Department of History Annual Newsletter 2019-2020

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES | UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

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CHAIR'S REPORT

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Historic, scary, and challenging is how I summarize the 2019-2020 Academic Year. In 30 years of teaching, I've never seen anything that changed the landscape of higher education like the COVID-19 pandemic. By March 2020, our Department's office was forced into exile in my home and the home of Barbara Bullington and Megan Brown, our Department staff. Faculty retreated to their home offices, and students moved out of the dorms and back home. It happened so fast. Everyone went into overdrive, working long hours without a vacation or break during the spring and summer. Faculty met the challenge and successfully transitioned to an online spring semester, but most of our research that involved travel ground to a halt. The University froze travel, and the ban to date has not yet been lifted. When Victoria Smith retired in May, we did not have a chance to celebrate her career at Nebraska because all normal social intercourse was officially prohibited.

As we prepared for the 2020-21 Academic Year over the summer, President Carter and Chancellor Green made the decision to start Fall 2020 semester earlier and to end it at Thanksgiving. A new vocabulary for teaching emerged, with hybrid, synchronous, asynchronous, and online modes of delivery. And the University has announced that the spring 2021 semester will begin in February and there will be no spring break. Nothing looks quite the same on campus, not even the university calendar.

And yet despite all this, our students continued research projects, theses, and dissertations; our faculty won major grants, published big books and completed other ground-breaking works, and embarked on new projects. In other words, despite the extraordinary challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic brought us, the Department of History thrived and conducted business in most *unusual* ways, even if it meant that graduations and thesis defenses were online, meetings, classes, and conferences moved onto Zoom. In short, having had a front row seat on the greatest challenge higher education has ever faced as a Department Chair, I'm proud to say that our faculty and students have been unified and determined to press on, even though we have had to lock arms 6 feet apart. I've never been more proud of my Department, in awe of my colleagues' professionalism, and so grateful to the leadership team in the Department of History, which stepped up with an "all hands on deck" attitude, no questions asked. All departments and units did the same across the university.

Let me take a few minutes to brag about the achievements of our faculty. Professor Amy Burnett won a Guggenheim fellowship and was appointed a Solmsen Fellow at the Institute for Humanities Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison for her research on early modern publishing networks. Professor Katrina Jagodinsky received a $460,000 National Science Foundation award for her research project "Petitioning For Freedom: Habeas Corpus in the American West." Professor William Thomas received a $200,000 NEH award to begin work on his feature film *The Bell Affair,* based on his book *The Question of Freedom*, which was published in November by Yale University Press. Professor Margaret Jacobs was appointed Director for the Center for Great Plains Studies and also won a $300,000 NEH award for her digital project "The Genoa Indian School Digital Reconciliation Project." Professor Thomas Borstelmann published his book *Just Like Us: The American Struggle to Understand Foreigners* with Columbia University Press. Professor Jeannette Eileen Jones won a $300,000 NEH award and a prestigious American Council of Learned Societies fellowship to complete her book entitled *America in Africa: US Empire, Race, and the African Question, 1821-1919* with Yale University Press. I won my first several awards for my own feature documentary film.

Our Department graduated four graduate students, including Harrouna Malgouri, who completed his dissertation "'We Have the Power to Combat Imperialism': Francophone West Africa, International and Pan-African Solidarity, and American Cold War Politics, 1946-1987" under Professor Jeannette Eileen Jones. Two M.A. students, William Kelly (Professor William Thomas) and Ann Vlock (Professor Katrina Jagodinsky), graduated and are beginning the Ph.D. program. Mackenzie Hughes earned her Master's under Professor James Garza.

Overall, despite the chaos and uncertainty of the pandemic on campus and around the world, the Department of History has continued to thrive, has achieved great things, and our students have graduated with a special sense of pride. I couldn't be prouder, and I am ever more thankful for the generosity and support that our alumni have demonstrated this year, in a year unlike others.

Stay safe and kind wishes from Lincoln,

James D. Le Sueur
Samuel Clark Waugh Distinguished Professor of International Relations &
Chair of the Department of History

PAUL WILSON LECTURE

Paul Wilson gave the talk "Reclaiming Democracy: Reflections on the Velvet Revolution" on 17 October 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in Andrews Hall, Bailey Library.

Wilson drew on his experiences in Czechoslovakia as a teacher, and later as a journalist, to look back at the origins of the collapse of communism in 1989 and examined some of the lessons to be learned from the Czech experience, over the past thirty years, of democratic renewal in a time of tumultuous social transformation.

Paul Wilson taught English in Czechoslovakia from 1967 to 1977, when he was expelled from the country for his association with the banned rock group, The Plastic People of the Universe. In addition to his work as a broadcast and print journalist and magazine editor, he has translated the work of many Czech writers, including Josef Škvorecký, Ivan Klíma, Bohumil Hrabal, and Václav Havel, into English.

In 1989, he chronicled the collapse of communism and the transition to democracy in Central Europe in a series of radio documentaries for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and in articles for the *New York Review of Books*.

He edited two volumes of Havel's essays and speeches, and an anthology of Czech short stories, called *Prague: A Traveler's Literary Companion*. He co-authored *Fifty-seven Hours*, an eye-witness account of the Moscow theater hostage-taking by Chechen terrorists in 2002. His most recent translation is a memoir by Bohumil Hrabal, called *All My Cats*, published by New Directions at the end of 2019.

Source: "Wilson to speak on the Velvet Revolution Oct. 17," https://history.unl.edu/wilson-speak-velvet-revolution-oct-17, 9 October 2019

NEH FUNDING FOR HISTORICAL FILM *THE BELL AFFAIR*

Building on the success of their short film, *Anna*, University of Nebraska–Lincoln scholars Kwakiutl Dreher, William Thomas, and Michael Burton are ready to tell a more in-depth story about the fight over slavery.

The award-winning *Anna* told the story of Ann Williams, who jumped from a third-story window to escape the fate of being sold to another slave owner and separated from her family. Combining live-action with rotoscope animation, it was a proof-of-concept project that set the stage for *The Bell Affair*.

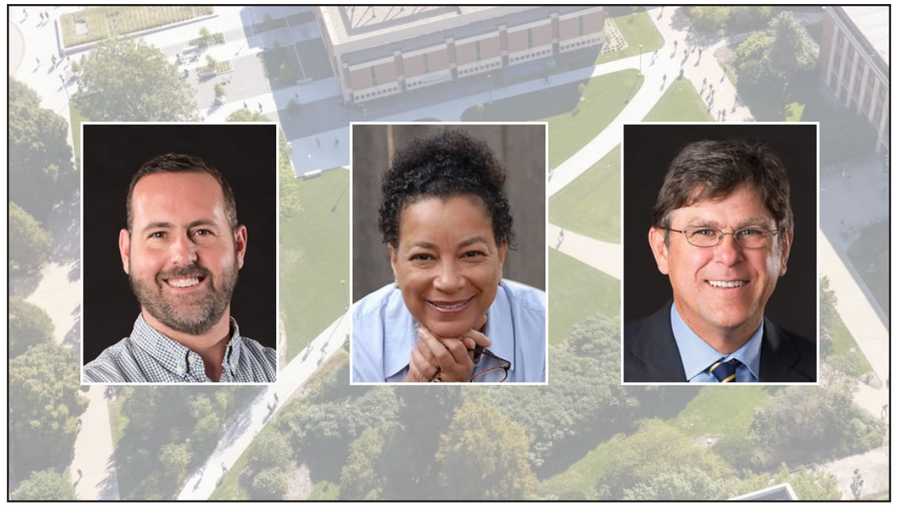
With a $200,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, they will develop *The Bell Affair: A Film Reframing American Slavery and Freedom*, an hour-long documentary set in 1830s Washington, D.C., at a pivotal moment in the national struggle over slavery.

"The project tells the story of Daniel Bell, who launched a lawsuit to make his family free just as a labor strike, a lynch mob, and a race riot erupted in the nation's capital in the late summer of 1835," Thomas, professor of history and John and Catherine Angle Chair in the Humanities, said. "Bell privately negotiated for the freedom of his wife and children, but his plans were upended. In the public trials that followed, the supremacy of the law, the freedom of the press, and the fate of an innocent man hung in the balance."

Dreher, associate professor of English and ethnic studies, wrote the screenplay for *Anna*, and co-wrote the screenplay for this film with Thomas. Both productions are based on research from Thomas's "O Say Can You See" online archive of freedom suits.

"For *Anna*, I concentrated on Anna—just Anna," Dreher said. "*The Bell Affair* is a feature-length production that involves a nimiety of characters. When we began our roundtable discussion for *The Bell Affair*, Will and I understood that a central collaboration would have to occur. It is a smooth partnership especially since history is my minor discipline of research, so Will and I sync in our vision of the script."

Anna was a shorter film, but Dreher said she was able to accomplish what she wanted to do.



"I knew exactly what we were doing with Anna, so I focused on the script in terms of what would accommodate the time frame."

Dreher will also be directing the film. She and Thomas will again collaborate with Michael Burton, an animator and assistant professor of practice in textiles, merchandising, and fashion design in the College of Education and Human Sciences.

This film is one of 215 humanities projects across the country supported by the most recent round of NEH funding.

"As the nation prepares to commemorate its 250th anniversary in 2026, NEH is proud to help lay the foundations for public engagement with America's past by funding projects that safeguard cultural heritage and advance our understanding of the events, ideas, and people that have shaped our nation," NEH chairman Jon Parrish Peede said in a press release.

In addition to producing, promoting, and distributing the film, the funding will be used to develop a website with companion materials and design teaching programs with original source documents. Thomas said his team aims to distribute the film through educational partners, film festivals, and broadcast channels. They also want to organize community-hosted screenings that spark conversations.

"I envision *The Bell Affair* circulating in film festivals and other socio-cultural communities," Dreher said. "I see being used as a tool for discovery about our past and, more specific, generating more insights into freedom making as enacted by enslaved people."

"Our goal [with the series] is to extend the historical imagination to recover these stories, showing how ordinary people used the law to define their rights and how their actions intersected with the nation's highest politics," Thomas said. "The film and website will tell the complete story of the Bells for the first time, dramatize the historical complexity of their enslavement, and place their resistance to enslavement in its full context."

They aim to distribute the film through educational partners, film festivals, and broadcast channels. They also want to organize community-hosted screenings that spark conversations.

Sources: Mike O'Connor, "Interdisciplinary team to continue historical film series with 'The Bell Affair,'" https://history.unl.edu/interdisciplinary-team-continue-historical-film-series-bell-affair, 30 August 2019 & Mike O'Connor, "'Anna' filmmakers begin new doc, 'The Bell Affair,'" https://research.unl.edu/blog/anna-filmmakers-begin-new-doc-the-bell-affair/, 16 September 2019

ETHNIC STUDIES LECTURE: DAVID KRUGLER

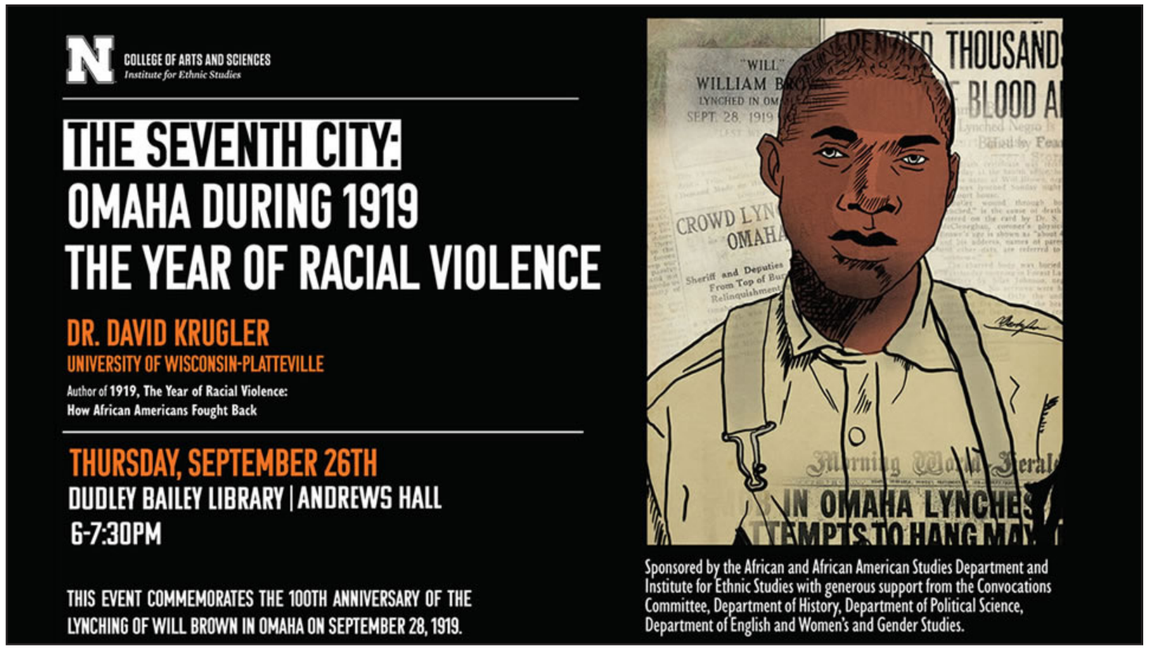
Visiting professor David Krugler presented a lecture, "Remembrance of 100th anniversary of the Will Brown Lynching in Omaha," from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. 26 September 2019 in Andrews Hall, Bailey Library. This lecture was organized by Patrick Jones, associate professor of history and ethnic studies, who is a scholar of African Americans in the Midwest.

In his lecture, David Krugler commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Will Brown lynching in Omaha, which took place on 28 September 1919. The murder of Brown, an African American laborer, by a white mob was part of a wave of anti-black violence sweeping the United States after World War I.

Krugler's presentation documented how Brown was framed for a crime he didn't commit, described the failed efforts of authorities to bring his murderers to justice, and explained how African Americans in Omaha took measures to defend themselves against further mob violence.

Krugler is a professor of history at the University of Wisconsin–Platteville, where he has taught since 1997. He is the past recipient of research grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Organization of American Historians, the White House Historical Association, and the University of Wisconsin System Institute on Race and Ethnicity.

Sources: "Visiting professor Krugler to give lecture Sept. 26," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/visiting-professor-krugler-to-give-lecture-sept-26/, 23 September 2019 & "Livestream Krugler's Sept. 26 talk on Omaha's racial violence in 1919," https://history.unl.edu/livestream-kruglers-sept-26-talk-omaha-racial-violence-1919, 23 September 2019



C-SPAN COVERS HISTORY COURSE

C-SPAN3 visited and recorded University of Nebraska-Lincoln professor William G. Thomas III's HIST 341 (American Constitutional History) class on some of the lawsuits brought by enslaved people who sued for their freedom in the antebellum period. The course, HIST 341, focused on "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."

Thomas outlined the different legal arguments they used and emphasized how most suits affected not just one person, but entire families. The C-SPAN Lecture in History can be viewed at the links below.

Source: "Slaves Suing for Their Freedom," C-SPAN, https://www.c-span.org/series/?ahtv & https://www.c-span.org/video/?464373-1/slaves-suing-freedom, 26 September 2019

SLAVERY AND REPRODUCTIVE MEDICINE LECTURE AT RICE UNIVERSITY

Deirdre Cooper Owens explained how the institution of American slavery was directly linked to the creation of reproductive medicine in the U.S. Cooper Owens's 6:30 p.m. talk on Friday, 27 September 2019 was a Gray/Wawro Lecture in Gender, Health, and Well-being, presented by Rice University's Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. Her lecture was originally reserved for Thursday, 26 September 2019, but was rescheduled due to a delayed plane flight.

Cooper Owens provided context for how and why physicians denied black women their full humanity, yet valued them as "medical superbodies" highly suited for experimentation. In engaging with 19th-century ideas about so-called racial difference, she shed light on the contemporary legacy of medical racism.

Time Magazine calls Professor Deirdre Cooper Owens one of the country's most "acclaimed experts in U.S. history," perhaps because as a teacher and public speaker, she knows that stories are what draw people into wanting to know about the past. Cooper Owens is a proud graduate of two historically black colleges and universities, the all-women's Bennett College and Clark Atlanta University. She earned her PhD in history at UCLA and served as a postdoctoral fellow at UVA. Her 2018 book *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology* (University of Georgia Press) received the Organization of American Historians' Darlene Clark Hine Award.

As Director of the Humanities in Medicine Program at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, she is also one of only two black women in the United States leading a health humanities program.

Copies of *Medical Bondage* – provided by Rice Campus Bookstore – were available for purchase during the reception.

Source: The Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality | Rice University, https://events.rice.edu/#!view/event/event_id/57493, 27 September 2019

NEW BOOK EXAMINES AMERICAN GI-GERMAN FORCES SOCIAL CRISIS

Alexander Vazansky, assistant professor of history at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, is the author of new nonfiction book *An Army in Crisis: Social Conflict and the U.S. Army in Germany, 1968-1975*.

The book, which was published 1 October 2019 by University of Nebraska Press, examines the social crisis that developed among American armed forces stationed in Germany between 1968 and 1975.

A number of factors contributed to this crisis, including shifting deployment patterns during the Vietnam War, changing social and political realities in postwar Germany and Europe, and racial tensions, drug use and the youth movement back in the United States.

Vazansky wrote *An Army in Crisis* from a unique perspective, having lived for several decades in Germany near an American military base himself. Drawing from his own experiences, he's excited to shed light on a relatively understudied portion of U.S. military history.

"Since my years as a graduate student, the history of German-American relations have been a major focus of mine," he said. "This interest is partially personal. I grew up in Heidelberg, Germany, during the 1970s, 80s, and 90s as the son of an American mother and a German father. At the time, Heidelberg was the headquarters of the U.S. army."

An Army in Crisis is Vazansky's first published book. He joined Nebraska's history department in 2009 as a lecturer, was promoted to assistant professor in 2014, and has been promoted to associate professor as of 2019.

For more information on his new book, visit the University of Nebraska Press website.

Source: Lindsey Amen | University Communication, "New book explores America's military presence in postwar Germany," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/new-book-explores-america-s-military-presence-in-post-war-germany/, 3 October 2019

SUFFRAGE ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM

Women's suffrage supporters demonstrate against President Woodrow Wilson in Chicago on 20 October 1916. Wilson withheld support for women's voting rights until 1918.

Nebraska Innovation Campus hosted a symposium commemorating the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. 19 October 2019.

The "Celebrating the 19th Amendment: Women's Rights Here and Abroad" program featured scholars from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and other institutions, as well as women serving as elected officials in the Cornhusker State. Topics included the history of women's suffrage, the impact of women in elections in the last 100 years, women's involvement in politics, and the status of women's rights on a global scale.

The symposium was sponsored by the university's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, the Global Perspectives: Winter Lecture Series, and the League of Women Voters of Lincoln-Lancaster County. Participation was open to the public.

The keynote speaker was Rhoda Howard-Hassmann, professor emeritus at Canada's Wilfrid Laurier University. Hassmann addressed international human rights with a special focus on women and women's suffrage. She is the author of several books and articles on the topics. She also served as a consultant for the creation of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's undergraduate program in human rights.

Other speakers include Leslie Working, adjunct instructor of history at Union College and Katrina Jagodinsky, Susan J. Rosowski Associate Professor of History at UNL.

Working discussed the history of women's suffrage in the United States. Jagodinsky examined the effects women have had on United States politics, especially in the last 30 years.

The symposium also included a moderated discussion from a panel of women who have served or are serving in elected office in Nebraska. The panelists were: Lou Ann Linehan, current state senator in the 39th District; Patty Pansing Brooks, current state senator in the 28th District; DiAnna Schimek, a public servant who represented Nebraska's 27th District from 1988 to 2008; and Anna Wishart, a freshman state senator in the 27th District.

Source: "Symposium to celebrate anniversary of the 19th Amendment," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/symposium-to-celebrate-anniversary-of-the-19th-amendment/, 30 September 2019; Photos from Shutterstock

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENT

The Executive Vice Chancellor's Office has announced its annual selection of faculty and executive-level professional staff who will attend two Big Ten Academic Alliance leadership programs this year.

Will Thomas, Professor of History, John and Catherine Angle Chair in the Humanities, has been appointed to the Academic Leadership Program.

Fellows will attend a series of three conferences and on-campus events throughout the academic year learning about leadership and a broad range of topics, including community engagement, diversity and inclusion, freedom of expression, challenging conversations, mental health, student success, and the social value of higher education.

Learn more about the programs and view past participants at Academic Leadership Program and Department Executive Officers Program.

Contact Judy Walker at judy.walker@unl.edu for more information about these leadership opportunities.

Source: "11 selected for Big Ten leadership programs," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/11-selected-for-big-ten-leadership-programs/, 30 October 2019

FACULTY SLAM

From the unlikely intersection of 3D engineering and baking to reconciling the trauma of long-mistreated indigenous peoples, from early childhood development to the connection between eviction and urban poverty, University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty celebrated the vision and impact of their work.

"How will your research change the world?" asked Nathan Meier, assistant vice chancellor for research, in kicking off the Research and Creative Activity Slam, part of the Nebraska Research Days celebration, Wednesday, 6 November 2019. It was the second annual Slam hosted by the Office of Research and Economic Development.

A research slam? Think poetry slam, but with more PowerPoint. Four faculty members were chosen to explain their research to colleagues in no more than five minutes and three slides – restrictions they largely stuck to.

Several participants shared the moments when their research changed them. For historian Margaret Jacobs, it was participating in a gathering in Ottawa in 2015 that aimed to come to terms with Canada's attempts throughout history to erase indigenous people's culture and traditions. On the one hand, she recalled feeling "weighed down by the magnitude of the cruelty," but on the other, feeling "a deep connectedness and desire to do better."

"How can my work help people come to terms with the trauma of the past?" Jacobs asked herself. Her current work includes the Genoa Indian School Digital Reconciliation Project, an effort to contribute to reconciliation and healing by making the history of the Genoa Indian Boarding School more accessible to the families of those who attended and by raising public awareness about Native American boarding schools.

"History may seem so yesterday, but reckoning with our history is essential to overcoming our divisions," said Jacobs, Chancellor's Professor of History.

Source: Dan Moser, "Faculty Slam demonstrates research expertise, passions," https://research.unl.edu/blog/faculty-slam-demonstrates-researchers-expertise-passions/, 7 November 2019

AAAS SPEECH

Margaret Jacobs, Chancellor's Professor of History in the Department of History, was one of over 200 new members inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences on 12 October 2019. Her AAAS membership was announced on 17 April 2019.

Her speech is available on the organization's YouTube channel.

Jacobs is the first female faculty member at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln to be selected. The class of 2019 includes former First Lady Michelle Obama, gender theorist Judith Butler, *The Atlantic* journalist James M. Fallows, and Cisco Systems leader Charles H. Robbins.

Read about Jacobs's selection on Nebraska Today.

Source: "Jacobs's speech at AAAS 2019 Induction Ceremony," https://history.unl.edu/jacobs-speech-aaas-2019-induction-ceremony, 14 November 2019

DIGITAL LEGAL HISTORY AWARD

The online archive "O Say Can You See: Early Washington, D.C., Law & Family" and the film Anna received the Mary Dudziak Prize for Digital Legal History from the American Society for Legal History. The annual prize, named for scholar and digital history pioneer Mary L. Dudziak, recognizes excellence in digital legal history.

The archive is a collection and analysis of freedom suits filed between 1800 and 1862 in Washington, D.C. It also traces the multigenerational family networks the freedom suits reveal. Located at earlywashingtondc.org, the archive was developed by a digital humanities team in the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, led by historian Will

Thomas.

"[The project] does more than merely put content online that could be digested in print form," the ASLH wrote. "[They] modeled more than 55,000 relationships between the participants in these cases. They also included engaging essays by legal historians about these sources and the broader historical context."

Anna was recognized for its production value and wide use in secondary schools—it was developed using information from the archive. Thomas, the John and Catherine Chair in the Humanities, collaborated with Husker colleagues Kwakiutl Dreher and Michael Burton to produce the film.

The ASLH has fostered interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching in legal history since 1956. This is the first year the award has been given.

"Overall, we were impressed by how this project harnessed the power of new media to excite the imaginations of current and future legal historians."

Source: "Website, film earn legal history award," https://history.unl.edu/website-film-earn-legal-history-award, 4 December 2019

ROZ PAYNE 1960S ARCHIVE

Mention the 1960s, and a few things are top of mind — activism, war, counterculture, protests — and Roz Payne, a filmmaker, photographer, and activist herself, was often in the center of it all.

A member of the Newsreel Films collective, Payne chronicled the decade, following movements spanning the progressive spectrum, including Black Power, anti-war, gay rights, women's liberation, and Cuban Revolution among many others.

Now, much of her work from the 1960s is available online, through the Roz Payne Sixties Archive, a project spearheaded by University of Nebraska–Lincoln historian Patrick Jones. The archive, which is hosted by the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, is completely searchable and annotated.

In April of 1969, after a lengthy, coordinated effort by local and federal law enforcement to infiltrate and disrupt the New York chapter of the Black Panther Party, District Attorney Frank Hogan indicted 21 members of the organization. In what was, at the time, the longest and most costly trial in New York state history, the Panthers were acquitted of all 156 charges on 12 May 1971.

Jones, associate professor of history and ethnic studies, met Payne when she visited campus for a "Blacks in Film" festival in 2009. As a historian of contemporary America, Jones established a quick friendship with Payne.

After several long conversations, Jones pitched Payne the idea of a digital archive, where her photos and films could live online and be accessed with whomever wanted to learn from them. Over the next few years, Jones visited Payne in her Burlington, Vermont, home to work on the project with her.

During his first visit to Payne's home, Jones realized that the archive would be much larger than he anticipated. Payne witnessed events through her camera lens, but she was also a collector. She kept mementos like buttons, manifestos, posters, and pamphlets from every movement she followed and every event she chronicled.

"She said she had a few filing cabinets of stuff, but when I visited the first time, there was so much that was just a part of her lived experience," Jones said. "On a wall, under a thumbtack, there were two tickets from Woodstock. In a closet, on shelves, she had hundreds of various posters. It was almost overwhelming, but it was such a rare collection."

Left: A soldier in the National Guard keeps watch in Chicago during the Democratic National Convention in 1968. Anti-war and counterculture demonstrations took place at the same time as the convention and Chicago Mayor Richard Daley requested assistance from the National Guard to maintain "law and order."

Above: Protestors in masks make their way through the streets during anti-war demonstrations in Chicago during the 1968 Democratic National Convention.

Jones spent each visit scanning the memorabilia while Payne shared hundreds of stories accompanying the collection. The most surprising pieces Jones came across were the original blueprints from the Woodstock Festival of 1969.

"She worked at Woodstock and was one of the people who put up fences each night," Jones said. "They would actually unscrew the fences so people could come in without tickets.

"And on the last day of Woodstock, she goes back to the cabin, which was like the central headquarters for the people organizing it. She'd gotten separated from her friends and she went back to try to see if any of her friends were there; they'd all left already. She saw the blueprints for Woodstock sitting there, and she had the presence of mind to take those."

The digitized collection is artifacts of the activism that defined the decade, including an anti-war march on the Pentagon in 1967; a showdown with the National Guard in Chicago, during the 1968 Democratic National Convention; Janis Joplin in concert; and the underground press.

There are also auspices of events to come, like posters and buttons from when Payne and her friends encouraged a political unknown to run for mayor of their small city in 1980: Bernie Sanders.

"The collection is vast, but it echoes much of what is happening now," Jones said. "It's been really interesting to see how the issues are similar, and that there's a longer history – like these issues haven't come out of nowhere. It's part of an ongoing struggle, with reverberations. We haven't progressed fully on some of these issues, but there has been change."

While there are a few items from other decades, Jones honed in on a single historic decade.

"There was so much more, but in terms of volume and national historical context, I made the choice to focus on the '60s," Jones said.

Source: Deann Gayman | University Communication, "Nebraska-led project digitizes 1960s activism artifacts: Collaboration between Jones, Payne expands access to rare collection," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/nebraska-led-project-digitizes-1960s-activism-artifacts/, 17 January 2020; Photos from Roz Payne Sixties Archive

LATIN AMERICA LECTURE

Scholars from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Kearney, Nebraska Wesleyan, and Vanderbilt University presented a series of lectures focusing on the relationship between the U.S. and Latin America.

The 2020 Winter Lecture Series was held from 7 to 9 p.m. on the six successive Sundays from 9 February 2020 to 15 March 2020 at the Unitarian Church of Lincoln. The lecture series is supported by the Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Committee, Humanities Nebraska, and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The lectures were free and open to the public.

The lectures emphasized six countries and regions in Central and South America. They described the historical, cultural, political, and economic factors that contributed to the current issues that each face. The Latin American countries or regions were selected either because they face problems that are important at this time or they have become the focus of important U.S. federal policies.

"Our goal is to provide information in a context that allows questions and dialogue with our attendees," said Dick Dienstbier, member of the lecture series planning committee and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute member.

Speakers and Schedule
Speakers addressed specific topics and included the following. The complete schedule can also be found online.

- **February 9**

Professor Tim Borstelmann, History, UNL – US Diplomatic History in the Western Hemisphere: From the Monroe Doctrine to our time.

Source: "Winter talks delve into U.S., Latin American relations," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/winter-talks-delve-into-us-latin-american-relations/, 5 February 2020

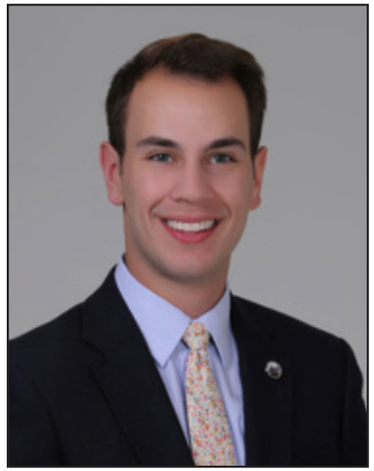
CATHER ARCHIVES DISCOVERY

William Kelly, a graduate student in the UNL Department of History, was working with new items for the Charles Cather collection when he came across a fun discovery, a short rhyme in an autograph book written in Willa Cather's hand. Kelly was working as an intern in the Archives & Special Collections, has an interest in Cather, and assisted Mary Ellen Ducey, University Archivist, by doing an in-depth review of items to add to the collection. During Kelly's closer look, an old pocket autograph book caught his eye. The book belonged to Willa's brother Douglass Cather, and dated back to 1890. The autograph book is similar to how students of today would sign each other's yearbooks with farewell messages and poems.

Dear Douglass
Learn your lessons, mind your teacher
marry a girl & pay the preacher,
die and fly to the "golden shore"
and don't be a sell [sic] anymore.
The medical advice of your sister WM Cather Jr.

In the summer of 2019, Kelly interned in Red Cloud, Nebraska at the National Willa Cather Center. It was here where Kelly learned much about Willa's life.

"I wouldn't have been able to pinpoint why this was so unique, had it not been for that experience in Red Cloud," stated Kelly.



The most striking piece of Willa's message was her signature. Willa signed off her poem as, "*The medical advice of your sister WM Cather Jr.*" Willa would have been around the age of 16 at the time, starting to adopt male styles, and aspiring to become a doctor. This is shown through her medical advice and referring to herself as William (WM) Jr.

"To have the smallest contribution to people's understanding of Willa Cather...is pretty cool," said Kelly.

Kelly has enjoyed working with the Cather collection and reading Willa's books.

"I always hated to read fiction, until I read Willa Cather," said Kelly, "now she makes me proud to be a Nebraskan."

Source: Caitlin Steiner, "Student Makes Fun Discovery in Cather Collections," https://unllibraries.blogspot.com/2020/02/student-makes-fun-discovery-in-cather.html, 24 February 2020

HABEAS CORPUS NSF GRANT

Translated from Latin, habeas corpus means "show me the body." Originally codified in the 1215 Magna Carta, and later adopted by the United States, habeas is a legal principle that originally enabled prisoners to challenge the legality of their detentions.

But after the Civil War, Congress expanded the rule through the Habeas Corpus Act of 1867, aimed at protecting recently freed slaves. The act's language extended habeas beyond criminal law and into the interpersonal realm, sparking its transformation into a tool of liberation for marginalized people.

With a three-year, $460,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, University of Nebraska–Lincoln historian Katrina Jagodinsky will explore how habeas corpus was used in the American West by various marginalized groups — immigrants, women, and indigenous and enslaved people, for example — to claim freedom and establish their rights between 1812 and 1924. She is one of the first historians to study these groups' habeas efforts as a whole, focusing on the overlapping and distinctive ways they used the law. Her project is titled "Petitioning For Freedom: Habeas Corpus in the American West."

"Despite there being hundreds of these types of habeas petitions, no one has looked at them collectively," said Jagodinsky, Susan J. Rosowski Associate Professor of history. "Putting all of these groups together is a very innovative aspect of the project."

In collaboration with Nebraska's Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, she also will develop a first-of-its-kind open source, open access graph database archiving approximately 6,000 previously unpublished habeas petitions, which will be searchable by detailed demographic information.

Jagodinsky is the first woman in Nebraska's history department, and just the second Husker historian overall, to receive an NSF grant.

The groups she's focused on used habeas to challenge a wide array of injustices. Black petitioners resisted enslavement. Indigenous people dodged federal Indian agents — the government's representatives on reservations — and reclaimed their children from boarding schools and settler families. Chinese immigrants challenged deportation following the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Parents sought custody of children from former spouses or in-laws. And patients and inmates challenged detention in state asylums and institutions.

Though researchers have studied each type of case in isolation, no one has studied the petitioners as a comparative whole. Jagodinsky expects this bird's-eye view to reveal a

trend of marginalized people informally exchanging legal knowledge both within their own groups and with other groups. These informal networks bolstered their ability to pursue expanded rights through the legal system.

She said people often express surprise that these groups, often uneducated and illiterate, used the legal system as a vehicle for gaining rights. But their practice of sharing legal knowledge, and the circumstances of their lives, enabled them to exploit habeas effectively.

"I think it's important to remember that these people's lives were heavily regulated and legislated," Jagodinsky said. "When that is the nature of your daily life, even when you are not literate, you carry a common knowledge of the law and the way it affects you."

She is particularly interested in how black and indigenous people, and indigenous people among themselves, shared knowledge. For example, though scholars often point to the 1879 Standing Bear petition in Omaha as the first instance of a Native American using habeas to challenge federal authority over Native people, that case actually had a predecessor. In 1868, Moses Keokuk in Kansas successfully used habeas to challenge his arrest by an Indian agent.

Jagodinsky said there is evidence of a connection between the two cases. In 1878, Standing Bear and Keokuk were in Indian Territory and Standing Bear's translator, Susette La Flesche, visited both men there as part of her work to reform Native American policy. As part of Jagodinsky's NSF research, she will map out how they potentially traded legal knowledge during that encounter.

Jagodinsky is also working with CDRH to build a database of thousands of habeas petitions from eight states across the American West. The digital archive will be a major advance in organizing habeas petitions, which currently are stored in state and federal archives not readily accessible to the public.

Her team will index the petitions so they are searchable by race, relationship, gender, age and petition type. Right now, habeas documents are searchable only by legal party name, which isn't always known. More expansive search capabilities will open the door for enhanced scholarship, enabling legal historians to unearth documents that were previously inaccessible, said Katherine Walter, co-director of CDRH.

"The project will allow CDRH to visualize relationships in the data by adapting different types of database structures and connecting the resulting data to the legal system," Walter said. "We believe this has implications for future scholars of legal history."

The database will also serve as a replicable digital tool for researchers who want to build relational archives for legal records in other areas, like family law, child custody law or other types of civil and criminal law. Jagodinsky said this aspect of the project — the creation of a new digital ontology, or categorization system based on relationships — is of particular interest to NSF because of the need to digitally archive and index records across a wide range of fields.

"I think the structure we're using could be applied to many other types of cases," Jagodinsky said. "If we can create the data template, then other archives can use that for their data."

Sources: "Jagodinsky earns grant for habeas corpus digital project," https://history.unl.edu/jagodinsky-earns-grant-habeas-corpus-digital-project, 20 March 2020; Tiffany Lee | Research and Economic Development, "Study delves into habeas corpus' use to gain freedoms in the American West: NSF award advances Jagodinsky's study into marginalized groups," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/study-delves-into-habeas-corpus-use-to-gain-freedoms-in-the-american-west/, 20 May 2020; Photo courtesy Craig Chandler | University Communication

HYMEN ROSENBERG PROFESSORSHIP

Faculty and staff who advance the mission of the university in teaching, research, and service are recognized annually at the system, campus, and college level.

Visit our Recognition web page to find out about each award. Professorships are the highest form of recognition.

2020 Awardees
College – Professorships
Bedross Der Matossian, Hymen Rosenberg Associate Professor in Judaic Studies

Source: "Faculty, staff, students earn Spring 2020 awards," https://cas.unl.edu/faculty-staff-students-earn-spring-2020-awards, 30 March 2020

GUGGENHEIM FELLOWSHIP

Amy Burnett, Paula and D.B. Varner University Professor in the Department of History, has been named a Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation to support work on her research project, *The Religious Republic of Letters: Correspondence Networks in Reformation Germany*. The twelve-month award, given to researchers who have demonstrated exceptional capacity for productive scholarship or exceptional creative ability in the arts, begins in January 2021.

Burnett, Paula and D.B. Varner University Professor of History, is one of only 175 Fellows, which were announced 9 April 2020. According to a news release from the Guggenheim Foundation, more than 3,000 applied. The fellowships are "intended for individuals who have already demonstrated exceptional capacity for productive scholarship or exceptional creative ability in the arts."

Burnett teaches early modern European history, and her research examines the role of print, preaching, and education in transmitting and transforming religious ideas. *The Religious Republic of Letters* examines the correspondence network connecting two dozen humanists, pastors, and teachers in Switzerland and South Germany 1510–1550.

"This network is the missing link between the earlier literary phase of the Republic of Letters and the broader 'commonwealth of learning' of the later sixteenth century," she said.

She will use network analysis and visualization software on a relational database of letters containing over 14,000 letters from nearly 1,500 correspondents.

"I will examine the shape of the network as a whole and consider how humanist epistolography influenced the format of the letters," Burnett said. "I will then analyze the contents under four headings: knowledge transfer, institutional reform, the expression of affect, and the formation of identity.

"Bridging the artificial divide between humanism and the Reformation, my book will make clear how much religious and educational reform owed to Erasmian humanism."

Burnett has received numerous previous awards for her research, which examines the role of print, preaching and education in transmitting and transforming religious ideas.

Her books *Debating the Sacraments: Print and Authority in the Early Reformation* and *Origins of the Eucharistic Controversy: A Study in the Circulation of Ideas* analyze how authors, editors, translators, and printers shaped public debate in the early Reformation. *Teaching the Reformation: Ministers and their Message in Basel* won the Gerald Strauss Prize of the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference.

Her research has been supported by fellowships from the American Philosophical Society, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, and the Fulbright Scholar Program.

Sources: "Burnett earns Guggenheim prize," https://cas.unl.edu/burnett-earns-guggenheim-prize, 9 April 2020; "Burnett earns Guggenheim Fellowship," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/burnett-earns-guggenheim-fellowship/, 15 April 2020

COVID-19 AND AMERICAN PERCEPTIONS OF THE FOREIGN

The writer is a professor of history at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and author of the book "Just Like Us: The American Struggle to Understand Foreigners" (Columbia University Press, 2020).

First, the novel coronavirus was a hoax, the White House told us. Then it was identified as a foreign virus. "The Chinese virus," as President Trump has insisted. Part of them, not of us. The president continues to emphasize what he sees as the foreign character of the disease, and in his wake come verbal assaults on Americans of Asian descent.

The COVID-19 pandemic may be new, but this way of thinking about Americans and their relationship to the world is decidedly not. Imagining themselves as uniquely healthy, affluent, strong and free, Americans have long cast a baleful eye on influences from abroad that seemed likely to pollute the national body politic, whether infectious or intellectual. Immigrants and refugees have regularly topped the list.

Those of us who are older, though, hardly imagined that, in the year 2020, we would live under a president so eager to mobilize racial prejudice and xenophobia. Surely we should have come much further by now?

But our story does not end here. And we have a very different tale from our national past to call upon as we pull together in hopes of building a viable future together. We can manage the current pandemic, we can find a humane path forward to negotiate flows of migration, and we can navigate the overriding challenge of climate change, in no small part by working closely with other nations. Just as the courageous dedication of our health care workers inspires us, so too can remembering the powerful ways in which the U.S. has, repeatedly, become a more inclusive society and now the most diverse great power in world history.

The broader sweep of the American story has been one of incorporating and assimilating newcomers and their descendants. More than 40 million U.S. residents were born elsewhere, nearly four times as many as in Germany, the country with the next-largest number.

Roman Catholics, once reviled in this country, eventually came to be seen as plain old Americans. For the most part, so did Jews, as part of a new "Judeo-Christian" tradition. In comparison to their reception in most of Europe, Muslim migrants here appear to be on a similar path of relative incorporation. Asian Americans after 1945 transformed from a "yellow peril" to a "model minority." Latinos have become a crucial part of American society, the U.S. economy and the U.S. electorate. In contrast to other nations with resurgent right-wing populism, the citizens of the United States can hardly deny their own identity as a nation of immigrants and their descendants.

Until quite recently, the Republican Party promoted international trade and investment. It embraced U.S. allies abroad. It welcomed new arrivals as entrepreneurs, people of religious faith, and workers critical to the success of large sectors of the U.S. economy. Republicans need not cling to the xenophobia of Trumpism once Trump, eventually, is gone.

Above all, American popular culture reflects global diversity and interconnectedness. Little is truly foreign to the vast industries of music, film, fashion, sports and food. For younger Americans in particular, the nativism (like the homophobia) of some of their elders is acutely embarrassing. They surely need to show up more regularly at election time, but the enormously diverse younger generations of Americans are not warming to xenophobia. At the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, my students are not afraid of foreigners, who comprise more than 10% of the student population.

The dramatic expansion of U.S. influence around the globe after World War II helped force white Americans to resolve their contradictory feelings about foreigners and people of color in the direction of greater inclusion. The 2016 election marked a considerable setback, just as there have been temporary defeats across the U.S. past. But Trumpism is not the end of American history, not by a long shot. Just as we will manage the COVID-19 pandemic better by not pretending it's a foreign challenge, so can we remember our better angels of inclusiveness that have long made this nation great.

Source: Tim Borstelmann, "Midlands Voices: Hostility to, suspicion of foreigners are deeply embedded in U.S. history," https://omaha.com/opinion/midlands-voices-hostility-to-suspicion-of-foreigners-are-deeply-embedded-in-u-s-history/article_16415443-7cfc-5550-a66f-2903e4084360.html, 11 April 2020

AFRICAN AMERICAN HEALTH INEQUITIES

In 1793 Philadelphia was assaulted with the worst recorded case of yellow fever in the new nation's history. Respected Philadelphian Benjamin Rush — considered the "Father of American Medicine" and also a Founding Father who was the country's preeminent physician — took the lead in helping to create public health awareness about the devastating disease. Rush asked ministers Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, two of the city's most respected black leaders, to rally black Philadelphians to help yellow fever patients. Members of the black community answered the call. They served as grave diggers, nurses, garbage collectors, and a host of other jobs during the epidemic. Rush did so because he believed African Americans were not as susceptible to the disease and might be immune to Yellow Fever.
The death toll numbers revealed how wrong Dr. Rush's beliefs were about supposed black immunity from yellow fever. Five thousand Philadelphians died and nearly 10 percent of those who died were black residents. In response to the disproportionately large numbers of deaths in the African American community, many of whom were on

the front lines assisting the sick, a white publisher Matthew Carey wrote a damning pamphlet that berated black Philadelphians as conniving thieves who robbed the houses of those they cared for as nurses and caregivers during the epidemic. The pamphlet was in its fourth printing by the time the Reverends Richard Allen and Absalom Jones published a rebuttal to Carey's racist argument against the city's black citizens.

People wait for a distribution of masks and food from the Rev. Al Sharpton in the Harlem neighborhood of New York, after a new state mandate was issued requiring residents to wear face coverings in public due to COVID-19, 18 April 2020. "Inner-city residents must follow this mandate to ensure public health and safety," said Sharpton. The latest Associated Press analysis of available data shows that nearly one-third of those who have died from the coronavirus are African American, even though blacks are only about 14% of the population.

Over 200 years later, African Americans are still more likely to suffer because of the social determinants of health that compound a lower quality of medical treatment. Medical racism is made even more apparent to members of the black community when statistical data reveals how complications from illnesses and death greatly impact them. Since the 18th century, African Americans have had a fraught relationship with the medical field. Over centuries, they have been used as experimental patients, made to patronize segregated and poorly funded hospitals, doubted by physicians when they detailed painful illnesses, and die earlier and more so, from preventable disease and conditions.

With the emergence of COVID-19, leading public health officials, black scholars of the history of medicine and racism, and experts on health inequities knew the virus would have a devastating effect on the black community. We were not prescient, we simply understood deeply what the historical records have shown us consistently about medical racism. The reasons are varied of course. There is a disproportionate number of African Americans who suffer from conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and are overweight. Yet, nearly 40 percent of all Americans are obese, nearly one-third of American whites have hypertension, and 10.5 percent of the U.S. population has been diagnosed with diabetes. Even with these alarming statistics, especially compared to other high-income earning nations, African Americans have died at disproportionately higher rates than their white counterparts in many urban centers throughout the Midwest and East Coast. For example, in St. Louis black people make up nearly all COVID-19 deaths. Unsurprisingly, New Orleans is the only southern city with black death tolls that are comparable to New York City. Why do African Americans fare so badly in the United States when it comes to their health and disease? Largely because there has not been a national effort to establish racism as a public health crisis.

In the late 1990s, then Surgeon General David Satcher created a national initiative meant to eradicate health disparities between African Americans and white people by 2010. His goal was never met. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention still has not made racism a public health crisis although racism meets the four criteria the agency established for a public health crisis. Racism places a massive burden on society, it disproportionately affects a segment of the country's population, the U.S.'s current measures are not enough to stop the crisis, and lastly, an expansive and coordinated public health approach is needed to eliminate racism's negative effect on society.

As the numbers of black victims of COVID-19 increase, those of us who study, write, and teach about medical disparities between black and white people will unfortunately include COVID-19 death rates as another example of how fragile African American health is in a society that has stark inequities between those who receive good medical care and those who do not. Until the nation's federal agencies and government prioritize how menacing racism is on this society, African Americans will continue to suffer from higher rates of death from pandemics like COVID-19 to maternal morbidity. As Americans, we must ensure that every citizen receives equal and good medical care and every statistic that the government has conducted for decades indicates that unequal treatment in health care is predicated upon racism, classism, citizenship, homophobia and a host of discriminators. Medical racism affects us all and its menacing presence has been a part of this country's legacy for too long. It is time to surgically excise it for good.

Source: Deirdre Cooper Owens, "COVID-19 reveals a long history of health inequities affecting African Americans [Opinion]," https://www.houstonchronicle.com/opinion/outlook/article/COVID-19-reveals-a-long-history-of-health-15218565.php, 22 April 2020; Photo by Bebeto Matthews, STF / Associated Press

THE 1918 INFLUENZA AND 2020 COVID-19 PANDEMICS

The pandemic arrived in Lincoln during the season-changing days of late September.

By the time it was over — one wave, followed by another — the leaves had long fallen and the graveyard on O Street had filled with bodies.

Nine-year-old Pearl Sharp and her little sister Charlotte. Mollie Klein and her daughter Alga.

A mother and father and two of their small children buried in the "free ground" of the stately Wyuka Cemetery, all four dead in the span of 11 days.

In all, there would be nearly 400 deaths in a city of 86,000; across the state, thousands more died, and worldwide, more than 20 million — some say upward of 100 million — taken by influenza.

Influenza and its complications sharply increased the death toll in Lincoln and Nebraska during the waning months of 1918. Masks were common apparel during the pandemic, as shown in this photo taken on the streets of Shelby.

Their stories fill newspaper archives and family bibles. Shopkeepers who closed up for lunch and didn't make it back to open, dead before the day was done. Mothers who entered hospitals — the safe, newfangled way to give birth — leaving orphaned infants behind.

Weddings in cemeteries, a charm from the old world — and the time of old plagues — to keep the couple safe.

They called it the Spanish Flu in 1918 but later, historians said it didn't start in Europe at all, but down in Kansas, carried across the ocean by soldiers. It was only because Spanish newspapers reported the illness more freely than others during the war in which it remained neutral that the name stuck…

I hear an echo.

I read that story with a fresh eye this week, looking back and looking ahead at the same time to the shutdown world we inhabit today. Drawn to that history to see what we learned, what we forgot…

Deirdre Cooper Owens is watching the pandemic unfold, too. She's the director of the Humanities and Medicine Program at UNL and a medical historian.

Look at the grainy old photos of people wearing masks, she says. "They literally look like us."

The societal fallout in 1918 parallels today, too.

"Businesses being outraged at local and state governments for instituting policies that might be an overreach of power."

A hundred years ago, people took to the streets in protest.

"People were very angry … and today people are responding in a very similar way; it's literally the same thing."

There are differences, too.

In 1918, the reported death toll for African Americans wasn't high, although separate hospitals for black citizens and underreporting may have skewed the data.

"The opposite of what we're going through now."

The influenza pandemic killed young people and children; the coronavirus aims for the old, and those with underlying health problems.

And we know how it spreads.

A century ago, people understood less about contagious disease. (Although, said Cooper Owens, the practice of spitting on the streets was common and eventually banned over the course of the outbreak in fear of it leading to the flu.)

There were no ICUs. No mechanical ventilators. No antiviral drugs, no antibiotics to treat secondary infections…

Measles and scarlet fever, whooping cough, and polio. Now we have vaccines for those killers.

But not for this one.

The novel coronavirus won't be rushed out of existence, no matter how soon we open our beauty shops and bars…

Sources: Cindy Lange-Kubick, "Cindy Lange-Kubick: The tale of two pandemics, separated by a century," https://journalstar.com/news/local/cindy-lange-kubick-the-tale-of-two-pandemics-separated-by-a-century/article_2a33cf64-4c78-5923-9182-b7b64e66767a.html?fbclid=IwAR3yh6ObeEB7py4MA6scRkzFrfD_sT9RDE-zHeNkr3sU-WdeMIDbQMp4jrdc, 27 April 2020, updated 3 August 2020; Photo from Journal Star Archives

PROMOTION AND TENURE

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln will award promotion and/or tenure to 101 faculty in 2020. Due to the ongoing threat of COVID-19, the spring celebration to honor faculty has been postponed until fall.

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln will award promotion and/or tenure to twenty-six CAS faculty in 2020. The spring celebration to honor faculty has been postponed.

Faculty receiving honors are listed below and at 2020 Promotion and Tenure.

Promoted to Associate Professor and Granted Tenure
Alexander Vazansky, History (left)

Promoted to Associate Professor of Practice
Sean Trundle, History (right)

Sources: "101 Nebraska faculty receive promotion, tenure," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/101-nebraska-faculty-receive-promotion-tenure/, 6 May 2020; https://executivevc.unl.edu/faculty/evaluation-recognition/promotion-tenure/2020; "26 CAS faculty receive promotion, tenure," https://cas.unl.edu/26-cas-faculty-receive-promotion-tenure, 8 May 2020

SYSTEMIC RACISM IN COVID-19 HEALTHCARE

There's evidence that systemic racism affects health in more subtle ways, too. In the 1990s, Arline Geronimus, a professor at the University of Michigan School of Public Health, coined the term "weathering" to describe the way that discrimination wears away at the body, leading to early onset of chronic disease and other poor health outcomes, even as people move up the economic ladder. "There's this accelerated biological aging that's caused by chronic exposure to stressors and high-effort coping with stressors [from] living in a structurally racist system," she explained. She said this may be one of the reasons COVID-19 is hitting communities of color particularly hard. Historically, though, policy interventions to address racial disparities have focused on changing individual behaviors. Geronimus and others argue that what's needed are structural changes aimed at rooting out discrimination and bias.

…The drivers of racial health disparities are well documented. People of color are more likely than whites to live in segregated neighborhoods with more pollution, unsafe housing, and limited access to health care, nutritious foods, and economic opportunity. Those and other social and environmental factors can lead to poor health outcomes, including higher rates of chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension, which have been associated with COVID-19 deaths. "A pandemic is in some ways about the pathogen but in so many more ways about the host and the environment," said Dr. Abdul El-Sayed, a former executive director of the Detroit Health Department. "Detroit, as an environment, is a place that has been beating up on the host—predominantly black and low-income folks in the city—for a really, really long time."

Compounding these environmental factors is bias within the medical system. Numerous studies show that black patients receive worse care than white patients. Although it's difficult to say whether bias is a factor in individual cases, there are many stories of people like Hargrove who were turned away from hospitals multiple times, only to die later. (Hospitals have generally denied accusations of bias regarding COVID-19 patients, pointing instead to capacity issues that required them to admit only the severest cases.)

Recently, some local governments have started to acknowledge the link between discrimination and poor health. Last year Milwaukee became the one the first cities in the United States to declare racism a public health crisis. Milwaukee is one of the country's most segregated metro areas: Wisconsin's mortality rate for black infants is the highest among the states, and Milwaukee has one of the most-incarcerated zip codes in the country. The point of the resolution was to make racial equity a core element of all decision-making, and it may have contributed to the fact that Milwaukee was more transparent than other locales about data showing disproportionate deaths early in the pandemic.

Dr. Deirdre Cooper Owens, a historian of medicine at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, has argued that the federal government should issue a similar declaration in response

to COVID-19. She argues that racism meets the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's criteria for declaring a public health threat: It puts a significant burden on society, it disproportionately affects part of the population, current measures to address it are inadequate, and a coordinated, broad approach is necessary in response. "Most white Americans do not like to have conversations around racism," Cooper Owens told me. "We have to be able to root it out at its source and just call a thing a thing."…

Source: Zoë Carpenter, "Will COVID-19 Be a Turning Point in the Fight Against Racial Disparities in Health Care?" https://www.thenation.com/article/society/covid-19-racial-disparities-health/, 1 June 2020; Photo by Guillermo Santos / NurPhoto via Getty Images

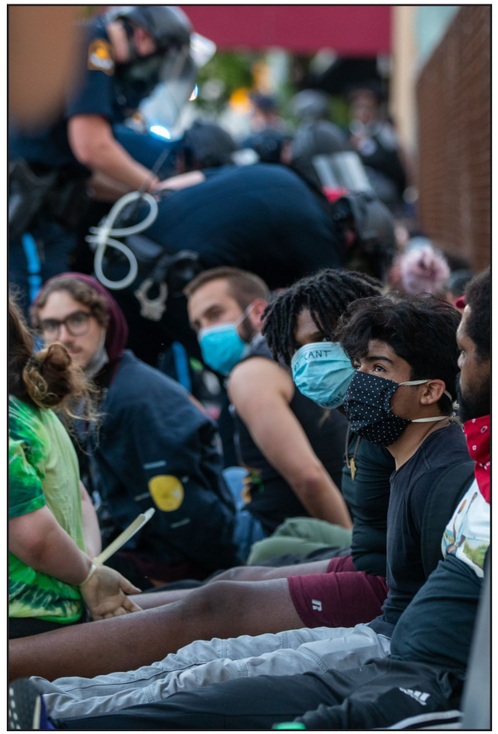
OMAHA PROTESTS

…In Omaha, Police Chief Todd Schmaderer said smaller groups of outside agitators have overshadowed and undermined the message of those asking for police accountability, pointing to an emotional but peaceful rally Sunday night at the Malcolm X Memorial Foundation Visitors Center in North Omaha that drew about 1,000 people.

Mayors and police chiefs in other cities have used similar us-versus-them language, blaming out-of-towners or outside groups for inciting violence and vandalism. But a USA Today analysis of arrest records and social media accounts in several cities found that most protesters are local...

Wednesday afternoon, at a meeting of the anti-violence group Omaha 360, Deputy Police Chief Scott Gray mentioned arrests of people from out of state, including the two Kentucky residents. Gray said he didn't know if the out-of-state residents came to Omaha for the purpose of stirring up trouble but said the Omaha department and federal authorities are going to look into that.

People who were detained during a moment of chaos on the fourth day of protests in Omaha.



Patrick Jones is an associate professor of history and ethnic studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln who studies civil rights and social movements. Jones, who attended some of the recent demonstrations, said there's a long history of officials blaming uprisings on "outsiders," from labor strikes in the late 19th century to the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

Historically, the tactic has been used to minimize or question the legitimacy of protests, "despite the reality that those movements were rooted in local circumstances and local people and they were the engine ... everywhere in change," he said of civil rights era-protests.

Still, there's nothing to stop a car full of college students or clergy in Kansas City from heading up to Omaha to protest this weekend.

"Protest is organic, and we're dealing with legitimate anger and frustration and rage right now," Jones said…

Source: Erin Duffy & Alia Conley, "Who are the Omaha protesters? Despite claims of outside agitators, most of those arrested are local," https://omaha.com/news/local/who-are-the-omaha-protesters-despite-claims-of-outside-agitators-most-of-those-arrested-are/article_41c606c3-e32c-5395-929c-3749e719efee.html, 5 June 2020; Photo by Anna Reed | The World-Herald

NORFOLK PROTESTS

Norfolk, Nebraska, is a quiet, conservative, and predominantly white city of 24,000 people where public protests are rare, except for an annual rally against abortion. So when about 300 people gathered on a busy street corner last weekend to voice their outrage at the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, residents took notice.

The rally was peaceful, but the fact it happened at all illustrates how far the movement to protest police brutality and discrimination has spread, fueled by social media and the persistent but less visible racism that minorities say they experience in small towns.

"It was important to do it, especially in the middle of Nebraska," said rally organizer Eduardo Mora, who lives in a neighboring town. "Are we going to wait for a police brutality incident to happen here? We shouldn't wait for there to be a life taken."…

The protests even in small towns reflect long-simmering anger over implicit discrimination, such as when police officers watch minorities closely, said Patrick Jones, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln history and ethnic studies professor. Police shootings of other black men only make it worse, he said.

"We've reached this tipping point with George Floyd," Jones said. "Frustration has continued to build with each new incident, and this was the spark. But it's really rooted in a broader set of injustices."…

Source: Grant Schulte | Associated Press, "George Floyd protests spread to smaller, mostly white towns," https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/nation/2020/06/07/george-floyd-protests-spread-smaller-mostly-white-towns/111918574/, 7 June 2020; Photo by Joseph Cress, AP

People hold their hands in the air as protestors chant "Hands up, don't shoot" during a 30 May 2020 rally in downtown Iowa City, Iowa, against police brutality sparked by the death of George Floyd, a black man who died after being restrained by Minneapolis police officers on 25 May 2020.

CALLS FOR UNL CAMPUS POLICE REFORMS

At the urging of student leaders demanding action, University of Minnesota President Joan Gabel announced last week the institution would no longer contract with the Minneapolis Police Department on certain events.

In a statement a few days later, a group of faculty at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln say administrators should take a look at how local law enforcement are used on the state's largest university campus.

"We are concerned by the heavy-handed reaction by law enforcement and certain political leaders in response to what have been, overall, largely peaceful protests in Lincoln and Omaha," faculty in UNL's African and African American Studies program wrote 5 June 2020.

Some of the demonstrators included UNL students who were tear-gassed, shot by rubber bullets, and arrested for exercising their constitutional right to protest, the statement adds, which only served to further erode trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

Because of those actions, the faculty said UNL should conduct "a formal review and reconsideration of any insti-

tutional relationships and partnerships with local and state police forces."

The statement also calls on UNL to ensure the rights of free expression and peaceful protest by students, faculty, and staff are protected and to provide better access to on-campus legal and medical services, as well as reforms such as the de-militarization of police and better oversight.

According to Patrick Jones, an associate professor within the program, the actions of police against the protesters both in Lincoln and Omaha and across the country highlight unfair, and even discriminatory, practices by some officers, which he said warrant a second look.

"We're asking the university to think about that, to review what its relationship is and to think about whether they are necessary and essential, or if they are exacerbating what are now obvious inequalities in policing," Jones said. "We think it's the right and responsible thing to do."

Citing a letter from Chancellor Ronnie Green calling for action against racism and discrimination, Jones said a review of UNL's relationship with outside police forces — it also maintains its own law enforcement department complete with sworn officers and community service officers assigned to residence halls — would be a way to immediately signal change.

"Whether or not they will make a change and whether that could happen are political questions, I guess," Jones said. "If people are serious, it has to be different, we have to re-conceptualize and transform the ways we're thinking about and doing policing."…

Jeannette Jones [no relation], an associate professor in UNL's Department of History and the Institute of Ethnic Studies, said the demands made in the letter from African and African American Studies faculty reflect similar calls for reform across the U.S.

She said at a minimum, a reexamination of the agreements between UNL, Lincoln police, and the Sheriff's Office would spell out the relationship for the campus community.

"When police are called onto campus to help out University Police, it would help everyone understand what the parameters are and what they are expected to do," she said. "That's just accountability."

Source: Chris Dunker, "UNL faculty call for university to reexamine relationship with outside police forces," https://journalstar.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/unl-faculty-call-for-university-to-reexamine-relationship-with-outside-police-forces/article_9490d7e1-94bc-522a-9def-766de48b4d4c.html, 11 June 2020, updated 11 Sept 2020

AFRICAN & AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES FACULTY ADDRESS CURRENT EVENTS

Faculty in the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's African and African American studies program have had a busy few weeks as the nation grapples with police violence and white supremacy. They find themselves playing many roles: as teachers, activists, and community members.

In early June, UNL's African and African American studies program issued a statement on the current racial crisis occurring in our nation and abroad. That statement detailed their demands, ranging from reexamining the university's relationship with the police to providing better access to health and legal resources for students.

Activists kneel together at the Monroe Community Center.

The statement is timely, but it's also one in a long line of statements the program has had to make over the years…

Helping students understand the history of race and racism in America is a big part of the work done by faculty in UNL's African and African American studies program.

Associate professor Dr. Patrick Jones recently finished teaching a three-week class called America in the 60s, which includes covering the civil rights movement. He said students learned about the different avenues for change, as well as the persistence of systems of oppression.

"Looking at that era and seeing the resurgence of a conservatism at the end of the 60s and beyond was [a] powerful reminder in a moment where a lot of people are feeling high, but the work of change has yet to really be done, and we're seeing the push back," Jones said.

Since the statement by the African and African American studies faculty was released, Jones has been working with UNL's administration on the faculty's demands. He said he's hopeful, but the faculty have been through these types of discussions before.

"Currently the administration seems to be working hard to accomplish that," Jones said. "They're hearing new voices, including new voices, and they are willing to at least acknowledge that in the past they have not done what needs to be done to make real and sustained and meaningful change."

The work of teaching and advocating for change is added to an already heavy personal load for Black faculty.

Dr. Jeannette Eileen Jones is an associate professor of history and Ethnic Studies at UNL. She spoke to NET while going for a walk. She emphasized how important it is for Black people to look after the whole self, especially now.

"That doesn't mean we shirk what we see as our responsibility to our communities, our families," Jones said. "We're coming from places where if you look right now where we are, where we come from, those places on the map are being decimated by COVID. And they're also sites of social unrest."

Despite the emotional and physical toll of the work, Jones says she wants to keep doing it, including though statements like this one.

"I do think it's important that we send both a message to the students, foremost, but also to the institution, that we are here, we are responding – almost all too often – and that we're here for these students," Jones said. "But we also want to be a voice to express their concerns to the administration and to be allies with them because they're also doing their own work."

For these faculty members, the work of teaching, advocating, and surviving goes on, especially as the nation grapples with race in its past, present, and future.

Source: Allison Mollenkamp | NET News, "UNL's African and African American Studies Faculty Balance Teaching, Advocating, and Surviving," http://netnebraska.org/article/news/1223649/unls-african-and-african-american-studies-faculty-balance-teaching-advocating, 18 June 2020; Photo by Allison Mollenkamp, NET News

LINCOLN POLICE VIOLENCE AGAINST PROTESTORS

…Danielle Conrad, executive director of the ACLU of Nebraska, said the organization is monitoring the responses by cities and counties all across the state to the protests.

What they saw in Lincoln and Omaha is disheartening, she said.

"To have a youth-led movement of so many crying out for justice be met with militarization and criminalization and pain and injury is a violation of their rights," Conrad said. "It's chilling and has no place in a working democracy."

Video of law enforcement using tear gas, rubber bullets and physical force against demonstrators both in Lincoln and across the country was watched by millions live on television and over the internet, echoes of a not-so-distant history of race relations in the U.S.

"This is nothing new," said Jeannette Jones, an associate professor of history and ethnic studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. "We've seen heavy-handed tactics being used on predominantly black protesters expressing their grief and rage at what was happening in America before."

In 1965, for example, Americans watched as Alabama state troopers beat and used tear gas on civil rights marchers outside Selma as they walked to Montgomery to rally for voting rights and against racial segregation.

The level of violence seen in Lincoln in late May does not rise to the level of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, Jones said, where water cannons, dogs, and officers on horseback were also used against demonstrators, but the goals of the state in deploying law enforcement with military-style gear and weapons appears the same.

"It is meant to quell protest, it is meant to silence protesters, or make them seem illegitimate, even in the case of clear racial injustice," she said…

Law enforcement officers stand at the entrance to the County-City Building on 30 May 2020 during a night of clashes between police and protesters.

Source: Chris Dunker, "Protesters describe being shot, gassed during Black Lives Matter rallies in Lincoln," https://journalstar.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/protesters-describe-being-shot-gassed-during-black-lives-matter-rallies/article_dadfbf6c-1649-54ad-8e43-67e48e174dcb.html, 21 June 2020, updated 30 July 2020; Photo by Justin Wan | Journal Star file photo

HISTORIC RELATIONS BETWEEN RACE AND MEDICINE

George Washington had false teeth for most of his life.

They were not made of wood — like the history books told us — but fashioned from ivory and from the teeth of Mount Vernon slaves.

He made the entry in his ledger on May 8, 1784: "to Negros for 9 teeth," a total of 6 pounds, 2 shillings.

"Think about how rich he was," Deirdre Cooper Owens says. "He had plantations. He had access to sugar. Think about the fact that his dentures were made from a slave who had healthy teeth."

Cooper Owens has spent her academic life thinking about and writing about the history of medicine and the way that history is linked to race and racism.

The professor is new to Nebraska — director of the Humanities in Medicine Program at UNL, one of only two black women in the country at the head of such a program.

She is a public speaker and storyteller and the author of *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender and the Origins of American Gynecology*.

She is working on a second book with a rich working title: *To Bite a Bullet: The Amazing Life of Harriet Tubman, A Disabled American Hero*.

We first talked in March about pandemics. The flu pandemic of 1918 and the pandemic we're living through now, one that has disproportionately affected black Americans.

I read an opinion piece she wrote, published by the Houston Chronicle, which traced the unjust medical treatment of blacks from the time of the yellow fever outbreak in 1793 to the spring of 2020.

"Why do African Americans fare so badly in the United States when it comes to health and disease?" she wrote. "Largely because there has not been a national effort to establish racism as a public health crisis."

I called her last week, to learn more about her field of research and what that meant for this moment in time. How it might help people understand a piece of the past that still causes hurt today.

She called it a hefty conversation to have. And then she began.

She talked about J. Marion Sims, considered the Father of Gynecology, and the surgeries he performed and perfected on female slaves without the use of anesthesia.

She researched his practices in her book — and those of physician Francois Marie Prevost and the enslaved women in Haiti and the United States who were the "experimental" subjects for some of the first cesarean sections.

"Many of the gynecological discoveries have largely been based on medical experiments on enslaved women.

"People say, 'Why do we have to talk about slavery?' That was so long ago. We weren't born yet. That has nothing to do with us.'"

And yet, it does.

"It had a hand in almost every industry and medical advance."

And it spawned a narrative of racial difference in medical treatment from Colonial times onward, a binary way of looking at black and white Americans.

Myths: Black people have thicker blood. Thicker skin. Black people don't feel pain the way white people do.

Cooper Owens points me in the direction of a 2016 study of medical students at the University of Virginia that confirmed that thinking still exists.

"These are people who got into one of the country's most elite medical schools and there was this unintentional embrace of black people being pathologically flawed, pathologically different."

Those attitudes translate into practice, the way black patients and their ailments are treated, symptoms not taken seriously, pain not properly treated.

There are real health disparities. Higher rates of heart disease and diabetes in African Americans, an alarmingly high rate of maternal death for black women.

"They literally rival the stats from the 19th century," Cooper Owens said.

And there is COVID-19.

Much like public health officials, she feared what the virus would mean for some segments of American society.

"We understand the social determinants of health. Poor people are going to be impacted, black people are going to be impacted."

Cooper Owens came to Nebraska from Queens College, CUNY. Her husband is still in Brooklyn until the end of the month.

"Many of the front-line workers you see in urban enclaves are black. Most of the people you see on the subway are black or brown."

Pollution is highest in cities. Density is high. Hospitals are underfunded in poor areas, training is lacking.

"When you start to think about the CNAs, the X-ray technicians, the custodians, the orderlies… they tend to be people of

Deirdre Cooper Owens, director of the Humanities in Medicine Program at UNL, wrote "Medical Bondage: Race, Gender and the Origins of American Gynecology" and is working on a second book.

color."

The same racial disparity showed up in Singapore, immigrants crowded into dormitories and falling ill with the coronavirus.

And in chicken factories and meatpacking plants across the Midwest, where many workers are also immigrants.

"You can see how it impacts other marginalized people."

Race changes the equation in so many areas of health care, she said.

In how we treat addiction. An opioid epidemic that largely affects white people garners compassion by lawmakers for substance abusers and money set aside for treatment and psychiatric care.

"But yet during the crack epidemic, these people were demonized. We did it the right way in the 21st century for opioids, but wouldn't it have been wonderful if we could have done that in the '80s and '90s?"

We need to look at all people through the same lens, she says. Regardless of skin color.

Look at the doctor in Ohio, she said, a state representative who questioned whether "colored people" were contracting COVID-19 at higher rates because of poor hygiene and lax hand-washing.

"The social determinants like poverty, lack of access to quality medical care, medical racism … are much more influential to poor health than say diet or high BMI (body mass index) percentages."

Black people aren't dying in this pandemic — or from any of a number of conditions — because they are somehow different.

"That's the old stand-by people give," the historian says. "It's a fiction. The difference is how people are treated."

Source: Cindy Lange-Kubick, "Cindy Lange-Kubick: An oath to do no harm and the reality of medical racism," https://journalstar.com/news/local/cindy-lange-kubick-an-oath-to-do-no-harm-and-the-reality-of-medical-racism/article_7f1c9165-5053-5a0f-b26d-5289282f7d66.html, 22 June 2020, updated 29 July 2020; Photo by Gwyneth Roberts, Journal Star

FOURTH OF JULY, COVID-19 STYLE

The sticky heat hung like a blanket, the fireworks tents bustled and the miniature explosives were picked, gathered, paid for and shuttled home at their usual clip. Sparking, sizzling fountains. Ashy snakes. Cheap little soldiers parachutes twirling in the air, at least one of them, without fail, getting stuck in the branches of a tree.

On the weekend in which America celebrates her 244th birthday, the July Fourth commemoration of its Declaration of Independence, at least the personal fireworks, shot off at the ends of driveways and in parking lots, seemed normal.

Little else did.

A coronavirus pandemic that waned a bit surged again in June, putting hospitals on edge or alert, canceling community celebrations and nixing concerts as all levels of government deploy different strategies on how to combat COVID-19's spread. An economy bustling along this winter has been rocked to the core with layoffs, furloughs and disappearing side gigs. Professional team sports remain — at best — a month away. College football is a coin-flip proposition. So, too, are high school sports. Pools that are open are full of social distance, less raucous than usual. And while most Nebraska parents appear able to send children back full time to school in August, the story is different in the Omaha Public Schools and much of the United States.

Coronavirus cases break daily and weekly records. The wearing of masks has become a pawn in ongoing culture wars between political groups. Then, the Memorial Day killing of George Floyd revived the long, painful, centuries-old conversation around personal and systemic racism in America, and the role the police play in enforcing laws that protest and reform organizations, like Black Lives Matter, say disproportionately harm communities of color. The weight of four hard months thus is compounded by the weight of 400 hard, painful years.

June 2020, filled to the brim with so much, felt so long and so hot, evoking memories of other difficult summers in American history. Like 1968, when race rallies and riots burned across the nation, while Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated two months apart. Or 1944, as Allied Forces continued a brutal, bloody advance across Europe against Nazi Germany. Or the uncompromising summers of the Great Depression and the Midwestern Dust Bowl. Or 1863, when the bloodiest battle of the Civil War, at Gettysburg, ended with more than 50,000 casualties and Union troops forcing Confederate soldiers to retreat on July Fourth. A well-known photo, taken by Timothy O'Sullivan of dead Union soldiers splayed across the Gettysburg battlefield, is named "A Harvest of Death."

It is hard not to feel, in a world shrunken to our screens by social media and the Internet, a sense of death around us.

"Economically, the disaster is large enough that it takes us back to the 1930s for a point of comparison," said Tim Borstelmann, modern world history professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. "It's huge, and what happens, of course, in times of crisis — in this case, a mega-health care crisis combined with an economic crisis and now sort of a racial crisis over the top of that — it provides the opportunity for change in ways people don't expect. Mostly, we all kind of live our lives expecting the next day will be like the previous one. When things really change fast, it's sort of a shock."…

That sense of collective American optimism — that fuels its robust, diverse, world-changing culture, from sports to movies to television to books to art to political ideas — can often seem boundless, even cocky, on the world stage, but it has been blanketed like summer humidity clings to flag-themed T-shirts. Borstelmann said the embedded individualism of the United States — less communal, he said, than any nation — can polarize Americans across a variety of fronts.

"The U.S. has always been at the extreme range of being the most individualistic of all modern cultures," said Borstelmann, who's written *Just Like Us: The American Struggle to Understand Foreigners* and *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality* in the last decade.

Borstelmann believes trust in government has declined over the last 50 years to the point where the nation's response to the coronavirus is almost atomized by locality…

This year is not like the last, or the one before it. But Borstelmann — whose wife, Lynn, is an assistant professor at the University of Nebraska Medical Center — is more encouraged than some by the nation's growing resiliency.

"Given the extraordinary pain being inflicted economically, politically, emotionally and psychologically by the pandemic, I'm guardedly optimistic," he said, noting that historians don't see any better into the future than anyone else.

Why?

Because Borstelmann sees the United States' broad diversity — of races, languages, perspectives, regions and political views — as an identity that differentiates it from other nations.

And the idea that all men are created equally — words embedded in Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence, even if executed for many years in ways untrue to their meaning — is a fast-held belief among Americans, he said. And the world at large sees it. The U.S., Borstelmann said, has roughly 85 million first- or second-generation immigrants.

"People gave up their lives elsewhere to come here because this is a place where they can make new and better lives," Borstelmann said. "And history shows they have, and their kids have after them have. Of all color, religions. The diversity of it is spectacular. They're walking advertisements for the U.S., to see people give up so much to be here."…

The fireworks tents and stands thus contain so many multitudes who have collected their miniature explosives in a bag, walked to their nearest patch of cement and, with an imperfect lighting device that will almost certainly fail at some point during the night, tried not to blow up a finger in pursuit of a few seconds of flash. And after the weekend closes, America will face the same distress and pain that makes 2020 so memorable. But Borstelmann sees an under-

lying strength and purpose.

"I don't want to sound Pollyannish — I don't think it's all puppies and rainbows going forward — but I think people believe, deeply, in this country that everybody should have equal chances and equal opportunity," Borstelmann said. "That's pretty deep."

Source: Sam McKewon, "A nation's birthday marked by a tug of war between distress and resiliency," https://www.omaha.com/news/local/a-nations-birthday-marked-by-a-tug-of-war-between-distress-and-resiliency/article_3891b43b-8a8b-57f8-b54f-2c254a6645ff.html, 4 July 2020, updated 5 July 2020

FOOTBALL IN A PANDEMIC

The snow began the night before Thanksgiving, and it fell softly on a nation weary from war.

Over the past 14 months, from the summer of 1917 to the fall of 1918, more than 100,000 men and women died fighting overseas. Thousands more were buried in the U.S., killed by the Spanish flu.

But when the sun rose on Nebraska the frosty morning of Nov. 28, 1918, the promise of a rare hopeful day lay ahead. Eleven days after the end of the Great War, after a morning of turkey lunches and holiday celebration, thousands wrapped themselves in scarves and topcoats and headed toward the edge of Lincoln to Nebraska Field…

How this game on Thanksgiving day came to be — how it kicked off just after World War I in the middle of a pandemic — is a small miracle. And the story is worth revisiting now, in this summer of 2020, because though the situation in front of college football appears incongruous and foreign, it's all actually happened once before.

After the outbreak of Spanish flu in the spring and summer of 1918, the conversation surrounding the return of sports split the country then, too. Not on social media but in courtrooms, boardrooms and locker rooms. Health directors cautioned against playing games, conferences debated if they should play or shut it down, universities worried about loss of revenues and scheduling.

A century later, America finds itself in a remarkably similar position. The college football world has spent months wringing its hands over what to do with the upcoming football season. The Ivy League announced last week the conference won't have any fall sports. The Big Ten and Pac-12 are moving to a conference-only schedule. Most of the sport is still waiting to see if COVID-19 cases continue to rise, as they have for more than a month.

Much has changed in the past century. The world is not in open war. This is not history exactly repeating itself.

Much is similar. And as we chase answers on what to do next, here's the story of what happened the only other time in history Nebraska found itself in this situation. Here's what football looks like in the face of a pandemic, and how it led to a hint of warmth on a cold, snowy Thanksgiving day.

* * *

When America entered World War I in 1917, life slowly began to change in the United States.

But sports continued.

Coached by John Heisman, Georgia Tech was named college football's national champion. The White Sox beat the Giants 4-2 to win the World Series. Boxing was still on the front pages of newspapers.

As the war rolled into the summer of 1918, though, it was unclear if that could be duplicated. The U.S. military was planning an offensive — called Plan 1919 — that it hoped would finish the war the following spring. The war department wanted as many healthy, young men as possible, and time spent training for football seemed futile.

"There were very few college-age men (in America) anyway," said Scott Stempson, a lecturer at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln who wrote *American Sports History* and teaches a course on the topic.

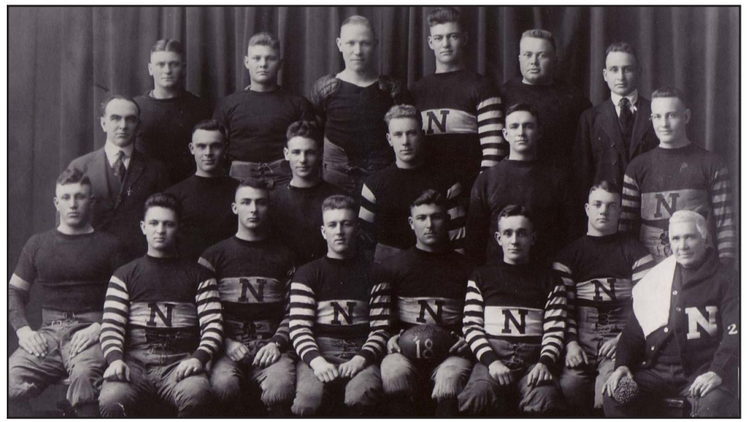
Stempson said the military became convinced football was a good way to train soldiers. So military bases put together football teams, and in the summer of 1918 offered to play college teams in the fall.

A second issue was growing. In May 1918, more than 100 soldiers at Camp Funston in Kansas contracted what would later be called the Spanish flu. It spread from army base to army base and into communities, landing in Nebraska by June.

By the end of 1918, at least 14,000 Omahans would contract the flu. At least 974 died. The Spanish flu pandemic is believed to have killed 500,000 Americans, and 50 million people worldwide. In six months, COVID-19 has infected more than 3.3 million Americans, and killed more than 130,000.

Sports reacted to the virus in 1918 by pulling the plug. All major golf and tennis championships were canceled. The virus was quelled briefly, but it reappeared in September at Camp Devens in Massachusetts. More than 10,000 soldiers contracted the Spanish flu, with almost 100 dying per day in the camp.

In September, the war department requested "no fall gridiron schedule" in 1918…



The 1918 Nebraska football squad poses for a team photo. The captain-elect of the team, Roscoe B. "Dusty" Rhodes, was killed in October while fighting with the 89th Division in France. News of his death made the papers of the morning of the Notre Dame game.

As campuses turned to autumn, as the flu killed young and old, as the Allies pushed further into German-occupied France, Nebraska hit the phones.

The country, they said, needs football.

A second breakout at Camp Funston quickly canceled the two-game series.

Iowa agreed to travel to Lincoln for the season opener, but days before kickoff, the army training corps ordered students in Iowa City to undergo a 21-day quarantine as Spanish flu cases rose…

Iowa beat Nebraska 12-0.

Two days later, Evangeline Pelton became the third student on campus to die from the Spanish flu.

Lincoln responded by closing campus. The state closed churches, schools, movie theaters and businesses. Parades were banned, as were large meetings and public gatherings…

In the first 10 days of October, 106 people died from the lung-clogging influenza in Omaha. Unlike COVID-19, the Spanish flu appeared to prominently impact those in their 20s and 30s. Young women contracted the flu while serving as volunteer nurses at the University of Nebraska. In Greeley Center, Nebraska, an outbreak of 200 cases killed four boys. At least 10 UNL students died in ensuing days after the Iowa game.

Despite that, football teams wanted to keep playing.

Though locally people knew of deaths from the virus, wartime censorship in Europe and hyper-awareness of war in the U.S. led Americans to think the problem was not as widespread as it was.

"More than likely, what you find is that people, including newspaper publishers, were far more concerned with anything and everything concerned with the war and dismissed anything else as competing with the war effort, including the Spanish flu or any other widespread sicknesses," said Thomas Berg, a former lecturer of military history at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. "Newspaper editors either kept the numbers of sick people out of their papers or buried the information on page 27 under the fold in small print next to an advertisement for dental creme."

Spain — neutral in World War I — was one of the few places to report accurate numbers, which is what led to the virus being named the Spanish flu, and why even as the virus killed between 3% and 5% of the world's population, there was an appetite for sport…

Source: Chris Heady, "Amid a war and pandemic, Nebraska gave Notre Dame all it could handle in 1918," https://omaha.com/sports/college/huskers/teams/football/amidst-a-war-and-pandemic-nebraska-gave-notre-dame-all-it-could-handle-in-1918/article_eda3b801-6dcd-57db-8f71-873a07df027e.html, 19 July 2020

ENSLAVED WOMEN AND MEDICAL ERASURE

This story is part of The Confederate Reckoning, a collaborative project of USA TODAY Network newsrooms across the South to critically examine the legacy of the Confederacy and its influence on systemic racism today.

Anarcha was at least 17 when the doctor started experimenting on her. The year before, she suffered terrible complications during a 72-hour labor that opened a hole between her bladder and vagina and left her incontinent.

The man who held Anarcha in bondage outside Montgomery sent her to Dr. J. Marion Sims sometime in 1845. She was one of at least seven enslaved women sent to Sims by white slaveholders. They had the same condition as Anarcha, known as a vesicovaginal fistula.

Sims wanted to find a way to address it. From 1845 to 1849, the enslaved women became experiments.

By Sims' own account, Anarcha underwent 30 operations as Sims tried different approaches to repairing the fistula. Another woman named Lucy took two to three months to recover from one of Sims' operations. Anesthesia was not in widespread use at this time, said Deirdre Cooper Owens, a professor of medical history at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and author of *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology*. Sims later wrote that "Lucy's agony was extreme" during one procedure.

These women could not say no. Neither Sims nor the white men who held them against their will showed any interest in their opinions. Cooper Owens said if the women protested, they "could get beaten, or they could get ignored."

"There is no consent between someone who's owned and Sims," she said. "He isn't talking to the enslaved people. He's talking to their owners."

Despite that, a statue of Sims unveiled in 1939 remains on the grounds of the Alabama Capitol in Montgomery. A bust of Sims also stands in Columbia, S.C. (New York City officials removed a statue of Sims in Manhattan in 2018.)

The experiments resulted in a procedure that Sims later performed on white women, becoming wealthy in the process.

Vesicovaginal fistula is not life-threatening. But it causes discomfort and can be embarrassing. Sims wrote in an 1852 paper "that a lady of keen sensibilities so afflicted, and excluded from all social enjoyment, would prefer death." The doctor went on to claim that one woman "absolutely pined away and died, in consequence of her extreme mortification on ascertaining she was hopelessly incurable."

A statue of Dr. J. Marion Sims is seen on the grounds of the Alabama Capitol, in Montgomery, Ala.

Cooper Owens calls Sims a "medical entrepreneur:" He named one of the tools developed to examine a woman's cervix a "Sims speculum."

"He was someone I liken to Mark Zuckerberg or Bill Gates or Oprah Winfrey," she said. "He was a person who knew how to market himself."

But white slaveholders didn't turn enslaved women over to Sims due to social niceties, Cooper Owens said. By repairing their reproductive organs, she said, Sims was ensuring that the white men who owned them had access to "really valuable assets:" Enslaved children, who the slaveholder raised or sold as he saw fit.

"It's a business agreement that he enters with them," she said. "It has nothing to do with them."

And it may have gone further than that. Cooper Owens's research found that one of the Black women Sims held gave birth to a daughter sometime in 1849. The father was white. It's not possible to further identify the man, but Cooper Owens said the incident showed a tremendous moral lapse by Sims, even by contemporary standards.

"During this time, he allowed this, or he allowed this white man if not himself to have access to her body," she said. "That goes against all ethics. That goes against the Hippocratic Oath."

Racism warped medicine as it did every American institution, and contributed to long-term public health issues that continue to affect Black Americans. In 1856, a physician named W.C. Daniell claimed that the breast milk of enslaved mothers was poisonous to their children and urged slaveowners to feed Black infants "sweet oil and molasses" instead. Most physicians of the time, including Sims, believed Black men and women didn't experience pain the way whites did.

Today Black Americans suffer higher rates of chronic diseases and higher rates of infant mortality while having less access to quality health care. Cooper Owens said the "structural dynamics of medical racism," which maintain those conditions, should concern Americans more.

"When we create historical boogeymen, we lose sight of other folks who were doing the same things as Sims before him, during his time period and afterward," she said.

Source: Brian Lyman, "Confederate monuments: J. Marion Sims, a doctor who experimented on enslaved women who could not consent," https://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/story/news/2020/07/30/j-marion-sims-performed-experiments-on-slaves-statue/5367070002/, 30 July 2020, updated 31 July 2020; Photo by Kim Chandler, AP

BIG TEN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

The Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor has announced its annual selection of faculty who will participate in the Big Ten Academic Leadership Program this year. Four of these faculty are in the College of Arts & Sciences.

- **Eve Brank**, Professor in the Department of Psychology and Director of the Center on Children, Families, and the Law
- **Deirdre Cooper Owens**, Associate Professor in the Department of History, Charles and Linda Wilson Professor in the History of Medicine, and Director of the Humanities in Medicine Program
- **Eileen Hebets**, Charles Bessey Professor in the School of Biological Sciences
- **Nick Pace**, Professor and Chair of the Department of Educational Administration
- **Susan Sheridan**, George Holmes University Professor in the Department of Educational Psychology, founding director of the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools, and associate dean for research and creative activity, College of Education and Human Sciences
- **Leen-Kiat Soh**, Professor in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering

Fellows will attend a series of virtual conferences and on-campus events throughout the academic year learning about leadership and a broad range of topics, including community engagement, diversity and inclusion, freedom of expression, challenging conversations, mental health, student success, and the social value of higher education.

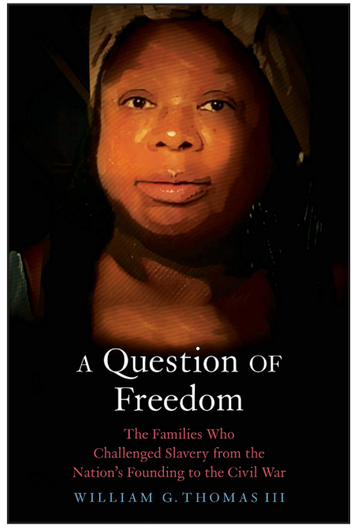
Learn more about the program and view past participants. Contact Judy Walker at judy.walker@unl.edu for more information about this leadership opportunity.

Sources: "Six selected for Big Ten Academic Leadership Program," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/six-selected-for-big-ten-academic-leadership-program/, 26 August 2020; https://cas.unl.edu/four-cas-faculty-selected-big-ten-academic-leadership-program, 26 August 2020

PUBLISHERS WEEKLY REVIEW OF A QUESTION OF FREEDOM

Thomas, a history professor at the University of Nebraska, debuts with a revelatory and fluidly written chronicle of attempts by enslaved families in Prince George's County, Md., to win their freedom through the courts. Many of these men and women were held at the Jesuit-owned White Marsh tobacco plantation, and profits derived from their labor—or from their sale to slaveholders in the deep South—helped to finance Georgetown University. In 1791, two men enslaved at White Marsh sued the Jesuits for their freedom, basing their argument on claims that they were descended from free women of color. Their lawsuits "opened the floodgates," Thomas writes, leading to "more than a thousand legal actions against hundreds of slaveholding families" in the county. He convincingly characterizes these "freedom suits" as "a public counterpart of the Underground Railroad" that forced a reckoning with the patchwork of laws supporting slavery. Moving profiles of Edward Queen, one of the original litigants, and Thomas Butler, whose family won their freedom suit against Supreme Court justice Gabriel Duvall, reclaim the humanity of slavery's victims, and Thomas's discovery that his own ancestors held Queen's relatives in bondage adds emotional and historical nuance. The result is an essential account of an overlooked chapter in the history of American slavery.

Source: "Nonfiction Book Review: A Question of Freedom: The Families Who Challenged Slavery from the Nation's Founding to the Civil War by William G. Thomas III," https://www.publishersweekly.com/978-0-300-23412-1



THE ART OF DISSENT REVIEWS, FILM FESTIVALS, AND AWARDS

Resistance can take many forms as these three documentaries from the virtual Newburyport Documentary Film Festival (18-24 Sept. 2020) demonstrate. Whether it's building a community out of a landfill, treating drug addiction with acupuncture, or struggling for years against a despotic regime, these stories inspire hope for those times when resistance seems futile…

Though it may take more than 20 years of peaceful activism, as well as imprisonment, torture, and the destruction of lives and careers, determined people can topple a tyrannical regime.

It looked like Czechoslovakia had achieved that in January 1968, when Alexander Dubček, first secretary of the Czech Communist Party, introduced "socialism with a human face." He ended censorship and other restrictions in what became known as the "Prague Spring," a brief renaissance of arts, culture, and free expression.

It ended in August when the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev sent in 650,000 troops and replaced Dubček with party hack Gustáv Husák, who introduced a ruthless policy of "normalization," repealing the reforms put in place by Dubček and instituting repressive measures. Many dissidents continued their nonviolent resistance for months until the police brutally crushed a demonstration in Prague in 1969 on the first anniversary of the invasion. It was to be the last such action for 20 years.

As James Dean Le Sueur shows in *The Art of Dissent*, his brisk account of 50 years of Czech history, the resistance was down but not out. An underground army of writers, academics, musicians, and other intellectuals sustained it, chief among them the internationally renowned playwright Václav Havel. He used his celebrity status to support and protect those who were persecuted and jailed.

But it was not enough clout to spare himself; he, too, was harassed by police and imprisoned. Nonetheless, Havel and his movement endured until they were able to launch the Velvet Revolution, in 1989. In 1990 as the Soviet empire crumbled and the Czech communist party was dissolved, Havel was elected president of a free, democratic Czechoslovakia.

Le Sueur relates with clarity and concision this chaotic era with interviews and rare archival footage, including clips from covert documentaries and film coverage of the invasion. Still, some notable figures are omitted, including the author Milan Kundera and such Czech New Wave filmmakers as Miloš Forman, Věra Chytilová, and Jiří Menzel (who died earlier this month, at 82).

Le Sueur wisely continues the story beyond the jubilation of initial victory to the troubles that lay ahead — the partition into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, in 1993; the chaotic and often criminal privatization of state property; and the familiar rise of right-wing, populist leaders. Havel and his fellow artists had the passion to help win the country's freedom, Le Sueur suggests, but they did not have the political skills to preserve it.

While thunderous percussion plays a classical Bond theme, Welsh star Shirley Bassey rises to the heavens on an enormous crane-suspended girder, so that dangling in the air she can sing about evil Goldfinger, whose

plans of destroying the world can only be stopped by heroic James Bond. To a local person, the locations of this 1968 clip are surprisingly familiar: it was actually filmed on the construction site of the Federal Assembly, which was just emerging at the top end of Václavské náměstí.

The clip was being filmed for the international music series *Europarty*. The English Moody Blues, who played their breakthrough psychedelic piece "Nights in White Satin" on Charles Bridge, performed in the program along with Shirley Bassey. The documentary film *The Art of Dissent*, directed by History Department Chair at the University of Nebraska James Dean Le Sueur, begins with excerpts from this now forgotten show. Le Sueur is currently doing a tour of international festivals with the film, so that he may also show it with co-producer Czech TV next year.

In the documentary, the Prague Spring is immediately followed by a Prague winter. As soon as *Europarty* was finished (the film database lists the fateful numerals 21.8.1968 as its "date of release"), Soviet tanks rolled into Czechoslovakia. And half a year later, Jan Palach immolated himself

at the exact spot where Shirley Bassey had sung her next hit "What My Now Love" in front of the National Museum. For the new documentary, this is the springboard for a remarkably apt analysis of the emergence, tribulation, and final victory of our dissent.

Archivist Martin Bouda helped the American director find a legion of to date unknown visual materials, on which he could base his feature-length probe into the exposed side of normalisation in Czechoslovakia: it is a portrait of people who, like Marta Kubišová (who also appeared in *Europarty*), decided that, despite the country's occupation, it was necessary to believe in the James Bonds and not in the Goldfingers. Timothy Garton Ash, Edward Lucas, and Jacques Rupnik also agree in their contemporary reminiscences in front of the camera that the peaceful resistance of several hundred people, which turned into national protest against the regime twenty long years later, is something by which the world should still be inspired today.

At the same time, James Dean Le Sueur deliberately follows a musical thread. After all, had it not been for the Plastic People of the Universe, whose natural desire to play music their way had been defended by Havel since the late '70s, Czechoslovak dissent would never have been as colorful: the expelled professors and priests or forbidden authors found themselves on the same ship with musicians whose music would have been too daring even for the "moody bluesmen."

It sounds like a fairy tale. Until one looks at the events in Belarus: aren't members of different social and cultural groups also meeting in Minsk streets to sing together in peace as a token of criticism of Lukashenko's regime? And, like our dissidents, they await for someone to beat them up if not even directly arrest them for doing so.

Incidentally, Shirley Bassey sang one more song in *Europarty*, which Le Sueur's documentary surprisingly left out. It was called "Big Spender" and in it the singer allowed herself to be escorted across Národní třída and in the direction of Schirdingovský palace by a jocular policeman. Here, twenty one years later, his much less jovial colleagues brutally dispersed a student demonstration, after which even those who had until then been too afraid to go out in the streets, let alone sing in them, finally lost their patience with the regime.

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The Art of Dissent, a feature documentary film by historian James Le Sueur, explores the role of artistic activism during Czechoslovakia's communist takeover and nonviolent transition from communist power. It was screened as a free drive-in film at 7:30 p.m. 30 September 2020 at Nebraska Innovation Campus, 2021 Transformation Drive, in the northwest corner of the A lot.

Le Sueur is the Samuel Clark Waugh Distinguished Professor of International Relations and the chair of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's history department. His film recently premiered online at the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival and the Newburyport Documentary Festival.

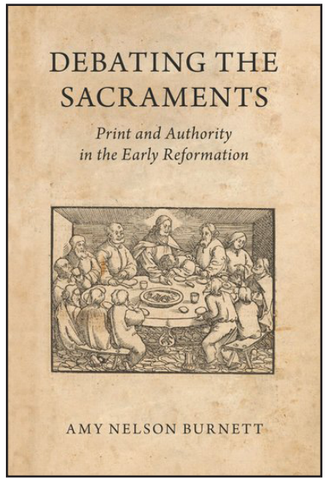
Le Sueur completed his doctorate in intellectual and cultural history at the University of Chicago in 1996. He joined the Nebraska faculty in 2001 and teaches courses on world intellectual and cultural history, France, Algeria, terrorism, radical Islam, 20th-century decolonization, and 20th-century international relations…

Sources:
Reviews: Peter Keough, "In Focus: In Newburyport, films that take the path of most resistance," https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/09/09/arts/focus-newburyport-films-that-take-path-most-resistance, 9 September 2020; Jan H. Vitvar, translated by Alena Jirásek, "Truth and Love / With Bond or With Goldfinger?" https://www.respekt.cz/tydenik/2020/37/s-bondem-nebo-goldfingerem, 9 September 2020; Heidi Uhing | Research and Economic Development, "Le Sueur's documentary featured at Innovation Campus screening," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/le-sueurs-documentary-featured-at-innovation-campus-screening/, 22 September 2020

Info: Brandon McDermott | NET News, "UNL Film Looks At Communist Czechoslovakia Before Velvet Revolution," http://netnebraska.org/article/news/1191798/unl-film-looks-communist-czechoslovakia-velvet-revolution, 8 October 2019; https://www.theartofdissentfilm.com/; https://twitter.com/ArtDissent; https://www.facebook.com/theartofdissentfilm; https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/the-art-of-dissent/; Alyssa Amen | NUtech Ventures, "Nebraska film shares global message on dissent, civil society," https://www.nutechventures.org/husker-film-shares-global-message-on-dissent-civil-society/, 15 July 2020; https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/nebraska-film-shares-global-message-on-dissent-civil-society/; https://vimeo.com/showcase/7407461

FACULTY NOTES

Columbia University Press published **Dr. Tim Borstelmann**'s newest book in Spring 2020. *Just Like Us: The American Struggle to Understand Foreigners* explores how Americans, across the full sweep of their history, have wrestled with how much people they encounter from elsewhere – immigrants, refugees, visitors, and those in other countries – are similar to themselves. He won the UNL College of Arts and Sciences Honors Humanities Faculty of the Year Award, and delivered one of the Nebraska Lectures as well as invited talks at Southern Methodist University, the University of California-Irvine, and the UNL Law School. His recent interview for a podcast on U.S. relations with South Africa can be found on the BackStory website. Borstelmann continues his efforts to spread the gospel of history beyond the Department, teaching extensively in the University Honors Program and for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.



Dr. Amy Nelson Burnett spent last summer doing research at the Herzog-August-Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, Germany. This past fall she gave papers at a symposium on "Ulrich Zwingli and the Swiss Reformation" at Calvin University and at the annual meeting of the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference in St. Louis and published three articles on the inner-Protestant debate concerning the Lord's Supper, the topic of her 2019 book, *Debating the Sacraments: Print and Authority in the Early Reformation*. She is now beginning work on a major new project that examines the evolution of the correspondence network that linked humanists and Protestant reformers throughout Switzerland and South Germany. Her study will be based on a database that contains over 20,000 letters written in the first half of the sixteenth century. Burnett received a Maude Hammond Fling Fellowship from UNL's Research Council for the summer of 2020, which will allow her to compare the Swiss/South German network with that centered on Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchthon in Wittenberg. She will begin analyzing these networks this coming academic year as a Solmsen Fellow at the Institute for Humanities Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and she has received a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship to continue work on the project through the end of 2021.

Dr. Parks Coble's primary research focus for 2019-2020 was completion of his book manuscript, *The Collapse of Chiang Kai-shek's China: Hyperinflation and Its Consequences, 1944-1949*. Much of the year was spent writing the final two chapters yielding a complete draft of the manuscript. Plans for a brief research trip to the Hoover Institution Archives at Stanford University were derailed by COVID-19 which have left the archives closed as of this writing. Although Coble continues to be an Associate-in-Research at the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University, Harvard libraries have been closed by the virus and all activities of the Fairbank Center are virtual only. Perhaps the biggest disappointment has been the suspension of Coble's ongoing research relationship with the History Faculty and Graduate Students at Fudan University in Shanghai, China. The virus as brought academic trips to China and much of the research activity in the history field there to a halt for the foreseeable future. Despite this Coble expected to send the manuscript off to a potential publisher by the end of the summer 2020.

One long-standing conference volume is finally being published as a book, *Living and Working in War-time China* by the University of Hawaii Press. Edited by Wen-hsin Yeh of University of California at Berkley and Brett Sheehan of the University of Southern California, it will contain Coble's chapter "Preserving the Value of *fabi* during Nationalist China's War with Japan."

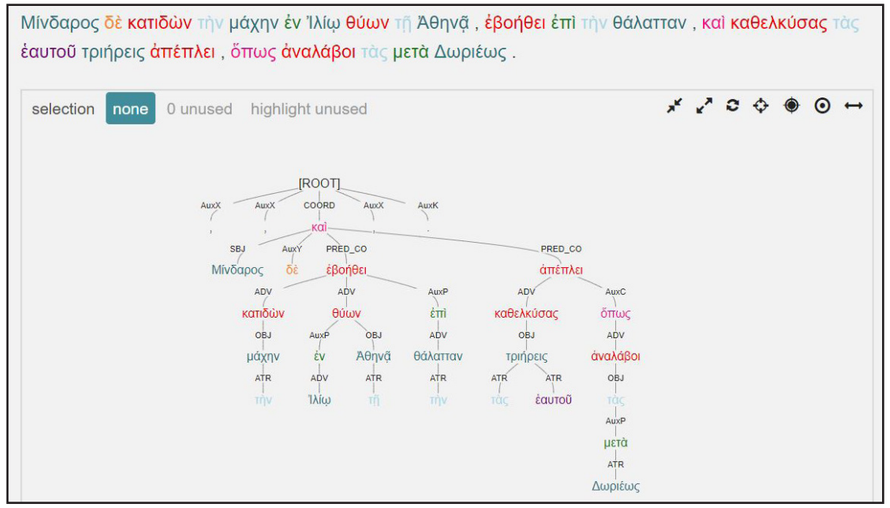
Coble attended the Midwest Asian Studies Conference held in October 2019 at Michigan State University where he presented a paper "70 years on: reflections on the 70th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Revolution." In January Coble attended the American Historical Association's annual meeting in New York City where he also joined the Conference on Asian History, an affiliate of the AHA. Coble was scheduled to be a discussant for a panel at the Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference to be held in Boston in March 2020 but the conference was canceled by COVID-19.

In the fall semester of 2019 Coble had one of his most rewarding teaching experiences of his four decades at Nebraska. He taught a freshman honor's seminar at the Robert Knoll Honors Residence Hall. Capped at 20 students the class was primarily discussion with incoming honors students. The environment in the Knolls Hall is unusual in that virtually all of the students lived in the building. Attendance was almost universal and honors students all seemed to have done the reading. The class dealt with 20th century China.

The spring semester brought perhaps the greatest challenge of Coble's teaching career. Never having done any online teaching in his career he (along with the rest of the faculty) found themselves in mid-semester having to completely convert their classes to online. After a few intense workshops in online teaching, he completed the semester.

Dr. Bedross Der Matossian had a very productive year. He published a new article titled "The Development of Armeno-Turkish (*Hayatar T'rk'erēn*) in the 19th Century Ottoman Empire: Marking and Crossing Ethnoreligous Boundaries," *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* (2019) 1-34. His new edited volume *The First Republic of Armenia (1918-1920) on its Centenary: Politics, Gender, and Diplomacy* (California: The Press California State University, Fresno, 2020) has just been published. He is currently finishing his manuscript *From Revolution to Violence: The Massacres of*

Adana to be published by Stanford University Press in 2021.



Dr. Vanessa B. Gorman's work this year has been dominated by her long-term Greek treebanking project: she makes syntactic trees of ancient Greek Prose sentences, and then uses those trees to examine questions of authorship among the ancient Greek historians (example to the right). This year she hit the half-million token milestone and published a data paper announcing this repository of open access material (https://openhumanitiesdata.metajnl.com/articles/10.5334/johd.13/), and Gorman gave several presentations – both domestic and international – focused on the construction and use of Greek trees. She have also began developing a fully open-access, on-line (or flipped) class on beginning Greek language that follows the principle that we should use all modern tools and avoid useless memorization of dumb stuff (https://vgorman1.github.io/Greek-Language-Class/). This class is about half developed, funded in part by a grant from the UNL Canter for Transformative Teaching. It should be functional be the end of summer 2020, with a tentative plan to teach it as Accelerated Beginning Greek in Spring 2021.

Within the department, Gorman began her third stint as Undergraduate Chair, and has been working particularly on the department's upcoming Academic Program Review and on the challenge of converting our department's teaching to align more with the available digital tools and to increase distance education offerings.

Margaret D. Jacobs is in the second year of her Andrew Carnegie Fellowship for her project, "Does the United States Need a Truth and Reconciliation Commission?" She traveled to New Zealand, Canada, and Australia in 2019-2020 to learn more about how those nations have been reckoning with and redressing past histories of human rights violations against Indigenous peoples.

Jacobs co-founded with journalist Kevin Abourezk (Rosebud Sioux) a multimedia project, Reconciliation Rising (https://www.reconciliationrising.org), to showcase the lives and work of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people 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.

Jacobs and Abourezk launched a podcast and are collaborating on a film about the repatriation of land to American Indian nations from non-Indian individuals, organizations, and communities. Jacobs is incorporating much of this material into her book on truth and reconciliation, tentatively titled "After One Hundred Winters."

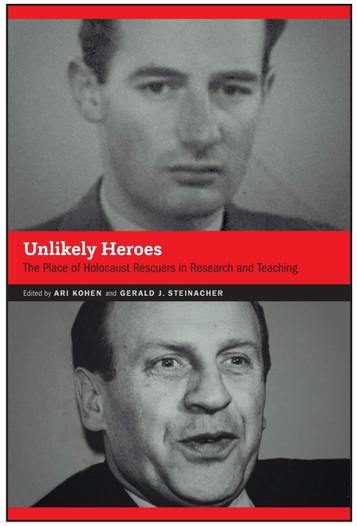
Since 2018, Jacobs has been co-directing with Liz Lorang of UNL Libraries the Genoa Indian School Digital Reconciliation Project, which aims to make government records of the boarding school more accessible to descendants and to promote greater awareness and discussion of Indian boarding schools in American history. The project is funded by two major grants from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

Jacobs also was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in October 2019. She was invited to give a speech at the induction ceremony on behalf of the new members in the Arts and Humanities (https://www.amacad.org/news/2019-induction-ceremony).

Carole Levin published the article, "Scholarship on Queen Elizabeth and Tudor Queens Over Half a Century: A Personal View" in the 50th anniversary issue of the *Sixteenth Century Journal* in 2019. A special issue of the journal *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* she edited came out in

June 2020. Her own essay in the collection is co-authored with C. J. Kracl, who graduated with a B.A. in History with Distinction from UNL in May 2019. There are also essays by Cassandra Auble, Ph.D. candidate at the University of West Virginia, who received both her B.A. and M.A. in History from UNL, and Alicia Meyer, who received both her B.A. and M.A. in English and Medieval and Renaissance Studies from UNL as well. Levin's review of the musical SIX, about the wives of Henry VIII, is forthcoming in the Early Modern Women Journal.

Gerald J. Steinacher continued to work on his next major monograph, *Forgive and Forget: The Vatican and the Nazi War Crime Trials 1945-1955*. In 2019 he published *Unlikely Heroes: The Place of Holocaust Rescuers in Research and Teaching*, which is the first volume in a new series on Contemporary Holocaust Studies jointly edited by him and Prof. Ari Kohen. Volume two of the series will be out in the fall of 2020 under the title *Antisemitism: From the 1930s to Today*. In the summer of 2019 Steinacher was a Visiting Scholar at the Australian National University in Canberra. During this stay he was working on a large comparative study on the increase of antisemitism in Europe, Australia, and the U.S. for an edited volume on racism published in Routledge's Approaches to History series. Steinacher was recently awarded a 2021 Senior Research Fellowship at the renowned Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies.



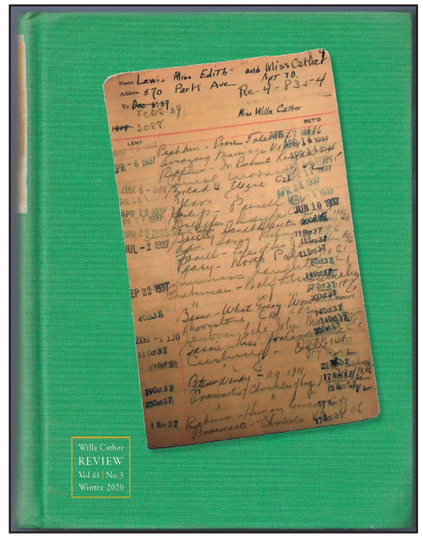
GRADUATE STUDENT NOTES

Baligh Ben Taleb has held two short-term research fellowships at Pennsylvania Historical Society (Fall 2019) and the American Philosophical Society (Spring 2020). He has also published a journal article entitled, "On the Difficulty of Reckoning with Settler Colonialisms: Transnational and Comparative Perspectives" in the *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* and a book review in the *Great Plains Quarterly*. Along the way, he completed an essential segment of the UNL Future Faculty Mentorship Program with Harvard History Professor, Philip J. Deloria.

Madelina Homberger Cordia completed her first year of Ph.D. coursework in May 2020. She is currently forming her committee and revising her summer research plans to adhere to the global shift to social distancing in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. She had a number of paper and panel proposals accepted at conferences this year, all on topics related to her research on the Bracero Program, an agricultural guest worker program between the United States and Mexico. While the Rocky Mountain Council for Latin American Studies conference in Las Cruces, New Mexico and the Rawley Conference on UNL's campus cancelled this year, Homberger Cordia looks forward to presenting at both the Pacific-Coast Branch and the regular American Historical Society's upcoming conferences in Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington, respectively. She will present her new research project that focuses on women and travel writing in twentieth-century Mexico at the (postponed) Gender and Gender Equity Conference in Lincoln in the fall.

Homberger Cordia's research plans to visit the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico City to begin tentative dissertation research has been delayed, but in order to help facilitate that travel when it is possible to do so safely, she was awarded the Maslowski Travel Award from the Department of History as well as the Albert J. Beveridge Grant for Research in the Western Hemisphere from the AHA. Once it is feasible, she plans on spending some time immersed in the archives. She is also looking forward to serving as the President of the History Graduate Students Association next year.

Donna Devlin completed the third year of her Ph.D. program in May 2020. She continued her work with The National Willa Cather Center in Red Cloud, Nebraska, during the summer 2019 season, serving as a tour guide. Her first published article appeared in the Winter 2020 issue (Vol. 61, No. 3, pages 13-19) of the *Willa Cather Review*, entitled "A Pioneering Tale of a Different Sort: Annie Sadilek Pavelka and Sexual Assault." It can be found online at https://www.willacather.org/system/files/idxdocs/willacather.newsletter.winter.2020.final2b_3-5-20.pdf. This article details the discovery of archival and legal documents which highlight a previously unknown experience of sexual assault for Annie Sadilek Pavelka, Cather's prototype for her fictional character, Antonia Shimerda, in her 1918 novel *My Ántonia*. For the 2019-2020 school year, Donna received the Dov Ospovat Memorial Award for her graduate paper entitled "'Saintly' Pioneers and the 'Disruption of an Entire Neighborhood': Sexual Coercion and Legal Manipulation on the Kansas Plains;" she also received the Louis Max Meyer Fellowship, a Graduate Studies Department Fellowship, and an Albert J. Beveridge Research Grant from the American Historical Association. During the 2020-2021 school year, Donna plans to take her comprehensive exams in August, serve as a graduate research assistant for Dr. Katrina Jagodinsky, and teach for the Department of History in the spring as an instructor.



This past year, **Elodie Galeazzi** completed her second year of Ph.D. coursework. She advanced her research on black media in North Omaha in the post-civil rights era and started developing digital components to her project. Galeazzi was also the co-chair of the annual James A. Rawley Conference in the Humanities. The 2020 Rawley team developed an innovative conference theme – *TIME: Trailblazers, Innovations, Movements, Epochs* – and creative outreach strategies. Galeazzi created and developed the official website of the conference and prepared visa documentation for international applicants.

Throughout the year, Galeazzi was also working in the International Student and Scholar Office where she assisted new incoming international students and developed student retention strategies amid COVID-19.

This summer, Galeazzi received the Addison E. Sheldon Research Fellowship. She also joined the Center for Transformative Teaching Advisory Board as a GSA representative. For the coming year, Galeazzi was elected as History GSA representative and will continue to work as co-chair of the Rawley Conference.

William Kelly has completed his MA in history with certification in Nineteenth-Century Studies this past spring. Throughout the preceding academic year, Kelly continued his work in the University Archives. He completed the organization of the Beverley Deepe Keever Collection in the early fall. Later, Kelly discovered an original poem penned by a sixteen-year old Willa Cather in 1890 while tying up loose ends in the Charles E. Cather Archives. The artifact sheds more light on Cather's sexual and gender identity during her teenage years. Kelly's finding was covered in a February article by the UNL Libraries.

Kelly was also the chair of the 2020 Rawley Conference. With the intended broad theme of T.*I.M.E.: Trailblazers, Innovations, Movements, Epochs*, the conference sought particularly to revisit, rethink, and remember the 100-year anniversary of the women's suffrage movement. Alas, the conference was forced into cancelation due to the novel coronavirus. Even so, Kelly was part of a Rawley organizing duo that raised a considerable sum of financial support, received numerous qualified applications from around the world, planned for a renowned keynote speaker, and fortified an already steady foundation upon which future Rawley Conferences can thrive.

Come fall 2020, Kelly will enter UNL's PhD program under the same department and continue studying under Dr. William Thomas. His current research on the freedom suits of enslaved persons in antebellum United States will take on a digital approach to diversify its conveyance to the public.

Kenneth Knotts completed his fifth 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.

In August 2019, Knotts successfully completed his Prospectus Defense. In the Fall of 2019, 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 2020, Knotts taught History 262, the History of Modern Russia, at UNL. He simultaneously taught

History of the United States to 1865 at UNO. Like so many others, Knotts began teaching both of these classes in the Spring as "in-person courses," when the COVID-19 Pandemic struck, and then made the transition to fully on-line courses in both cases, to allow students to successfully complete the courses.

In March 2020, Knotts was scheduled to present a paper entitled "Women's Airforce Service Pilots of World War Two: A Long Overdue Salute," at the Missouri Valley History Conference in Omaha. Unfortunately, that conference was canceled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Nonetheless, the Society for Military History recognized Knotts's paper as "Honorable Mention for Best Graduate Paper" at that conference. Later in March, Knotts was awarded the Homze Travel Research Award, with which he plans to conduct research at the Sioux City, Iowa, Railway Museum after COVID travel restrictions allow. In June 2020, Knotts taught History of the United States Since 1865 as a fully on-line course at UNO.

In the Fall of 2020, Knotts will teach History 324, History of the Cold War, at UNL, as well as History of the United States to 1865, at UNO. Knotts is scheduled to teach both these courses as Split Synchronous versions, combining in-person student learning with simultaneous on-line variants provided to those students who complete on-line courses from home.

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.

During the summer of 2019 **Sean Scanlon** traveled to three states to conduct research for his dissertation on U.S.-Israeli relations at the Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and Ronald Reagan presidential libraries. Upon returning to Lincoln, he taught HIST 110: American History to 1877 during the Fall semester of 2019 and began work on writing his dissertation. During the spring of 2020, he continued working on his dissertation and taught two courses, HIST 110 and HIST 112: History of the U.S. Present. During the Summer of 2020, Scanlon worked as a teaching assistant for an online course in the Department of Classics and Religious Studies and completed several chapters of his dissertation. During the 2020-2021 academic year, he will teach three courses: in the Fall he will teach a course on the history of U.S. involvement in World War II for the University of Nebraska Omaha, and in the Spring he will teach HIST 112 and HIST 111: American History Since 1877 at UNL. He intends to complete and defend his dissertation in 2021.

Ann Vlock completed her M. A. degree this spring and has been admitted into the Ph.D. program. She has been expanding her research on women who participated in the Populist reform movement of the 1880s and 1890s. She originally focused on Luna Kellie of Nebraska, but is in the process of adding other women editors of Nebraska and Kansas to her research. Dr. Jeff Wells, Chair and Associate Professor of History at the University of Nebraska-Kearney, asked Ann to participate on a panel on Populism at the Missouri Valley History Conference. Vlock's proposal was accepted for this conference (slated for March, 2020) and is entitled "'Who Would be Free, Themselves must Strike the Blow': The New Woman, the Populist Movement, and the Reform Activism of Ada Coleman." Vlock's proposal on female reformers of the 1890s, "More Than a Job: Gender, Journalism and Gilded Age Reform on the Nebraska Great Plains," was accepted by the Midwestern History Conference (slated for May, 2020). Due to COVID-19, these conferences did not take place, but hopefully will next year.

IMPACT OF MASLOWSKI FUNDS ON GRADUATE STUDENTS

Fourteen graduate students in the Department of History have been able to take their graduate education further because of the Peter Maslowski Graduate Student Support Fund.

A new report outlines the award's history, value, and recipients and shares four stories.

"Emeritus Professor Peter Maslowski was a legend on campus," professor and department chair James Le Sueur said in the report, "and, when he retired, we wanted to honor his contribution to our department. It is one of the most important foundation accounts we have dedicated to helping our graduate students achieve distinction."

Established in 2013, the award supports fellowships, assistantships, travel, and other expenses for graduate students.

Emily Wendell (right) gained access to documents in Mexico City crucial to her portfolio research.

"It was an honor to receive such a generous award," she said.

A trip to Ireland expanded Christy Hyman's (left) network and increased access to resources.

"Without that trip, I would never have shared the generative discussions about my work to make it better," she said.

Harrouna Malgouri of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (below) plans to pay it forward.

"I will always remember this form of altruism and plan to replicate it back home," he said.

Source: "How students have been impacted by the Maslowski graduate fund," https://history.unl.edu/how-students-have-been-impacted-maslowski-graduate-fund, 22 April 2020

ALUMNUS IN THE NEWS: MIKAL ECKSTROM

Researchers at the University of Nebraska's Center for Great Plains Studies talked about new research on black homesteaders in the Great Plains during the February Paul A. Olson Great Plains Lecture at 3:30 p.m. 19 February 2020.

African Americans successfully homesteaded in all of the Great Plains states. Although few in comparison with the multitudes of white settlers, black people, against steep odds, created homes, farms, and a society which were all their own. About 70% of them settled in clusters or "colonies," the most significant of which were: Nicodemus, Kansas; DeWitty, Nebraska; Dearfield, Colorado; Sully County, South Dakota; Empire, Wyoming; and Blackdom, New Mexico. Others were independent homesteaders, filing on

land not near black colonies. They faced even more severe challenges, but many persisted and succeeded.

Richard Edwards, the Center's director, and Mikal Eckstrom, postdoctoral researcher and Nebraska history alumnus, spoke on the topic at the Center, 1155 Q St. Their project, funded by the National Park Service, seeks to bring to life a history that was nearly forgotten. Deanda Johnson, with the National Park Service, and Jeannette Jones, associate professor of history and ethnic studies at Nebraska, also discussed their research during the event.

The free public talk was part of an interdisciplinary lecture series from the Center for Great Plains Studies on various Great Plains topics. Learn more at https://www.unl.edu/plains.

"It is a joy to be able to announce new projects that will produce vibrant humanities programs and resources for the reopening of our cultural centers and educational institutions," he said.

Great Plains Studies

Scholars from the Center for Great Plains Studies received $75,000 in support for a traveling exhibition, titled, "Staking Their Claim: Black Homesteaders and the Promise of Land in the Great Plains."

Project co-directors Richard Edwards, the center's director, and Mikal Eckstrom, a postdoctoral researcher at the center, will develop the exhibition, which will feature photographs of black homesteaders on the Great Plains. The exhibition will be shown in museums throughout the region. "This project extends the center's eight-year study of homesteading," Edwards said. "Before the Great Migration, there was a smaller migration of African-Americans to the Great Plains to claim land. We want to illustrate their lives through photographs."

Homesteading was a central feature of the Euro-American, African-American and immigrant settlement of the Great Plains. On May 20, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act, which offered settlers 160 acres of free public land. Settlers had to pay a small processing fee, live on the claim for five years and fulfill some other requirements to obtain the land title.

Several thousand African-Americans successfully homesteaded in the region and claimed roughly 650,000 acres of prairie land.

"The exhibition seeks to engage the public with this important and complicated history to help Americans better understand our shared past," Eckstrom said.

For more information on homesteading and the center's work, visit https://www.unl.edu/plains/homesteading-research.

University of Nebraska–Lincoln research projects that focus on Walt Whitman and black homesteaders recently earned funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The awards were part of $22.2 million in new grants for 224 humanities projects across the United States recently announced by the federal agency.

Jon Parrish Peede, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, said the projects exemplify the power of the humanities to educate, enrich and enlighten.

Moses Speese family in Custer County, Nebraska

Sources: "New research on black homesteading to be presented Feb. 19," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/new-research-on-black-homesteading-to-be-presented-feb-19/, 11 February 2020; Photo from Solomon Butcher | Library of Congress; "Eckstrom, Edwards earn NEH grant for black homesteaders project," https://cas.unl.edu/eckstrom-edwards-earn-neh-grant-black-homesteaders-project, 10 April 2020; "Whitman Archive, black homesteading research projects earn NEH funding," https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/whitman-archive-black-homesteading-research-projects-earn-neh-funding/, 20 April 2020

CAS ALUMNI MASTER: CHARLES WILSON

Alumnus Charles Wilson was selected to represent the College of Arts and Sciences for the Nebraska Alumni Association's 2020 class of Alumni Masters. Alumni who have shown great promise, success, and leadership in their fields return to campus during the annual Alumni Masters Week – postponed this year – to share their experiences and knowledge with students and be recognized by the university.

After earning his undergraduate degree in 1960 – majoring in chemistry, English, and history – he completed medical school at Northwestern and specialty training in cardiology at the Mayo Clinic. He also served as a medical officer in an army field hospital during the Vietnam War.

Wilson was a leader in health care in Nebraska during a 40-year career, which included co-founding the Nebraska Heart Institute and the Lincoln Cardiac Transplant Program. He also served as chair of the Lincoln Community Health Endowment.

Passionate about higher education, he was elected to three terms on the University of Nebraska Board of Regents and served as chair of the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. He helped found the Humanities in Medicine program at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (housed in the Department of History) and University of Nebraska Medical Center with an endowment for student scholarships and speakers focused on the intersection of medicine and the humanities. He has served on the Dean's Alumni Advisory Council in the college for four years.

Alumni Masters Week is sponsored by the Nebraska Alumni Association, the Student Alumni Association, and the Chancellor's Office.

Source: "Wilson selected as 2020 CAS Alumni Master," https://cas.unl.edu/wilson-selected-2020-cas-alumni-master, 31 March 2020

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