, in some cases, statues. Some are forgotten, though, a situation Curry hopes to rectify with her new book.



“I got interested because I saw parallels with the American civil rights movement,” Curry said. “I would say in both the post-civil rights era and post-apartheid era, there are some similarities in terms of how race relations are evolving and how they are also re-emerging in some ways.”

For example, in the United States the prevalence of police brutality permeates throughout our society and has gained

increasing attention over the last 20 years, Curry said. The Black Lives Matter movement sparked protests all around the world including South Africa where the issue against injustice is not just between black and white. It includes other racial groups due to the country's history of apartheid.

**Source:** Dan Moser, "Nebraska researcher explores social justice in South Africa, notes parallels with U.S.," <https://research.unl.edu/blog/nebraska-researcher-explores-social-justice-in-south-africa-notes-parallels-with-u-s/>, 28 April 2021

## SAY THEIR NAMES DISCUSSION

The Women's and Gender Studies program hosted a "Say Their Names: Centering Black Women Activists in the Struggle for Justice" discussion from 3:30 to 4:45 p.m. 12 Oct. 2020 via [Zoom](#).

The event featured Jeannette Jones and Zakiya Luna, who examined the often-overlooked activism and leadership of women of color in the United States. This dialogue and discussion allowed us to hear from two outstanding scholars and then to ask questions and discuss together.

Jones, associate professor of history and ethnic studies,

spotlighted women's activism in Black Lives Matter. Her talk focused on the Black women, queer, and transgender people who are central to creating and leading resistance to violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. She also addressed the need for movements like #SayHerName to foreground that women and girls are victims of police brutality....



**Source:** "Women's and Gender Studies to host Say Their Names discussion," <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/womens-and-gender-studies-to-host-say-their-names-discussion/>, 5 October 2020

Her book, *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and Origins of American Gynecology*, lays groundwork for understanding how structural racism was seeded in health care and how it continues to play a role in the health outcomes of minorities to this day, including in the COVID-19 pandemic that is disproportionately affecting Black and Hispanic communities.

Cooper Owens, the Charles and Linda Wilson Professor in the History of Medicine and director of the [Humanities in Medicine](#) program at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, sat down for a conversation with Nebraska Today to discuss her scholarship, the past and present of health care in the United States, epidemics, and what comes next.

**You joined the faculty in the fall of 2019. What brought you to Nebraska?**

You know, it was really a wonderful career opportunity. On a personal level, how many black women are heads of humanities departments? There are literally two of us in the United States and also two black women faculty members who are endowed professors in the history of medicine. I thought, 'what a wonderfully progressive opportunity for the Midwest to make this kind of move outside of a metropolis like Chicago or Detroit.' But also, the ways that Nebraska is trying to center humanities — particularly with all of the discussions around STEM — sometimes the medical humanities is forgotten. Yet, it has such a big impact on society. It was a wonderful opportunity, I think professionally and personally, for me to come here.

**Having been here a little over a year, as the director of the Humanities in Medicine program, what opportunities do you see for growth there?**

What we're trying to do is raise our profile nationally, with other medical humanities programs. Beyond that, I want to be able to institution-build, so that in a number of years, I would love to have postdoctoral fellowship opportunities and hire more faculty members, but right now, we don't have the hard money for these positions. One of the most promising things about heading up this department and doing the kind of work that intersects with history, race and racism, and gender, and all of these things, is, in the moment of this pandemic, people have really been looking to the medical humanities and folk who do the history of medicine to be able to provide context for where we are at this moment. People really want to understand this moment, in a way that doesn't make them feel like this is new and exceptional. If we've been here before, how do we move ahead? Medical humanities experts have thankfully been able to do that in this particular moment.

**Is there a particular course you really love teaching?**

Oh, my gosh, yes, I love the History of American Medicine. I'm able to really rely on my expertise. And, in the years to come, when my course load increases a little bit, I would love to teach graduate students who are also interested in comparative histories of race and medicine and the impact it has on our society.

**What spurred you to become a historian of medicine?**

Until probably three and a half years ago, I was really afraid to take on the label of historian of medicine, because I thought, 'I do U.S. history. I do slavery. I do women's history, and that's it.' I used medicine as a lens to understand all of these people and the country.

It felt weird to me to call myself a historian of medicine, but I realized I was doing a different kind of history of medicine. I wasn't writing about a disease. I wasn't writing about a famous person. I wasn't writing about a hospital or institution. I was really writing about the patients, and that was something that typically had not been done in the history of medicine. It took a long time for me to adopt that, but now, it's interesting. I do other things, too. I can talk about more things than that, but I absolutely love it.

**Your book, *Medical Bondage*, was published in 2017, which received a lot of acclaim. Were there reactions that surprised you?**

I would say in terms of the response, it's been really positive. In some ways, it was shocking.

I was living in New York at the time. And there was this huge controversy surrounding the removal of a statue of James Marion Sims, known as the father of American gynecology (and one of the doctors researched in the book who performed medical experiments on enslaved and poor women). I joke that I went from an assistant professor at Queens College who taught African American history, to the country's foremost expert on James Marion Sims. What was happening? At first, I wanted to stay in my safe place as an academic. I don't want to have these political opinions about whether the statue should stay or be removed. But the public really wanted to know. They wanted context.

Then the book got a second breath of life from birth workers — primarily midwives and doulas — who found out about the book and they were like, 'wait, we didn't learn this in school.' And now, the third iteration is medical colleges and schools of nursing. I have done probably more Grand Rounds than I can count. These medical residents are really interested in how do we come to a maternal health

Deirdre Cooper Owens is telling the stories of the past that

can point us in the right direction in the future.

## ASKED & ANSWERED: HEALTHCARE, EPIDEMICS, AND CHANGE

crisis for black women and black birthing people? Why is this so reminiscent of the 19th century? They've been looking to my work to fill the gaps.

In terms of the publishing, most books by an academic press sell 300 to 400 copies. I'm now over 8,000. For me, it's not about selling books. I'm more interested in, what does this say for scholars who are coming along who want to write histories that they see have a resonance for contemporary society? They want to write about slaves. They want to write about immigrants. They want to explore these kinds of histories of marginalized people. For me, it leaves an imprint. The press now knows people are really interested in these kinds of histories. There are people who are really interested in the history of gynecology, not because it's the history of gynecology, but what does this say about a current crisis that so many people are facing? That's why it's important that something like this does so well.

**Speaking of racism in medicine, this pandemic seems to have put a very bright spotlight on systemic racism in health care. From a historian's perspective, is this going to be a catalyst for change?**

Yeah, I think so. Although this has been ongoing for a really long time, I am, I would say, optimistic about a transformation happening.

A year or so ago, I was giving a talk in Iowa at Simpson College. I was in the lobby of the hotel, catching the shuttle, and I had the hotel copy of *USA Today*. On the front page was a story about the black maternal health crisis. That would have never been on the front page of a major newspaper five years ago, and so people are paying attention.

I've done interviews in Turkey, Germany, with the BBC, ABC News, all on race and structural racism in medicine. Even reporters are becoming more precise and accurate with the language. What does anti-blackness look like? Or, what does racism look like? What does sexism look like? What does classism look like? Once we start naming the things that actually create these negative social determinants of health, then we can start to face the problem. How does the impact of poverty, or how does

one process racism, physiologically? How does that then affect the ways in which your body processes these things? Or what if someone has a bias against you? What if you aren't able to articulate language in a particular way, and so if someone is condescending to you, and that manifests in terms of stress, now there's low-level inflammation that happens. All of these things are not necessarily based on whether one is Black or white, or Chinese, or Chippewa, but it's really based on the structures that our society has created.

With the work of reproductive justice activists, in particular, and what has now been intersecting with the epidemiology of this pandemic, it's really beginning to make change. I'm really, really grateful Lincoln has even declared medical racism as a public health crisis. That's pretty progressive, being that the CDC hasn't even made that declaration. So, yes, I'm hopeful.



There are new calls for us to really take heed of what medical racism does. Often, and this is a really distressing fact, when I show the documentation, and I provide the evidence that the black maternal health crisis in the 21st century rivals the numbers during the age of slavery, most people are shocked. For those stats to still be the same for Black mothers and Black birthing people, I think it's a crisis that we're going to have to take very seriously. We know what these medical crises cost our country billions of dollars that we don't actually need to be spending if we could just save their lives and the lives of their children.

What I am thankful and hopeful about is that medical institutions, medical organizations, like the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists are finally

saying, 'okay, we have to change this, because the numbers are dismal. We should not be the most dangerous country in the developed world for women of color to have children.' They've been hard at work at trying to reverse those numbers.

#### **What is your next research project?**

I am working on two projects, both in the history of medicine.

The more fun project, for me, is really understanding Harriet Tubman as a disabled person. Most people know of Harriet Tubman as one of the conductors on the Underground Railroad and all of her work with the Civil War as a soldier who helped free over 750 slaves in the raid in South Carolina. But they often don't know that she suffered a traumatic brain injury as an adolescent.

In today's age, we might look at her askance because of some of the things that she said, right? She would get these vivid visions, these hallucinations, where she would have conversations with God, seeing colors that didn't exist in real life. The effects of her condition led her to make those multiple trips back to her former plantation to free almost 100 slaves, but also when she was married and enslaved in her early 20s, she never had a child for all the years that she was married. And that's pretty uncommon. We'll never

know for sure. She was illiterate — she didn't leave a body of written work — but I think knowing this information helps to raise questions around infertility.

It helps to raise questions around the ways that men and women responded to Tubman as a disabled person, which was something she was very transparent about. And yet, the most powerful white men in the country asked her to lead a raid during the Civil War. She did amazing things.

The second project that's going to take a really long time is one where I'm looking at slavery and mental illness. And I'm looking at it from the colonial period all the way to the 19th century. What did it look and feel like for people living during that time to be considered? There was a kind of violence that we can't imagine. People were killed publicly. There were lynchings. I mean, I can't imagine seeing that now. How does one live through this and maintain a grasp of sanity? What does insanity look like? What got me on that path was the first hospital that was built in the United States was one for the mentally ill.

**Source:** Deann Gayman | University Communication, "History shows COVID-19 can be catalyst for change | Asked & Answered: Deirdre Cooper Owens," <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/history-shows-covid-19-can-be-catalyst-for-change/>, 26 October 2020

## NEVER AGAIN: HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

Learning about the Holocaust — the atrocities, as well as the events that preceded it — can instill important lessons on civic engagement, human rights, antisemitism, and xenophobia, but how do instructors make the coursework meaningful to their students, beyond just learning the facts?

For Gerald Steinacher and Ari Kohen, the question is personal, as Steinacher grew up in a post-World War II Austria near a former concentration camp, and Kohen is the descendant of Holocaust survivors. To help answer it, the two University of Nebraska–Lincoln scholars launched a five-year study, gathering data from Steinacher's History of the Holocaust course, which he teaches each year to 120–150 students.

"We all agree, 'Never again.'" Steinacher, James Rawley Professor of History, said. "This is the slogan and people

have traditionally said, 'Yes, it's important to have Holocaust education and that institutions have classes on this topic,' but there was not much research on what kind of impact this education actually has. We have a responsibility, to be frank, to get it right.

"My course [on the history of the Holocaust] is always evolving, and it became particularly pressing to answer this question in recent years, with the strong increase in antisemitism, xenophobia, and racism. What can we do to make history more meaningful for the present, and what can we learn from history to strengthen empathy and truth? How can we find ways to fight back against antisemitism and other falsehoods?"

Utilizing more than 1,000 student pre- and post-class surveys, interviews, and evaluations from 2013 to 2018, the

# WASHINGTON POST GUEST COLUMN

Deirdre Cooper Owens, Wilson Professor of History and director of the Humanities in Medicine program, wrote a 12 Feb. 2021 [guest column for \*The Washington Post\*](#) on the United States' long history of medical racism.

about Black people's immunity to yellow fever and defending the Black community against charges of immorality and criminality, providing evidence using quantitative data.



People gather in New York on 4 Feb. 2021 to call for minorities to be prioritized for the coronavirus vaccine. (photo credit: Justin Lane/EPA-EFE/Shutterstock)

She touched on other instances, such as the Tuskegee syphilis study, the case of Henrietta Lacks, and forced hysterectomies in the South in the 1950s and 1960s.

She wrote that, thankfully, a number of major organizations, from the American Medical Association to the March of Dimes, have stepped up to declare medical racism a public health crisis.

“Medical racism has no place in a country where Black Americans, like those who worked and suffered during the 1793 yellow fever epidemic, have contributed so much to our society,” she wrote. “It is an outdated racial science that not only has made the United States the most dangerous developed nation for Black pregnant people to give birth, but also has made a respiratory disease into a racialized disease.”...

**Sources:** Deirdre Cooper Owens, “Medical racism has shaped U.S. policies for centuries: The link between the 1793 yellow fever epidemic and the coronavirus,” 12 February 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/02/12/medical-racism-has-shaped-us-policies-centuries/>; “CAS in the national news, February 2021,” <https://cas.unl.edu/cas-national-news-february-2021>, 3 March 2021

# YORK RECOGNITION AND THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

When the early-1800s expedition to the Pacific Ocean led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark returned after

two years and 8,000 miles, members who traveled with the now-famous pair of explorers received titles, accolades,



Visitors gather near the gate rail entrance, of Auschwitz Birkenau, a Nazi concentration and extermination camp in Poland. Two Nebraska scholars have identified ways to make Holocaust education more meaningful for students. (photo credit: Shutterstock)

researchers found that overall, personal narratives from those persecuted — specifically books and oral histories — made the most lasting impression on students...

With the findings, Steinacher has grown his course syllabus to include more personal narrative books, including Elie Wiesel's *Night* and *The Sunflower* by Simon Wiesenthal, a visit to a Holocaust memorial, guest speakers with first-hand knowledge, and video interviews with survivors.

“At the end of the day, it is about empathy,” Steinacher said. “What kind of materials really click with students, so they can relate, and say, ‘this was really horrible and how was it possible?’ We want to teach them the factual knowledge, but also establish empathy and meaning in their lives now.”

Kohen and Steinacher also are actively disseminating what they've learned. With a generous donation from the Sommerhauser family, Kohen and Steinacher have published chapters in books on genocide education, launched a book series with the University of Nebraska Press on teaching the Holocaust, and host workshops every other year for educators and the general public on different aspects of Holocaust education.

“It's so important to educate a wider audience,” Steinacher said. “I always felt it was my obligation to be a public

historian and get our research, our knowledge, out there.

“And we want to work with teachers, who are so extremely important as people who can distribute the information to the next generation.”

Their research has become even more significant as recent studies have shown younger generations lack knowledge about the Holocaust and most other genocides. Specifically, a nationwide survey suggested that 1 in 10 can't recall the Holocaust ever being mentioned, and 63% didn't know the basic fact that 6 million Jews were murdered.

“Holocaust education is not systematized in the United States, so depending on where you are from, you might learn about it or you might not — it's a roll of the dice,” Kohen said. “This is one area where we can improve. We're specifically trying to bring as many high school teachers as we can to the table.”

**Source:** Deann Gayman | University Communication, “‘Never again.’ Research helps raise impact of Holocaust education,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/never-again-research-helps-raise-impact-of-holocaust-education/>, 5 November 2020

land, and fame.

Except for the Black man who had no say in whether he was coming along.

York, an enslaved man owned by Clark and the first Black man to reach the Pacific, wanted his freedom. Or, at the very least, York wanted to be allowed to live with his wife in Louisville, Kentucky.

Clark refused both requests. When York became despondent, Clark saw fit to punish York with a “trouncing,” historians said. While he did eventually gain his freedom, accounts of York’s life after the expedition vary, and his story has been mostly ignored or misconstrued.

In Oregon, an unknown artist gave York the recognition that experts say his contributions to the Corps of Discovery deserved. A bust of York, mysteriously placed in Portland’s Mount Tabor Park in late February, depicts a bald man gazing solemnly downward and includes a plaque describing the significant role of the expedition’s lone Black adventurer.

It’s a gesture experts who spoke with USA TODAY hope will spark new interest in York...

Katrina Jagodinsky, Susan J. Rosowski associate professor of history at University of Nebraska in Lincoln, which hosts the [journals of the Lewis and Clark expedition online](#), said Clark spoke of York “in disparaging ways.”

Clark suggested York was not equipped for freedom is an “indication of Clark’s sort of lingering racism – something he held for the remainder of his life,” Jagodinsky said...

Coming to terms with York means grappling with a complex period of American history, Jagodinsky said.

“The more you know about York, the more difficult it is to hold William Clark as an uncomplicated hero,” she said. “It may be that some readers like to think of William Clark as a champion of democracy and liberty because of his participation in the expansion of American territory and, therefore, values.”

She added, “When you follow his treatment of York, it’s difficult to uphold that.”

**Source:** Jordan Culver, “A bust of the lone Black adventurer in the Lewis and Clark expedition mysteriously appeared in an Oregon park. Who was York?” 7 March 2021, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2021/03/07/york-bust-mount-tabor-park-portland-lewis-clark-expedition-oregon/6825504002/>



- On the NET Nebraska website at [netnebraska.org/livestream/](https://netnebraska.org/livestream/)
- On Facebook at [facebook.com/NebraskaStories](https://facebook.com/NebraskaStories)

Jacobs is an award-winning professor in the Department of History and director of the Center for Great Plains Studies.

Reconciliation Rising is a multimedia project that showcases the lives and work of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the U.S. who are engaged in honestly

confronting painful and traumatic histories, promoting meaningful and respectful dialogue between Natives and non-Natives, and creating pathways to reconciliation.

**Sources:** “‘Return of the Pawnees’ premieres on NET, PBS April 29,” <https://cas.unl.edu/return-pawnees-premieres-net-pbs-april-29>, 28 April 2021; “Return of the Pawnees,” <https://www.nebraskastories.org/videos/return-of-the-pawnees/>

## ASSOCIATE DEAN APPOINTMENT

William G. Thomas III, professor of history and John and Catherine Angle Chair in the humanities, began serving as the associate dean for research and graduate education in the College of Arts and Sciences starting 4 January 2021.

Will joined the Department of History in 2005 and served as chair from 2010 to 2016. He teaches U.S. history and specializes in the Civil War, the U.S. south, slavery, and digital history and digital humanities. He received the Hazel R. McClymont Distinguished Teaching Fellow Award in 2012 from the college and was selected as a 2016 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellow. His efforts helped earn the department the University-wide Departmental Teaching Award in 2017.

As a fellow of the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, Will’s projects include “Railroads and the Making of Modern America,” funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, and “O Say Can You See: Early Washington, D.C., Law, and Family.” The latter is the basis for his award-winning film “Anna” and the feature film in production, “The Bell Affair.” He also co-directs the History Harvest, which partners with undergraduate students and the local community to collect, digitize, and archive historical artifacts. It was adopted to K-12 curriculum in Lincoln Public Schools.



At the university level, he co-led the Nebraska 150 Commission—which created a plan for the university’s future—and is an ex-officio member of the N150 Strategy Team that will implement the plan.

Will brings his research knowledge and leadership experience to this associate dean role, where he fosters research support for faculty in all areas in the college, maintains connections to funding agencies, and oversees the college’s research award programs. As part of some administrative realignments in the Dean’s Office, he will also provide leadership for the advancement of graduate education in the college.

“We are excited about the contributions that he will make to the expanded role of associate dean for research and graduate education,” Dean Mark Button said in an email.

## “RETURN OF THE PAWNEES” SHORT FILM

The [Reconciliation Rising](#) project, co-directed by historian Margaret Jacobs, has produced an 11-minute film called “Return of the Pawnees,” which premiered on 29 April 2021 at 8:00 p.m.

The film chronicles how the Pawnees, once exiled from Nebraska, are now regaining a presence in their homeland due to a significant act of reconciliation.

“In 2007, Roger and Linda Welsch did what few descendants of European immigrants have ever done in the 500-year history of America,” Jacobs said. “They returned their plot of sixty acres near Dannebrog, Nebraska, to its original owners.”

Viewing options:

- On the NET/PBS TV station

The college thanks the search committee, chaired by Dan Claes, for their efforts in Will's selection and John Osterman for his two and a half years in the Dean's Office. Over the last nine months, John stepped in as interim associate dean for research in addition to his academic programs position.

**Source:** "Thomas to begin associate dean role Jan. 4," <https://cas.unl.edu/thomas-begin-associate-dean-role-jan-4>, 11 November 2020

## MACH PROFESSORSHIP

Six University of Nebraska-Lincoln professors have been awarded professorships from the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor.

"Professorships are one of the highest forms of recognition bestowed upon our faculty," said Elizabeth Spiller, executive vice chancellor. [University Professorships represent](#) an extraordinary level of scholarly or creative achievement, documented excellence in various aspects of teaching and outreach, and extensive involvement and service in the advancement of the university's mission.

Two faculty members received University Professorships, which recognize those who have shown an extraordinary level of scholarly or creative achievement and clear potential for continuing accomplishments...

Margaret Jacobs, [Charles J. Mach](#) professor of history and women's and gender studies, is the Director of the Center for Great Plains Studies, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and former Pitt Professor of American History at the University of Cambridge. She is internationally recognized for historical scholarship related to Indigenous peoples of the American West and Australia

and for explorations of the legacy of settler colonialism. She has written numerous peer-reviewed articles and chapters and has published three books, the second receiving the Bancroft Prize. Her Genoa Indian School Reconciliation Project is an ongoing collaborative digital history that will share the perspective of Native students taken away from their families to attend boarding school. Jacobs has received numerous honors in her career, including [membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences](#) and [being named Nebraska's inaugural Carnegie Fellow](#). Jacobs successfully supports her efforts with major grants and fellowships and received the university's Outstanding Research and Creative Activity Award in 2021...

[Read more about Jacobs' accomplishments on Nebraska Today.](#)

**Sources:** CAS, "Jacobs earns Charles Mach university professorship," 19 February 2021, <https://www.unl.edu/wgs/jacobs-earns-charles-mach-university-professorship>; Julie Kundhi | Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor, "Six faculty earn professorships," 7 May 2021, <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/six-faculty-earn-professorships-0/>

"The teaching, research, and outreach that these faculty do on a daily basis has a remarkable impact on our 52,000 students, the state, and the entire world. I'm honored to be able to celebrate their work."

Award recipients are selected by a system-wide committee of faculty members and, in the case of the engagement award, community members...

The awards — selected by an NU-systemwide committee of faculty and community members — were formally presented at a luncheon in the spring. Biographies of the three Huskers who earned individual 2021 President's Excellence Awards are below...

Outstanding Research and Creative Activity (ORCA) Award: recognizes individual faculty members for outstanding research or creative activity of national or international significance.

Margaret Jacobs, Ph.D., Chancellor's Professor of History and director of the Center for Great Plains Studies, University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Jacobs studies the history of the American West in comparison with Australia and Canada, focusing on women and gender as well as children and family. For the last 20 years, Jacobs has studied Indigenous child removal. Many of her books and articles concern government policies from



1880 to 1940 that required Indigenous children to be separated from their families and sent to distant boarding schools and other institutions. Her more recent scholarship examines how government authorities in the U.S., Australia, and Canada continued to remove Indigenous children after World War II through foster care and adoptive placements in non-Indigenous families. Her current work also examines and promotes reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

**Sources:** "University of Nebraska names system's top teaching, research and engagement award winners," <https://nebraska.edu/news-and-events/news/2021/03/university-of-nebraska-names-systems-top-teaching-research-and-engagement-award-winners>, 24 March 2021; Melissa Lee | Central Administration, "Jacobs, Kiewra, Rilett earn top NU awards," <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/jacobs-kiewra-rilett-earn-top-nu-awards/>, 29 March 2021

## OUTSTANDING RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY AWARD

On 24 March 2021, University of Nebraska President Ted Carter announced the 2021 recipients of the university system's six most prestigious faculty awards for research, creative activity, teaching, and engagement.

The university-wide [President's Excellence](#)

[Awards](#) recognize faculty whose work has had a significant impact on students, the university, and the state.

"Faculty are at the heart of any great university, and the University of Nebraska is fortunate to have some of the world's best serving across our four campuses," Carter said.

## POUND-HOWARD AWARD

Carole Levin, Cather Professor in the Department of History, and Christina Falci, associate professor in the Department of Sociology and acting chair of the Women's and Gender Studies Program, were recognized by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Faculty Senate.

Levin earned the [Louise Pound-George Howard Distinguished Career Award](#) for exceptional contributions through teaching, research, public service, or administration, reflecting a long-standing commitment to the university...

**Sources:** "Levin, Falci earn Faculty Senate awards," <https://cas.unl.edu/levin-falci-earn-faculty-senate-awards>, 4 May 2021; University Communication, "Achievements | Honors appointments, publications for May 21," <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/achievements-honors-appointments-publications-for-may-21/>, 20 May 2021

# DISTINGUISHED VISITING SCHOLAR AT UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

Jeannette Jones has been selected for the Distinguished Visiting Scholars program at the University at Buffalo's Center for Diversity Innovation (CDI).

The program's goal is to have the cohort "substantially advance diversity, equity, and inclusion at the University at Buffalo...through their record of scholarship and/or creative endeavors, teaching, mentoring, and service, as well as their skills, experiences, underrepresentation, and areas of scholarly and/or creative expertise."

Jones is an associate professor in the Department of History, the Institute for Ethnic Studies, and the Women's and Gender Studies program. As part of the second cohort of eight scholars,

she will spend the 2021-22 academic year at UB working on a project while mentoring students, sharing research, and attending events—all connected to impacting the campus community.

"Members were selected based on their excellence in their fields, commitment to student mentoring, and ability to

have the greatest possible influence on our UB, SUNY, and local communities," Maura Belliveau, director of the program, said.

CDI's program is one of the largest diversity-themed visiting faculty programs in the United States. The cohort was chosen by a university-wide selection committee chaired by the center director and nine faculty members across academic disciplines.

•••••

In September 2021, a second cohort of eight outstanding scholars and artists will arrive in Buffalo to spend the 2021-22 academic year at UB as part of an annually recurring program funded by the Office of the Provost and led by



The Center for Diversity Innovation's Distinguished Visiting Scholars for 2021-22. Top, L to R: Seth Parker Woods, Crystal Z Campbell, Óscar F. Gil-García, Jeannette E. Jones. Bottom, L to R: Devonya Havis, Carlos Amador, Octavio R. González, Margarita Huayhua.

UB's Center for Diversity Innovation in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Through the investment of more than \$1 million in funding to this program, the Office of the Provost is supporting one of the largest diversity-themed visiting faculty programs in the United States. There are multiple goals for the CDI

Distinguished Visiting Scholars program, but the fundamental objective is to host an annual cohort of "exceptionally accomplished individuals who, through their record of scholarship and/or creative endeavors, teaching, mentoring, and service, as well as their skills, experiences, underrepresentation, and areas of scholarly and/or creative expertise, can substantially advance diversity, equity, and inclusion at the University at Buffalo."

"UB is committed to enhancing our social impact and addressing issues related to structural racism and inequity through our curriculum, research, and hiring and retention practices," says A. Scott Weber, provost and executive vice president for academic affairs. "The 2020-21 Distinguished Visiting Scholars have had a tremendous impact on our university community and helped us advance our equity, inclusion, and diversity goals. We are excited to welcome another outstanding class of scholars to UB this fall and look forward to their impact on campus."

The 2021-22 cohort of Distinguished Visiting Scholars was chosen, once again, from a highly competitive pool of outstanding candidates across academic disciplines and fields generated through UB faculty members' and the center's national outreach and advertising efforts.

After initial evaluations and recommendations were provided by academic departments, top candidates received further review by a university-wide selection committee chaired by the center director and consisting of nine highly accomplished UB faculty members from diverse backgrounds whose work traversed the arts, humanities, social, physical, health, and applied sciences...

Jeannette Jones (she/her/hers), University of Nebraska, Lincoln, a historian focused on American cultural and intellectual history and African American Studies, with strong interests in race and representation, Atlantic studies, and science studies. Jones examines the ways in which "race" as a popular and scientific category operated as a potent signifier of difference — cultural, biological, social and political — in late 19th- and early 20th-century America...

Robin Schulze, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, notes that, as hoped, the Distinguished Visiting Scholars program has resulted in some of the visiting faculty from 2020-21 opting to stay at UB. "We anticipated that once visitors engaged with our students and experienced the university community through this program, it would become particularly attractive to stay. We could not be more pleased that, after a year of extraordinary work as Distinguished Visiting Scholars, three have chosen to continue as faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences," Schulze says.

"We are so grateful to Professors Victoria Udondian, Terri Watson, Patricia Matthew, Vanessa Holden, Mishuana Goeman, Nicholas Githuku, John Eason, Waverly Duck, and Eli Clare, who, during a very challenging year, nonetheless engaged with more than 32 different UB departments and programs and nearly every unit, as well as external groups, reaching thousands of students, faculty, staff, and community members and formally mentoring 80 students through their mentoring circles," CDI Director Maura Belliveau says.

Belliveau adds that the programming led by the visiting scholars in partnership with CDI and UB programs, departments, and staff groups, reached academics across the globe, bringing each scholar's work focused on racial equity, Indigenous, immigrant, trans, and disability justice to an even wider audience...

Events to welcome the scholars to UB will be announced in September 2021.

**Sources:** CAS MarComm, "Jones selected for visiting scholar program," <https://history.unl.edu/jones-selected-visiting-scholar-program>, 20 May 2021; UBNow Staff, "Center for Diversity Innovation announces second cohort of scholars," <http://www.buffalo.edu/ubnow/stories/2021/05/distinguished-visiting-scholars.html>, 20 May 2021; "Jones selected for visiting scholar program," <https://cas.unl.edu/jones-selected-visiting-scholar-program>, 20 May 2021; "Achievements | Honors, appointments, publications for June 4," <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/achievements-honors-appointments-publications-for-june-4/>, 4 June 2021

## HOSTILE TERRAIN EXHIBITION

The community joined scholars from across the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for a conversation about research, teaching, and public engagement related to the themes of the "Hostile Terrain 94" exhibition at 5 p.m. 21 Sept. 2020 via Zoom. The exhibition opened the same day in the

Nebraska Union.

Panelists included: Sergio Wals, Department of Political Science and Institute for Ethnic Studies; Isabel Velazquez, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures; Arthur

“Trey” Andrews, Department of Psychology and Institute for Ethnic Studies; William Belcher, School of Global Integrative Studies; and Veronica Duran, doctoral candidate with the Department of History. The panel was moderated by James Garza, Department of History and Institute for Ethnic Studies.

After a brief overview of the exhibition, panelists discussed their own research and backgrounds as they relate to Latine migration, Nebraska’s history, and its increasingly diverse communities. The discussion also touched on past and present policies in the United States and Mexico that contribute to the humanitarian crisis at the U.S.-Mexico



border and the (in)visibility of the human costs of migration, which characterize present-day debates about these issues. The audience was encouraged to contribute to the conversation, pose questions, and offer thoughts on possible solutions.

Sponsors and partners included: Humanities Nebraska; Faculty Senate Convocations Committee; Office of Diversity and Inclusion; Department of Textiles, Merchandising, and Fashion Design; Latino Research Initiative / Institute for Ethnic Studies; Department of Classics and Religious Studies; School of Global Integrative Studies; Forsythe Family Program on Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs; College of Arts and Sciences IDEA Committee; Office of Latino/Latin American Studies (UNO); Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education; International Quilt Museum; the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts; the College of Law; and the Robert J. Kutak Center for the Teaching and Study of Applied Ethics.

**Source:** “Scholar panel to launch ‘Hostile Terrain’ exhibition,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/scholar-panel-to-launch-hostile-terrain-exhibition/>, 16 September 2020

## “CHRISTIAN & ALEJANDRO” PRESENTATION

The Sheldon Museum of Art hosted Look at Lunchtime via Facebook Live at 12:15 p.m. 8 Oct. 2020.

On Facebook Live, Laura K. Muñoz, assistant professor of history and ethnic studies, talked about John Sonsini’s 2007 painting, “Christian & Alejandro.”

Each month of 2020, a member of the Sheldon staff or University of Nebraska–Lincoln faculty led a 15-minute discussion about an artwork on view in the museum.

Learn more on the [Sheldon’s website](#) or [Facebook page](#).

**Source:** “Look at Lunchtime to focus on

‘Christian & Alejandro,’” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/look-at-lunchtime-to-focus-on-christian-alejandro/>, 2 October 2020



## ACADEMY IN ACTION: POLICING AND RACISM

The Academy in Action presented the virtual event “Policing and Racism” on 13 October 2020 from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The event was free and open to the public.

We were joined by these academic experts and community leaders:

- Dr. Jeannette Jones, Professor of History, Ethnic Studies, and Women and Gender Studies at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.
- Black Leaders Movement, a local organization that emerged this summer to organize and lead protests against racialized police violence.
- Leo Yankton, a local activist and member of the Lakota nation.
- Dr. Anne Hobbs, Director of the Juvenile Justice Institute at University of Nebraska–Omaha, which seeks to improve and promote best practices in the juvenile criminal justice system.

Academy in Action, created by the group UnrulySociologists, is a group of graduate students in the Department of Sociology that bridges academic knowledge with action through the power of stories, and connections with on-the-ground change-makers. Their aim is to

inspire students at Nebraska to take action within their local community.

“At our event, attendees will learn about the problem, hear stories shared by community members directly impacted by racist policing, and receive guidance on how to get involved to stop police racism,” Rosalind Kichler, graduate student and chair of UnrulySociologists, said. “We hope to host more events on other social issues in the future.”

UnrulySociologists is a group of individuals using the information and skills that they have developed through their lived experiences, education, and interaction with others for the good of many. They consider it their duty as action-oriented social scientists to support social justice efforts to the best of their ability. They provide an umbrella for members to share expertise and passion on their focal topics and gain strength from collective efforts, helping each other do more than any could do alone.

**Source:** “Virtual event on policing, racism is Oct. 13,” <https://cas.unl.edu/virtual-event-policing-racism-oct-13>, 6 October 2020

## SOUTH TYROL LECTURE

*South Tyrol - Amore Mio: Identity and Ethnonationalism in a European Borderland* was a lecture by Gerald Steinacher, University of Nebraska, on 2 November 2020 (9AM PT – 11AM CT – 12PM ET). [Watch recorded lecture here](#). The lecture was sponsored by Center Austria, University of New Orleans.

The province of South Tyrol, a borderland long the subject of territorial disputes between Italy and Austria, is mostly known for its beautiful Dolomite mountains. After a tumultuous history of war, ethnic cleansing, and dictatorships, the province today is an affluent Italian autonomous region with three official ethnic/linguistic groups. As such, it is also a fascinating case study of (national) identities. What role does ethnonationalism still play there? And what can the case of South Tyrol tell us about the “United States of Europe” project?

Gerald J. Steinacher is James A. Rawley Professor of History at the University of Nebraska. Dr. Steinacher’s research focuses on 20th Century European History with an emphasis on Holocaust, National Socialism, Italian Fascism, and intelligence studies. Dr. Steinacher is currently writing his next monograph with the working title *Forgive and Forget? Catholic Responses to the Nuremberg Trials and Denazification, 1945-1950*. In it he explores profound questions of guilt and responsibility, which allows him to compare and contrast competing models of transitional justice. Dr. Steinacher teaches classes on the Holocaust, Modern Jewish History, Modern German History, History of Immigration, and Intelligence and Espionage History.

**Source:** <https://www.centeraustria.org/news-events-blog-2018/2020/9/11/upcoming-joint-lecture-series>

# GREAT PLAINS: ANYWHERE

The first entry in the revamped “Great Plains: Anywhere” series is an interview with the new director for the Center for Great Plains Studies, [Margaret Jacobs](#), Chancellor’s Professor of History at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. For more information on her projects, visit [Reconciliation Rising](#).

The middle of the U.S. is certainly not the middle of nowhere. Discover the vast Great Plains via interviews and presentations from experts from all sorts of fields. These

Paul A. Olson lectures were created by the Center for Great Plains Studies at the University of Nebraska. These are also uploaded as videos at: [go.unl.edu/gplectures](https://go.unl.edu/gplectures).

**Sources:** “Paul A. Olson Great Plains Lectures,” <https://www.unl.edu/plains/great-plains-great-ideas-paul-olson-seminars>; <https://mediahub.unl.edu/media/14429>; <https://anchor.fm/gp-lectures/episodes/Ep--1-New-Director-Margaret-Jacobs-ejmgb>

# PANEL ON COVID’S RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES

Why is COVID-19 killing Black and Brown people at higher rates than white people? Does this extend to other health issues? Can anything be done?

University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s Department of Communication Studies and the Institute for Ethnic Studies hosted a colloquium exploring these questions from 4 to 5 p.m. 26 Oct. 2020 via [Zoom](#).

There is an abundance of evidence pointing to racial and ethnic disparities related to the pandemic. These disparities reflect the existing inequities present in various aspects of health and health care in the United States.

Panelists discussed some of the social determinants and explanations for these disparities with the hopes of continual engagement on how we address this inequity locally and across our nation. Audience members had the opportunity ask questions of the panelists.

The moderator was Jordan Soliz, professor of communication studies. The panelists were:

- Jonathan Alcántar, Mexican American studies, University of Northern Colorado
- Trey Andrews, ethnic studies (Latinx studies) and psychology
- Virginia Chaidez, nutrition and health sciences and communication studies
- Margaret Huettl, ethnic studies (Native American studies) and history
- Angela Palmer-Wackerly, communication studies

**Source:** “Racial and health inequities to be explored in colloquium,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/racial-and-health-inequities-to-be-explored-in-colloquium/>, 21 October 2020

exploring, and celebrating the digital humanities work done at Nebraska. Presenters for the 5 Nov. session were Veronica N. Duran, a doctoral candidate in history, who discussed “Nuestras Historias: Chicanos Form Mexican

Student Organization at University of Nebraska–Lincoln;” and Robert Shepard, assistant professor in geography, who presented “Historical GIS and the Experiential Perspective.”

There was time for questions and open discussion after the two 20-minute presentations.

[Learn more about DH Afternoons.](#)

**Source:** “Digital Humanities to host virtual forum Nov. 5,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/digital-humanities-to-host-virtual-forum-nov-5/>, 29 October 2020

# SHAKESPEARE AND THE SUPERNATURAL

Carole Levin, Willa Cather Professor of History, was a featured special guest on the “Shakespeare Live” program at 6:30 p.m. 11 Nov. 2020. She discussed Shakespeare and the supernatural.

The Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington has been doing the weekly show, “Shakespeare Live,” since March 2020, as a way for people to experience discussions of Shakespeare during the pandemic.

Artistic director Simon Godwin and resident dramaturg Drew Lichtenberg gathered online with special guests each week to discuss a new topic and allow audiences the opportunity to ask questions.

The discussion was about ghosts, witches, and magic in Shakespeare. Levin is an expert on Shakespeare and Elizabethan culture and history. Her books include (with John Watkins) “Shakespeare’s Foreign World,” “Dreaming the English Renaissance,” and “The Heart and Stomach of a King;

Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power.” She also regularly teaches the course “Saints, Witches and Madwomen.”

**Sources:** “Levin a featured guest on Nov. 11 ‘Shakespeare Live,’” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/levin-a-featured-guest-on-nov-11-shakespeare-live/>, 11 November 2020; <https://www.shakespearetheatre.org/events/shakespeare-hour-live/>



# DIGITAL HUMANITIES DURING COVID-19

It started as a difficult task but turned into an opportunity for students to document history in the making.

Like nearly every course offered at the University of

Nebraska–Lincoln, Adrian Wisnicki’s fall digital humanities class, Digital Project Development, had to be retooled for instruction during a pandemic.

# DH AFTERNOON SESSION

Digital Humanities hosted an online version of DH Afternoons at 3:30 p.m. 5 Nov. 2020 via [Zoom](#).

DH Afternoons is a forum dedicated to supporting,

But the historic moment gave him an idea. He decided to have his students reflect on and document the COVID-19 pandemic over the course of the fall 2020 semester, all while learning about a variety of digital humanities tools and methodologies...

William Kelly, a doctoral student in history, examined homelessness, personal responsibility and social justice under the backdrop of a destabilizing pandemic.



William Kelly, a doctoral student in history, included this photo of downtown Lincoln in his digital humanities project to illustrate the emptiness of the streets and sidewalks and the ensuing plight of the homeless during the pandemic. (photo credit: William Kelly | University of Nebraska-Lincoln)

“As I was going through the course, I was thinking about my project not as necessarily for my peers or my colleagues in the history department, but for the average person out on the street who has questions,” Kelly said. “How is a major research university responding to a pandemic, and the mid-major city that surrounds it? I wanted my website to not only present answers to those questions, but be in an engaging and attractive format, and not intimidating. And I wanted my writing to tell a story, that life in a pandemic is not monolithic...”

Kelly had never worked in digital humanities before but

found the course helpful in building his knowledge in a methodical way. Jessica Dussault, a programmer in the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, and Elizabeth Lorang, associate professor and associate dean of University Libraries and fellow digital humanist, also helped students learn about some of the course’s digital humanities tools and engage in library-based research, respectively.

“I was intimidated at first, because I had some preconceived notions about what was involved with digital humanities,” Kelly said. “I thought you needed to know how to code or have a lot of knowledge about computers, and I didn’t know any of that. Because of the structure of the course, I was able to learn about different tools and see how those different tools could be used to build a project like mine...”

With the students’ permission, Wisnicki is hosting the projects on his website, [Pandemic on Campus: Documenting COVID at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln](#). “I think the students were really inspired by the project, and that shows in their work,” he said.

As a historian, Kelly said he sees their potential value years, maybe even decades, down the road.

“It really started to hit home, toward the end of the course, that we were documenting history in real time in a different way,” he said. “What journals and diaries do for historians, as far as providing a day-to-day record down the line, these sites hopefully will do the same.”

**Source:** Deann Gayman, “Students document living history of pandemic,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/students-document-living-history-of-pandemic/>, 8 January 2021

2021 with three days of events on racial justice.

The Wednesday, 10 March 2021 presentation 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. was conducted via Zoom and was titled “What Is Indigenous Sovereignty, and Why Does It Matter Now?”

Panelists were:

- Dr. Tom Gannon, Native American Studies and English
- Dr. Margaret Huettl, Native American Studies and History
- Jessica Shoemaker, J.D., Nebraska College of Law
- Dr. Colette Yellow Robe, Student Support Services...

The Friday, 12 March 2021 presentation was 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. via Zoom. The panelists for “Social Justice and Intellectual Allyship: When the Culture You Research or Teach Is Not Your Own” were:

- Dr. Patrick Jones, African American Studies and History

- Dr. Alice Kang, African Studies and Political Science
- Dr. Trey Andrews, U.S. Latinx Studies and Psychology
- Dr. Luis Rosa, U.S. Latinx and Latin American Studies and Modern Languages

**Source:** “Spring Celebration March 10-12 focused on racial justice,” <https://ethnicstudies.unl.edu/spring-celebration-march-10-12-racial-justice>, 8 February 2021

# ETHNIC STUDIES SPRING CELEBRATION

The Institute for Ethnic Studies hosted the annual Spring Celebration, honoring success and service, 10-12 March

# FACULTY LEADERSHIP IN ACADEMIA: FROM INSPIRATION TO REALITY

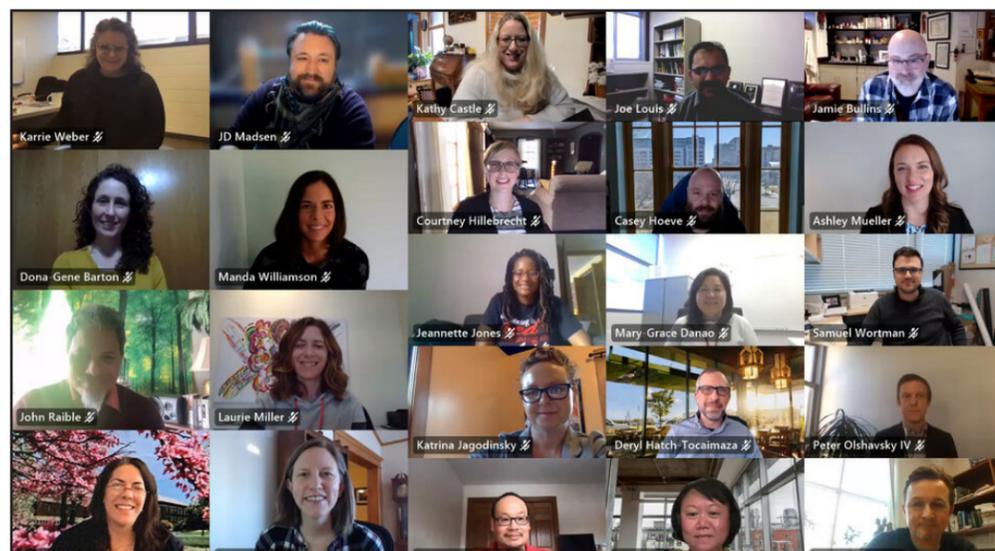
Eight CAS faculty are among 24 selected by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor for the third year of the Faculty Leadership in Academia: From Inspiration to Reality (FLAIR) program.

FLAIR provides professional development for university faculty who are considering a leadership role or are in their first leadership position and considering continuing on a leadership path.

The faculty are:

- Dona-Gene Barton, political science
- Katherine Castle, communication studies
- Courtney Hillebrecht, political science
- Katrina Jagodinsky, history
- Jeannette Jones, history and ethnic studies
- Witawas Srisa-An, computer science and engineering
- Karrie Weber, biological sciences
- Manda Williamson, psychology

**Source:** “Third cohort begins FLAIR leadership program,” 11 February 2021, <https://cas.unl.edu/third-cohort-begins-flair-leadership-program>



## LOVE ACADEMICALLY

*Welcome to Love Academically, a Nebraska Today series that snuggles up with the stories of Husker couples: how they met, how they wound up at Nebraska U, how they balance relationships with careers or studies at the university. Because love may be patient, kind and blind, but at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, it’s also academic.*

Like many love stories, Jim Benes (left) and Tim Turnquist’s (right) started on campus.

After being introduced through a mutual friend in late 2007, the pair officially became a couple early the next year. At the time, both were pursuing their undergraduate degrees at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln — with Benes majoring in geography and minoring in geology, and Turnquist studying history and Spanish.

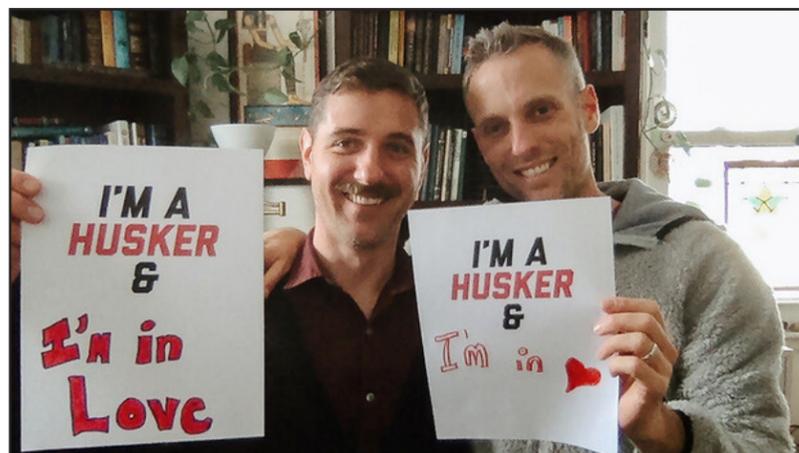
The two shared lunch dates in Selleck, read together on the green space and memorized their course schedules so they could connect between classes.

“Every minute, we were always trying to find each other on campus,” Benes said.

Because Benes didn’t have a cell phone, the pair devised a new way of finding each other on campus. Rather than meeting at a simple spot like the Nebraska Union or one of the academic halls, one person would send a call number at Love Library to the other via email or a pay-phone call. Then, at their predetermined time, the two would separately search for the book until they found each other among the stacks.

“I was such a sappy romantic, so of course ... I always picked books like ‘Love in the Time of Cholera’ or, you know, romantic books,” Benes said.

The pair have been through a lot together since they started dating in 2008. They’ve each earned bachelor’s and master’s



degrees. On the personal front, they’ve shared a proposal in Tel Aviv, a wedding in Yellowstone, and the introduction of the newest member of their crew — their pup, Rudiger.

In recent months, they’ve been spending their days working from home together — Benes as a global exchange coordinator for the College of Education and Human Sciences and part-time doctoral student in geography, Turnquist as a full-time doctoral student in history — and preparing to expand their family via adoption.

Through all the academic adventures, travels and life changes, Benes and Turnquist have always had each other.

“It’s so much fun having someone who’s on the same journey as you,” Turnquist said.

Though a lot has changed in the past 13 years, campus has been a constant in their lives. It’s where they spent the early years of their relationship. It’s where they returned to pursue doctorates and new jobs. Even simple things, like meeting for lunch in the dining hall, bring back old

memories.

“Even just going to Selleck, it was like, ‘I remember when we first were dating,’” Turnquist said. “Just a big sense of this history and continuity and nostalgia ... but you get to kind of live it every day.”

Whether they’re walking to work, a lecture hall or a meetup for lunch, they can relive their relationship as they pass by the familiar buildings and green spaces.

“The landscape ... kind of becomes infused with the love I have for him,” Benes said. “So when I see the cherry trees on campus blooming, or I see the magnolias, or when I stop to get a coffee in the union or the Academic Grind ... I just think of Tim all the time on campus.”

**Source:** Annie Albin | University Communication, “Nebraska U remains at heart of couple’s love story | Love Academically,” 18 February 2021, <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/nebraska-u-remains-at-heart-of-couple-s-love-story/>

## FACULTY 101 PODCAST

With the COVID-19 pandemic disrupting normal routines and shifting so many personnel and activities off campus, host Mary Jane Bruce adapted the podcast with a temporary spinoff named Faculty 101: Five Things. True to its name, each episode asks a faculty member to address five aspects or questions related to a specific topic.

For this episode, Bruce spoke with Deirdre Cooper Owens, Charles and Linda Wilson Professor in the History of Medicine and director of the Humanities in Medicine program. Cooper Owens described her work interrogating medical racism — especially the experimentation on enslaved Black women — and how she approaches teaching students during grand rounds in

medical schools and in her history classes on campus. Cooper Owens also explained how structural and medical racism are making the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately worse for communities of color.

Faculty 101 episodes are featured on Nebraska Today, but you can also subscribe via [iTunes](#) and [Stitcher](#).

**Source:** “Cooper Owens talks medical racism in new Faculty 101,” 23 February 2021, <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/cooper-owens-talks-medical-racism-in-new-faculty-101/>

## PERSON OF INTEREST SYMPOSIUM

A dozen University of Nebraska–Lincoln students, faculty and staff in diverse fields discussed papers and creative projects that explored the complexities of the simultaneous

construction and performance of one’s identity, in an online symposium presented by Sheldon Museum of Art, 4 to 6 p.m. on 2 April 2021.

The presenters' papers and creative projects are available on the [museum's website](#)...

The 4:05 to 4:30 presentation was "Establishing and Representing Identity, Navigating Expectations and Realities," presented by Dan Hutt – academic success coach, Center for Academic Success and Transition, "Torn Between Notebooks: Utilizing the Arts to Distinguish Identity from Selection of College Major" – and Carole Levin, Willa Cather Professor of History, and Duncan Moore, undergraduate student, history

(major), medieval and renaissance studies (minor), "Two 16th Century Portraits of Future Kings: The Dauphin Henry and Prince Edward"...

**Sources:** "Sheldon symposium to feature students, faculty, staff," <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/sheldon-symposium-to-feature-students-faculty-staff/>, 29 March 2021; "Person of Interest: A Symposium," <https://sheldonartmuseum.org/person-of-interest-symposium>

## SORENSEN MODERATION

COVID-19 has disproportionately affected women and people of color, necessitating public policies and programs to address the pandemic's disparate harm to already marginalized populations as the United States begins its pandemic recovery.

The president and CEO of the Institute for Women's Policy Research, C. Nicole Mason, discussed the pandemic's unequal impact and policy solutions at an event hosted by the University of Nebraska via Zoom from noon to 1 p.m. 12 April 2021.

Part of the Thomas C. Sorensen Policy Seminar Series, the event was co-sponsored by the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's College of Arts and Sciences through the Thomas C. Sorensen Endowment.

Mason, a frequently quoted expert on pay equity, economic policies, and research affecting women, discussed the varied impacts the pandemic has had on women. She also spoke on the long-term policy needed to lift and sustain women's well-being, economic stability, and upward mobility in the United States.

For the past two decades, Mason has spearheaded research related to: economic security, poverty, women's issues, and

entitlement reforms; policy formation and political participation among women, communities of color, and youth; and racial equity. Her writing and commentary have been featured in The New York Times, MSNBC, CNN, NBC, CBS, and many other notable publications and media outlets.

The lecture was moderated by Deirdre Cooper Owens, Charles and Linda Wilson Professor of History and director of the Humanities in Medicine program at Nebraska. She is an Organization of American Historians distinguished lecturer whose first book was recognized by OAH as 2018's best book in African-American women's and gender history.

Thomas C. Sorensen, a Nebraska native and Husker alumnus, was an investment executive and U.S. Information Agency deputy director whose brother, Theodore, served as special counsel to President John F. Kennedy.

The virtual event was free and open to the public.

**Source:** Kateri Hartman | University Communication, "Sorensen seminar to focus on COVID-19's unequal impact," <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/sorensen-seminar-to-focus-on-covid-19-s-unequal-impact/>, 5 April 2021

dissertations and scholars from all disciplines and career stages (including independent scholars) are eligible for this grant, which supports activities conducted during the academic year (September to September) following the award of the grant...

Anthony Foreman, Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, was awarded the Grant for "Military Honor and the Holocaust"...

**Source:** "Sharon Abramson Research Grant," <https://hef.northwestern.edu/grants/sharon-abramson-research-grant/index.html>



## OUTSTANDING HONORS AWARD

Eight graduating seniors from the College of Arts and Sciences have earned awards from the University Honors Program at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

The Outstanding Honors Leadership Award recognizes an honors graduate who has made the most significant and lasting impact to the Honors Program through their leadership.

The Honors Program collaborated with Nebraska's eight undergraduate colleges to recognize an Outstanding Honors Graduate from each college. Students were selected based on their contributions to, and involvement with, both the Honors Program and their respective colleges.

Outstanding leadership within one of the Honors Program's registered student organizations was also

recognized Honors Ambassadors, Honors Program Student Advisory Board, Honors Afterschool Clubs Coaches, and Honors Peer Mentor Leaders.

Finally, the Honors Resilience Award acknowledges Honors Program graduates who have persisted and grown through adversity during their time at Nebraska to achieve at a high level personally and academically...

- Anna Krause, history, Outstanding Honors Graduate

**Source:** "8 graduating CAS seniors earn Honors Program awards," <https://cas.unl.edu/8-graduating-cas-seniors-earn-honors-program-awards>, 29 April 2021

## SHARON ABRAMSON RESEARCH GRANT

The Holocaust Educational Foundation of Northwestern University (HEFNU) awards Sharon Abramson Research

Grants to support research related to the Holocaust. Doctoral candidates nearing completion of their

## AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION AWARD

Each year, the American Historical Association awards several [research grants](#) to support the study, exploration, and advancement of history in numerous diverse subject

areas. The AHA is pleased to announce the 2021 winners for the [Albert J. Beveridge Grant](#), [Michael Kraus Research Grant](#), [Littleton-Griswold Grant](#), and [Bernadotte E. Schmitt](#)

Grant. These 31 grantees will be conducting research over the course of the year. Congratulations to all winners!...

The Michael Kraus Research Grant to support research in American colonial history went to Danielle Alesi (University of Nebraska – Lincoln) for *Consuming Empire: Eating and Engaging with Animals in the Early Modern Atlantic World, 1492–1650*...

**Source:** Liz Townsend, “2021 AHA Research Grant Winners,” <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/may-2021/2021-aha-research-grant-winners>, 3 May 2021



we look like in 2021. And they would be deeply impressed by it. But then they would also be like, “Really? The cops are still killing Black people? We thought maybe you guys would stop doing that.”

### Do you think we remember the 1970s unfairly?

Yes. In my book, I’m making an argument that we misremember the ’70s in some really profoundly problematic ways. People thought of it for at least for 30 or 40 years afterward as just kind of a lost period of people with bad haircuts and bad disco music, sideburns and those ugly wide ties. And then also of defeats. Political defeats in terms of the Watergate scandal in the U.S. and the loss of respect for public figures. The military defeat in Vietnam. The economic defeats of inflation and stagflation, really. Plus unemployment being very high.

But the other part of the story is that there’s this vigorous reassertion of reformism that emerges out of there. You can’t be a female person and think that the ’70s is anything but an amazingly exciting time period. Because that’s the first time that women are beginning to be treated like full

human beings in this country. To see the ’70s as a time of defeat is a male view of the world. My argument essentially is that the U.S. became a much more egalitarian place in its public sphere in the 1970s — more accepting, more tolerant of gay people as well.

So it becomes a less repressive place, but it also becomes less equal. The U.S. has become economically less and less equal since the 1970s, in terms of the distribution of wealth, in terms of patterns of salaries and wages as well. So we’ve become both more equal sort of socially, culturally, and less equal economically. That happens in the ’70s, as I see it.

**Sources:** Myah Ward, “Where docs go to talk to teens about vaccines | Nightly Interview: Did Biden’s Meeting with Carter Change the Timeline?,” <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/politico-nightly/2021/05/12/where-docs-go-to-talk-to-teens-about-vaccines-492811>, 12 May 2021; Sean Hagedorn | University Communication, “Nebraska in the national news: May 2021,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/nebraska-in-the-national-news-may-2021/>, 2 June 2021

## POLITICO INTERVIEW

...I called University of Nebraska-Lincoln historian Thomas Borstelmann, the author of *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality*, to ask if history — gas lines, inflation fears, conflict in the Middle East — is repeating itself. This conversation has been edited.

### Are we reliving the 1970s?

No. There are ways in which certain patterns do come back, but they always come back in different forms and different circumstances. So things can look recognizable, but they’re not the same.

### But does this gasoline shortage feel familiar to you?



The American obsession with access to automobiles, and to endless, inexpensive fuel for those automobiles is an

enduring 100-year pattern now, of Americans feeling that that’s something close to our constitutional rights. And our failure for 50 years now to do anything serious about becoming much more efficient in our use of fuel and moving past internal combustion engines.

From a bigger perspective, which is what historians do, the

gas shortage looks like a shorter-term problem. It could get much bigger and could become national, but that has to do with larger questions about the quality of our infrastructure and the danger of ongoing attacks, Russian-backed or Chinese-backed or simply criminal-backed.

We missed the opportunity in the ’70s to seriously reduce our usage of fossil fuels.

### How about inflation fears?

Inflation that emerged in the early 1970s, in ’73 and ’74, right when the first oil crisis kicked in as a result of the 1973 war between Israel and its neighbors, that pattern of inflation was specific to the two factors: the spending on the Vietnam War, on top of the spending on Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society programs. And that double whammy is what really, without increasing taxation to pay for either of those, created an inflationary spiral that lasted essentially for nine years, until it was beaten back in the early 1980s.

That’s not where we’re at now, to put it mildly.

### We’ve also seen a lot of social unrest this year, particularly surrounding police killings of Black people.

It always feels like we’re both getting worse and getting better at the same time. For anybody who’s of my generation, it’s wildly obvious that we are much more effectively integrated here in the public sphere, at least, racially integrated and a more diverse and tolerant society on matters of gender and sex and everything else, in ways that would be unrecognizable. If you brought back somebody who died in 1961, they would be stunned at what

## NEW STORYTELLERS

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln is preparing to welcome 23 emerging scholars from minority-serving institutions for an intensive, interdisciplinary institute that will explore the platforms, tools, designs, and ethical questions surrounding digital humanities projects in ethnic studies.

“New Storytellers: The Research Institute in Digital Ethnic Studies” began 24 May 2021 and was held virtually over 10 weeks. It is one of the only digital humanities research institutes in the United States focused on digital research in ethnic studies. It was made possible by grant funding from the American Council of Learned Societies and support from the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities and the Institute for Ethnic Studies.

“New Storytellers” was organized by a team of scholars at Nebraska committed to bringing new voices and diverse stories and projects into the digital humanities sphere. Leading the effort are: co-principal investigators Joy Castro, Willa Cather Professor of English and ethnic studies and director of the Institute for Ethnic Studies; Margaret Huettl, assistant professor of history and ethnic studies; Jeannette Eileen Jones, associate professor of history and ethnic studies; Ken Price, Hillebrand University Professor of American Literature and co-director of the CDRH; and Will

Thomas, Angle Chair in the Humanities, professor of history and associate dean for research and graduate education in the College of Arts and Sciences.

“We want to have an open and mutual and developmental exchange at the national level, to raise the visibility of digital humanities in ethnic studies,” Thomas said. “In the digital space, we have a lot of work to do to bring out these new stories.”

The co-principal investigators are being assisted by Claire Jimenez, doctoral student in the Department of English with a graduate specialization in ethnic studies and a graduate certificate in digital humanities. In addition, CDRH staff are contributing to the institute, including: Karin Dalziel, digital development manager and designer; Laura Weakly, metadata encoding specialist; Brett Barney, research associate professor; Kaci Nash, research associate; Greg Tunink, programmer/analyst; and Sarita Garcia, junior developer [History M.A., May 2019].

The 23 fellows, selected through a competitive application process, will attend sessions led by digital humanities scholars from across the United States. The fellows identified a digital humanities project in their application, and the institute’s goal is to help the scholars develop these

projects through a variety of session topics.

“We have people at different stages in the evolution of their projects. For some, it’s an idea that has just started, and for others, they’re in process,” Price said. “Through the institute, they’re going to be exposed to the big-picture plenary addresses, down to the very specific technical advice.”

A key component of the institute is growing an intellectual community. There are networking sessions included in the syllabus and an opportunity for peer-to-peer mentoring.

“We are trying to foster and create relationships,” Jones said. “If we cultivate those relationships now, they may — maybe not right away, but down the road — become collaborators and have a professional community to lean on.”

Preparation and planning for the institute has been ongoing since 2017, when the co-principal investigators began visiting eight minority-serving institutions across the country — historically black colleges and universities, Native-serving institutions, and Hispanic-serving institutions — to gather information about what faculty wanted and needed in terms of digital humanities. In 2018, the CDRH held its annual forum on the topic of “New Storytellers,” with many of the faculty members from minority-serving institutions in attendance. Following the forum, the Nebraska team planned a two-week, in-person institute for 2020, which was postponed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Institute leaders reworked the schedule into a 10-week course for 2021 and invited back the fellows originally selected. All were able to attend.

The change to a virtual format, and a longer calendar schedule, allowed for some extra guest presenters to be added, including editors of scholarly journals and program



officers from funding organizations, including the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

Castro said there is a pedagogical advantage to a longer format, as well.

“If you’re thinking about a project in a focused way for 10 weeks, even if it’s not all day, it is still at the forefront of your mind,” she said. “As you continue to develop the project, you’re going to have questions arise that might not have come up in a hyper-concentrated two-week schedule. You have more time to think it through, build on it and test things out.”

The 10-week period also gave scholars a long runway to get new projects off the ground.

“It gives the participants time to embed their project in their home institution, and if they run into a technical problem or some questions, then they have time to come back to us, talk to us about it, and then return home and tackle it one more time,” Price said.

Fellows will receive ongoing mentoring from the institute’s organizing team, as well as technical assistance when needed from CDRH.

The team plans to make the institute an annual offering and is seeking continued funding.

“We would like to see this independently funded and permanent,” Castro said. “Based on the demand we saw when people applied, this could run every year, and this is a dynamic field that is only growing.”

Thomas added: “Holding this institute at the University of Nebraska is putting it in the lead of digital humanities programs and centers around the country and around the world. We want to maintain that lead and sustain this project, as well as put it into a larger framework for race and ethnic studies inquiry, research, scholarship, and publication at the university.”

**Source:** Deann Gayman | University Communication, “Research institute aims to bring diverse ‘new storytellers’ to digital scholarship,” <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/research-institute-aims-to-bring-diverse-new-storytellers-to-digital/>, 20 May 2021

# MIDWESTERN HISTORY CONFERENCE

The Midwestern History Conference: “The Midwest at the Intersection of Past and Present” took place Wednesday, May 26 through Thursday, May 27, 2021.

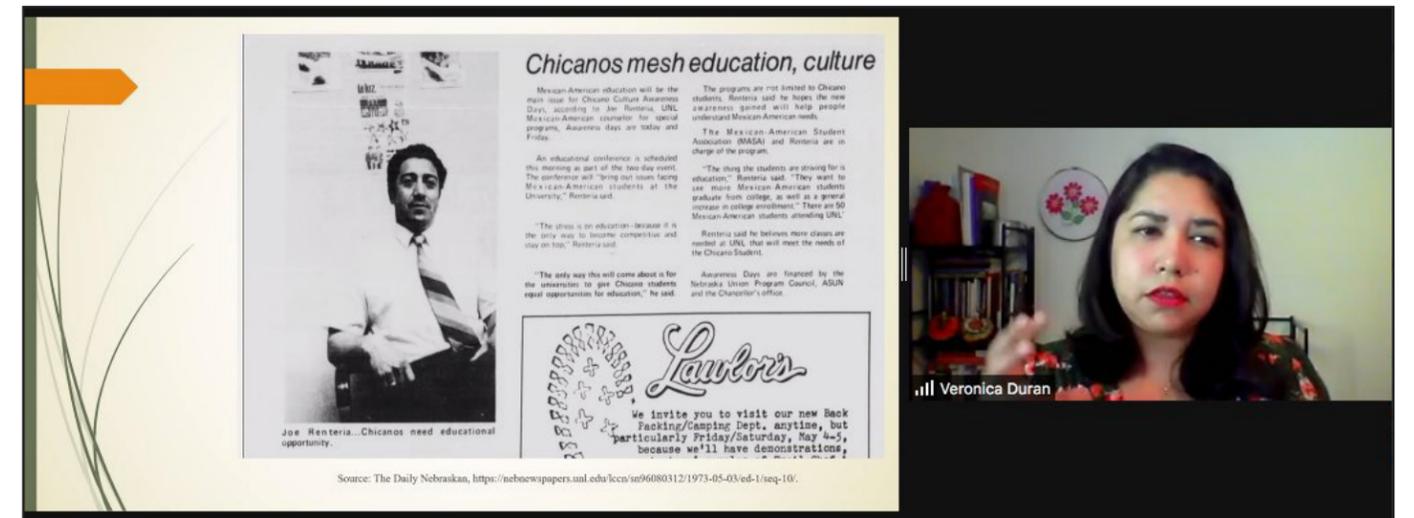
As in 2016, the 2020 election year shined a spotlight on the Midwest. This conference continued a vibrant discussion which has grown significantly over the last six years, a collaborative conference designed to spark – and sustain – a revival of Midwestern studies in American historiography. Infused with the varieties of original research pursued by scholars from many different career paths and stages, this annual gathering cultivates rigorous historical understanding of a complex, dynamic, and misunderstood region.

Hosted for the seventh year by the Hauenstein Center in collaboration with the Midwestern History Association and the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation, Library & Museum, this conference assembled a broad array of historians, literary scholars, and cultural commentators

dedicated to rebuilding the field of Midwestern studies. In casting light upon the vast expanse of scholarly terrain available in Midwestern history to those willing to cultivate it in their minds, classrooms, and research centers, “The Midwest at the Intersection of Past and Present” will continue the project of rebuilding the intellectual infrastructure necessary for studies of the American Midwest to flourish...

On Thursday, 27 May 2021, the second panel session – 10:30-11:45 EDT – was titled “The Greater, Mexican Midwest.” Veronica Duran, Ph.D. student at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, presented “Nuestras Historias: ‘Chicano Students Asked to Report’”...

**Source:** <https://www.gvsu.edu/hc/midwestern-history-conference-2021-440.htm>



The American Philosophical Society’s Library & Museum is excited to announce its 2021-2022 Fellowship recipients! The Society has awarded eight long-term fellowships and ten short-term fellowships for scholarly research in the history of science, Native American studies, and early American history.

Three of these fellowships are underwritten by a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support Native American and Indigenous research. An additional two-year fellowship for a recent Ph.D. graduate interested in gaining

# APS FELLOW

curatorial skills is also supported by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

2021 is the inaugural year for two additional long-term fellowships and a new short-term fellowship in conjunction with the launch of the David Center for the American Revolution at the American Philosophical Society's Library & Museum. These include a new 2-year postdoctoral fellowship and a yearlong predoctoral fellowship supporting research on the American Revolution and Founding Era (1750-1800). The APS is also pleased to launch a complementary short-term research fellowship in collaboration with The Swan Historical Foundation, Inc. in Titusville, NJ on revolutionary-era material culture.

Learn more about the American Philosophical Society's Fellowships and how to apply on the [APS website](#). Congratulations to all recipients!...

Baligh Ben Taleb, of the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, is the Daythal L. Kendall Fellow in Native American Studies. His project is “Reckoning with the Legacy of

American Settler Colonialism: Treaty Claims and Western Shoshoni Quest for Justice”...

**Source:** “2021-2022 Library & Museum Fellows | American Philosophical Society,” <https://www.amphilsoc.org/blog/2021-2022-library-museum-fellows>, 27 May 2021



- Ari Kohen, political science
- Kristi Montooth, biological sciences

**Source:** “CAS faculty earn 2021 Layman Awards,” <https://cas.unl.edu/cas-faculty-earn-2021-layman-awards>, 6 July 2021

## GRADUATE STUDENT NOTES

**Donna Devlin** has completed her fourth year at UNL, passing her comprehensive exams in August 2020, and successfully defending her dissertation prospectus in January 2021. In the summer and fall of 2020, she began working with Dr. Katrina Jagodinsky as a graduate research assistant on her NSF grant project studying the usages of habeas corpus petitions in the American West between 1812-1924. In Spring 2021, Devlin taught the History of Nebraska and the Great Plains for the Department. She looks forward to continuing her work on both the NSF project and serving as an instructor in 2021-2022.

Devlin's dissertation is well underway, and her research project is currently entitled “Women of the Great Plains and the ‘Disruption’ of Neighborhoods: Challenging Sexual Violence and Coercion through Local Courts of Law in Kansas and Nebraska, 1870-1900.” Devlin has recently had a second article accepted for publication in the *Western Historical Quarterly*, “A ‘Hired Girl’ Testifies Against the ‘Son of a Prominent family’: Bastardy and Rape on the Nineteenth-Century Nebraska Plains,” and for the 2021-22 school year, Devlin will serve as the History Graduate Student Association President.



**Veronica Nohemi Duran** completed her fourth year in the Ph.D. program at UNL in May 2021. In the last year she passed her comprehensive exams, successfully defended her dissertation prospectus, and achieved candidacy. She continued research on her dissertation, tentatively titled “*Liderazgo de buena mano: Aida Barrera, Carrascolendas, and the Intersection of Race and Gender, 1970-2020*,” which examines race and gender in the U.S-Mexico borderlands, migration, and bilingual education.

Duran presented her dissertation research at several local and regional conferences, including the No Limits! Women's & Gender Studies: Shaping Worlds, Shaping Futures Conference, the Western Historical Association Conference, and the Midwest Historical Association Conference. She also presented her dissertation and digital humanities research at the Organization of American Historians Conference and Rocky Mountain Council for Latin American Studies Conference.

In May 2021, Duran also completed her second year as a Graduate Research Assistant for the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, where she led much of the archival research for the Mexican American Student Association Digital Archive and continued her work as Assistant Managing Editor for the *Journal of South Texas*. Recently she also received a grant from the Recovering the US Hispanic Heritage Program / US Latino Digital Humanities (USLDH) program to commence the construction of (Re)Discovering *Carrascolendas: The Aida Barrera Digital Project*, a digital humanities archive featuring Aida Barrera's *Carrascolendas*.

**Tony Foreman** continued work on his dissertation, “Defending Honor: The Use and Abuse of German Military Ethics and Honor in Twentieth-century Courtrooms” and plans to defend for graduation in May 2022. He is editing his chapter on the 1924 Hitler Trial for submittal as an article in the *Central European History* journal. The academic journals “Europe Now” from Columbia University and “Francia-Recensio” from the German Historical Institute-Paris published his book reviews in the Fall of 2020. In addition, Tony taught three American history classes and the History of World War II course during the last academic year.

Tony will be traveling to archives in Germany to complete his dissertation research, and he is grateful to receive funding through the Sharon Abramson Research Grant from the Holocaust Education Foundation of Northwestern University. The UNL Department of History also awarded

## FOLSOM AWARD

The Office of Graduate Studies announced the recipients of their annual [awards and fellowships](#)...

2021 Folsom was awarded to Harrouna Malgouri, who graduated from the Department of History in August 2020.

The Folsom Distinguished Doctoral Dissertation Award recognizes the outstanding research and creative accomplishments of the university's doctoral students. The

**Source:** “Faculty, students recognized by Graduate Studies,” <https://cas.unl.edu/faculty-students-recognized-graduate-studies-2021>, 30 June 2021

## NEW DIRECTIONS PROGRAM RECIPIENT

The Office of Research and Economic Development is supporting 30 research projects in 2021-22 through its Layman Awards program, which funds work that enhances a researcher's ability to obtain external funding to support prominent scholarship.

a funded research program.

Awards of up to \$10,000 per application for each program are made possible by support from the University of Nebraska Foundation...

There are two tracks: The Layman Seed Program, which funds new projects by early-career faculty who are nontenured at the time of submission; and The New Directions Program, which funds tenured faculty who are branching into new research directions or need funding to support pilot or developmental work toward the next step in

New Directions Program recipients:

- Shireen Adenwalla, physics and astronomy
- Elizabeth Enkin, modern languages and literatures
- James Garza, history and ethnic studies
- Carolyn Heitman, anthropology (School of Global Integrative Studies)

Tony with the Stover Fellowship and the McPhee Fellowship this coming academic year to assist in completing this research and writing. The German military archives have already approved his request to shorten the protection period for a collection of relevant files, and Tony is also working to gain access to another collection of private papers which have yet to be used by any scholars. Finally, Tony will participate at a symposium on Nazi collaboration and the German army at the Martin-Springer Institute of Northern Arizona University in late 2021.

**Elodie Galeazzi** completed her third year in the Ph.D. program this past 2020-21 school year, and plans to take her comprehensive exams in August 2021.

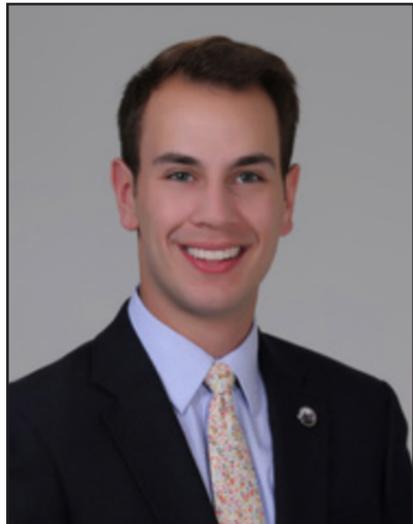
Galeazzi continues to refine her research on black media in Omaha in the post-civil rights era. For her research seminar this past year, she focused on the apparition and evolution of black television in Omaha. The study explores the different goals and objectives of each television program and how the black population was using this outlet to represent the black experience. As very little to no information was found in state and local archives, Galeazzi had to conduct many interviews with the main actors of the Omaha media landscape of the 1970s and the 1980s, such as Ben Gray, host of the public affair show *Kaleidoscope*, or Artes Johnson, primary programmer of the first black-owned television channel in Omaha. Galeazzi will use this HIST 950 paper as a first draft for a dissertation chapter on black television in Omaha.

Her professional development pursuits include being a founding member of the International Student Advisory Board and assuming the role of Graduate Chair within that organization. Galeazzi was also promoted to the role of Global Graduate Student Peer Specialist at ISSO on campus.

**Madelina Homberger Cordia** completed her Ph.D. coursework in May 2021. She is currently preparing for comprehensive exams in fall 2021 and planning to subsequently begin the research that COVID-19 put on hold for the past year and a half. Despite the delay during the pandemic, Homberger Cordia plans to visit the Archivo General de la Nación and other archival holdings in Mexico City in late 2021. To facilitate that travel, she will use funding graciously provided from both the Addison E. Sheldon Research Fellowship from the Department of History and the Dean's Fellowship from UNL in the next year. She is looking forward to diving into archival research and completing the next major benchmark step toward her

Ph.D.

After graduating with his MA from UNL in May 2020, **William Kelly** finished his first year in the Ph.D. program in 2021. During that time, Kelly worked as a history intern at the Lincoln Airport Authority. The internship will extend



into the 2021-22 school year. At the airport, he researches the institution's history with the ultimate aim of constructing a physical and digital public history exhibit illustrating Lincoln's storied aviation past.

In accordance with his pursuit of a career in public history, Kelly also

obtained another remote internship for the summer and fall semester as a research consultant at the Marietta House Museum in Glenn Dale, Maryland.

Kelly will also serve as the Department's inaugural Career Diversity Research Assistant, a new collaborative relationship between the History Department and History Nebraska.

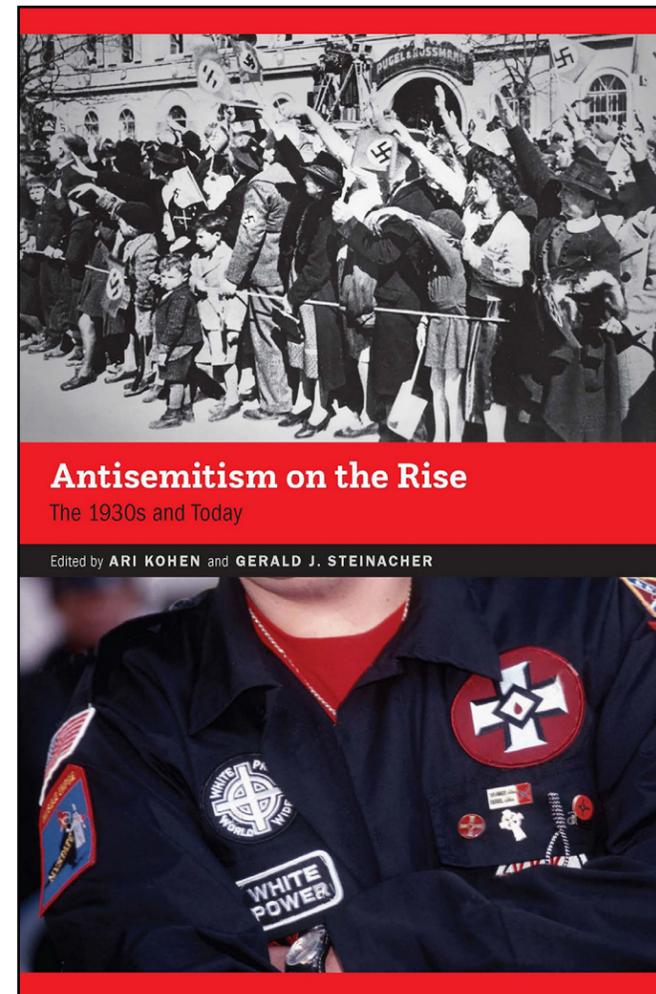
William Kelly's dissertation topic continues to take shape and narrow in scope. His main focus is on the mobility of enslaved Black persons in Dorchester County, Maryland, from 1790 to 1840. Kelly published a portion of this research with the UNL Digital Commons and with the O Say Can You See project.

**Kenneth Knotts** completed his sixth year toward his Ph.D. in Modern European History, with a Focus Field of Central and Eastern Europe and a Secondary Field of Twentieth Century U.S./International History. Knotts, a retired Air Force officer, is a former Intelligence Analyst and Soviet/Russian Area Specialist, who served as a military attaché in Russia, Belarus, and Turkmenistan. Ken was awarded the Homze Travel Research Award in the Spring of 2020, but was delayed in conducting the trip due to the Pandemic. He plans to complete the research travel in Summer 2021, if the museum archives in question is again open for visitors.

In the Fall of 2020, Knotts taught History 324, History of the Cold War, at UNL, as well as History of the United States to 1865 at UNO. In the Spring of 2021, Ken taught History of the United States to 1865 at UNL, and he also taught History of the United States Since 1865 at UNO; Knotts taught the latter course in a fully on-line mode.

In the Fall of 2021, Knotts is scheduled to teach at UNL the History of the Cold War as well as History 303, U.S. Military History, 1607 to 1917. UNO also asked that Knotts again teach History of the United States to 1865.

Knotts continues to conduct research on Twentieth Century World and U.S. History. He focuses especially on topics associated with U.S. and Allied military units on World War One's Eastern Front and Russia's Civil War,



1917-1922.

**Timothy Turnquist** will be publishing a book chapter in a UNL press book on antisemitism: Turnquist, Timothy. "Semites on Display: David Gordon Lyon and the Jewish Other at Harvard University, 1889-1926." In *Antisemitism in the 1930s and Today: Contemporary Holocaust Studies*, edited by Ari Kohen and Gerald Steinacher. Second volume. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021.

Also, in Historical Geography, Tim will be publishing a review of *Building Nazi Germany: Place, Space, and Ideology* by Joshua Hagen and Robert C. Ostergren.

Apart from doing comprehensive exams in August, Tim will be Dr. Steinacher's research assistant fall 2021.

## FACULTY NOTES

Columbia University Press published **Tim Borstelmann's** fifth book at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic: *Just Like Us: The American Struggle to Understand Foreigners*. Also in 2020, he received the first annual UNL College of Arts and Sciences Honors Humanities Faculty of the Year Award. This spring (2021) the UNL Parents Association awarded him its 5-Year Recognition for Contributions to Students Award. As part of the History Department's adaptive response to the challenges of the pandemic, Tim taught his first online course, a 300-level course on U.S. foreign relations. He is currently writing a series of essays about his

40 years in teaching, tentatively titled *Chalk Man: A Life in History and Teaching*.

The past academic year was unlike any other in **Parks Coble's** forty-plus-year teaching career. When the University shut down for a two-week spring break in March of 2019 as the COVID crisis spread, Coble faced the daunting prospect of moving his classes online for the remainder of the semester. As the senior member of the Department, he had never done any online teaching and

had no idea what to do. He took a frantic series of tutorials, some in the Department and some online to learn the basics of Canvas, VidGrid, and Zoom, all essential tools for the new environment.

It was hectic but Coble did manage to complete the semester reasonably well. He wants especially to thank his colleagues Sean Trundle and Vanessa Gorman along with several others for their help. He also wants to recognize the help he received from his students. Many students were forced to leave campus and deal with uncertain Internet connections. But frankly most were far more comfortable in an online environment than Coble. Many would quickly alert him when he posted items incorrectly, set the dates for quizzes wrong, or accidentally deleted part of the video for a VidGrid online lecture, all of which he did. Coble felt a “we’re all in this together” approach which was rewarding. At the end of the semester he took an intensive, three-week online class on

how to teach online. At the end of this process Coble began building his classes for the fall in an all online environment. He taught entirely online during the 2020-2021 academic year, uploading lectures and exams to Canvas, recording lectures on VidGrid (with notes), and



grading written papers online. Despite many false starts, egregious mistakes, and near fatal accidents he managed to get through the year relatively well. Coble held no in-person office hours, “meeting” students through personal Zoom appointments or by email exchange. He wants to thank the personnel at the Center for Transformative Teaching at UNL for frequent and regular help during the year.

The COVID crisis dealt a severe blow to Coble’s research plans. He had been finishing a book manuscript, “The Collapse of Chiang Kai-shek’s China: Hyperinflation and its Consequences, 1944-1949.” Aside from diverting much of his time toward learning how to teach online and away from research, the COVID crisis closed the major venues which he had been using for research. An essential resource for this project had been the Archives of the Hoover Institute

held at Stanford University. They had inherited the papers of many key figures involved in the history of Republican China, including the diaries of Chiang Kai-shek, the papers of financial official T. V. Soong, and longtime financial advisor Arthur Young. Coble had also made regular trips to the Harvard-Yenching Library as well as other libraries in the Harvard System. Both of these institutions closed to the public because of COVID and as of the end of June have not reopened. It does appear that both will reopen in the fall of 2021.

The biggest blow has been the inability to travel to or work in China. Coble’s project would not have been possible without regular involvement with Professor Wu Jingping at Fudan University in Shanghai. Wu directed a large number of graduate students and colleagues in the study of Republican China with particular reference to finance, business, and the family of Chiang Kai-shek. Beginning in November 2013 Coble gave seven invited presentations at conferences hosted by Professor Wu. This allowed Coble to meet and read papers by an important range of Chinese scholars working on these topics. Wu routinely had his graduate students translate Coble’s paper into Chinese for the conferences. Coble developed close relationships with many of these young scholars which provided valuable insights into the Chinese academic world.

Even before COVID, the more rigid intellectual controls implemented by the Chinese leader Xi Jinping began to restrict this connection but COVID has severed it completely. The Chinese academic world went into a complete lock down and travel to China is still next to impossible for Coble. As of this writing in June 2021, foreign scholars all still restricted from most archives in China.

In this rather grim environment, Coble made the decision to complete writing his manuscript based on the current resources available. After he was able to devote some time to research he completed a final draft of the work and sent it to a university press for review. If he is able to resume his research and access new material he will likely use this material for a new academic article. But Coble is not optimistic about research work in China for foreign scholars, particularly Americans.

**Bedross Der Matossian’s** book entitled *The Horrors of Adana: Revolution and Violence in the Early Twentieth Century* will be published in March of 2022 by Stanford University Press. In April 1909, twin massacres shook the province of Adana, located in the southern Anatolia region of modern-day Turkey, killing of more than 20,000 Armenians and 2,000 Muslims. The central Ottoman

government failed to prosecute the main culprits, a miscarriage of justice that would have repercussions for years to come. Despite the significance of these events and the extent of violence and destruction, the Adana Massacres are often left out of historical narratives. *The Horrors of Adana* offers one of the first close examinations of these events, analyzing sociopolitical and economic transformations that culminated in a cataclysm of violence. Drawing on primary sources in a dozen languages, the book develops an interdisciplinary approach to understand the rumors and emotions, public spheres, and humanitarian interventions that all informed this complex event. Ultimately, through consideration of the Adana Massacres in micro-historical detail, this book offers an important macrocosmic understanding of ethnic violence, illuminating how and why ordinary people can become perpetrators. Der Matossian has also finalized an edited volume entitled *Denial of Genocides in the 20th Century* which will be published by the University of Nebraska Press in 2022. The volume features some of the renowned scholars of the Cambodian, Rwandan, Guatemalan, Holocaust, the Armenian, Native American, Bangladesh, and Bosnian genocides. The volume tackles the ways in which the denial of genocides intensified in the 21st century due to advancement of social network, rise of right-wing governments, freedom of speech, mainstreaming denial, and rise of racism and bigotry.

**Vanessa Gorman** continues to build her long-term treebanking project, hand-annotating the syntax (now over 600,000 tokens) of ancient Greek prose. The data repository is available open access on GitHub and is being actively used for linguistic studies of ancient Greek by scholars all over the world. She is working particularly closely with the Alpheios Project, the Perseids Project at Tufts University, and the Pedalion Project at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium). She and Robert Gorman in Classics employ this material in their collaboration on an equally extensive project, using digital stylometry to determine authorship of ancient Greek prose. While this undertaking continues to grow in many unexpected directions, she is concentrating on the question of the disputed authorship of sections of Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*. This work has, in turn, led to a broader study of the stylistic variation that can be considered normal within the writing of one author, especially one who writes in multiple genres. She gave a presentation (“Did Xenophon Write the Epilogue of the *Cyropaedia*?”) to the annual meeting of the Association of Ancient Historians, offering some preliminary findings on that subject.

Our lives this year have been dominated by the COVID pandemic, and Gorman used it as an opportunity to

develop and implement new teaching styles for some of her classes. She completely redesigned HIST 311, The Trojan War, so that it focuses on interpreting and integrating primary evidence from literature, documents in both Linear B Greek and Hittite, historical linguistics, and archaeological remains. The material was all unified around one theme: what was the Bronze Age context for a Trojan



War? Lessons were videotaped to watch at home, and class time was devoted to discussion, in preparation for writing a fifteen-page research paper, one paragraph at a time, over the course of the semester. She also pioneered a revolutionary approach to reading ancient

languages in GREK 151, Advanced Accelerated Greek (renamed Reading Ancient Greek in the Digital Age). This class is based on the idea that students should concentrate on understanding syntax and semantics, while using digital tools to replace the rote memorization of forms and vocabulary. Thus they can achieve a workable ability to read Ancient Greek in only three credit hours. This course has already spawned a number of experiential learning projects for the students in it, including an Honors Contract course, three senior thesis digital projects for distinction, and three undergraduate research (UCARE) projects. The UCARE projects are the beginning of another long-term scheme, to develop a collaborative, hand-annotated valency dictionary for ancient Greek verbs, while offering undergraduate students, now and in the years to come, an opportunity to publish real scholarship, both open access on GitHub and (hopefully) in future published articles.

As the academic year ended, Gorman was awarded the inaugural Department of History Outstanding Teaching Award.

Another big adjustment required by COVID involved Gorman’s role as chair of the University Commencement and Recognition Committee and member of the University Marshal Corp. This dedicated group of university faculty and staff meet multiple times each week, first to develop an on-line commencement celebration for the three

graduations held for the class of 2020, and then to plan and carry out the first ever graduate commencement held in Memorial Stadium for a record high graduating class, all while observing COVID social distancing guidelines. They are eagerly looking forward to some semblance of normality in the fall.

**Margaret Jacobs** was awarded the Outstanding Research and Creative Activity (ORCA) Award and the Charles Mach Professorship from the University of Nebraska in 2021. She became Director of the Center for Great Plains Studies in August 2020. She has continued the Genoa Indian School Digital Reconciliation Project in partnership with Liz Lorang of the UNL Libraries and a team of Community Advisors from Nebraska's current and historic tribal nations. Together with local Rosebud Lakota journalist Kevin Abourezk, she has recorded and produced 10 podcast episodes for Reconciliation Rising, a project that she and Abourezk cofounded in 2018 to showcase the lives and work of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the U.S. who are engaged in honestly confronting painful and traumatic histories, promoting meaningful and respectful dialogue between Natives and non-Natives, and creating pathways to reconciliation. Abourezk and Jacobs also produced an 11-minute documentary, "Return of the Pawnees," that aired on Nebraska Public Media's *Nebraska Stories* in April, 2021. Abourezk and Jacobs have won a \$142,000 from Vision Maker Media to make an hour-long documentary, "The Land Returns," on the repatriation of land to Indian nations by private owners, churches, environmental organizations, and municipalities. Jacobs will publish her fourth book, *After One Hundred Winters: In Search of Reconciliation on America's Stolen Lands*, with Princeton University Press in October 2021.

**Carole Levin**, who will be retiring in December 2021, in late 2020 published "Heroic Queens in the age of the Stuart Kings: Elizabeth and Boudicca" in the journal *Parergon: Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Association for*

*Medieval and Early Modern Studies* and "Poison, Incest, Slander: Scandal at the Jacobean Court," in the collection, *Identity, and Gender in the Early Modern Era*. Her article, "Dreaming of Death and the Dead in the Stuart Political World Imaginary: the case William Laud," is forthcoming in *Explorations in Renaissance Culture*. She also has articles on Elizabeth I and Lady Jane Grey forthcoming in the collection, *Women Reformers: Protestant Voices in Early Modern Europe*, "Every Madman Dreameth Waking: *Macbeth* and the *Winter's Tale*," in *Mad World, Mad Kings: Kingship, Madness, and Masculinity on the Early Modern Stage*, and "Margaret of Anjou: Passionate Mother" in *Later Plantagenet and Wars of the Roses Consorts*. She is the 2021 recipient of the University of Nebraska Louise Pound-George Howard Distinguished Career Award. In May 2022 she will be a scholar in residence at the University of Catania in Italy.

**Gerald Steinacher** continued to work on his next major monograph on the Vatican and the Nuremberg War Crime Trials 1945-1949. For this research he was awarded a Research Fellowship at the renowned Vienna Simon Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies for the spring of 2021. He finished the work on *The Rise of Antisemitism: From the 1930s to Today*, which is the second volume in a new series on Contemporary Holocaust Studies jointly edited by him and Prof. Ari Kohen. In addition, in 2020 he wrote a number of articles on the increase of antisemitism in Europe, the U.S., and beyond. Steinacher's monograph "Humanitarians at War" (Oxford University Press, 2017) was just published as a paperback edition. He is also excited to share the great news that *The German Yearbook of Contemporary History* from the Institut fuer Zeitgeschichte Munich will from now on be published with the University of Nebraska Press. He contributed to the current volume with an article about Nazi careers in Germany and Austria after 1945: <https://nebraskapressjournals.unl.edu/journal/german-yearbook-of-contemporary-history/>.



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