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SPECIAL ISSUE
CLASS PARTICIPATION

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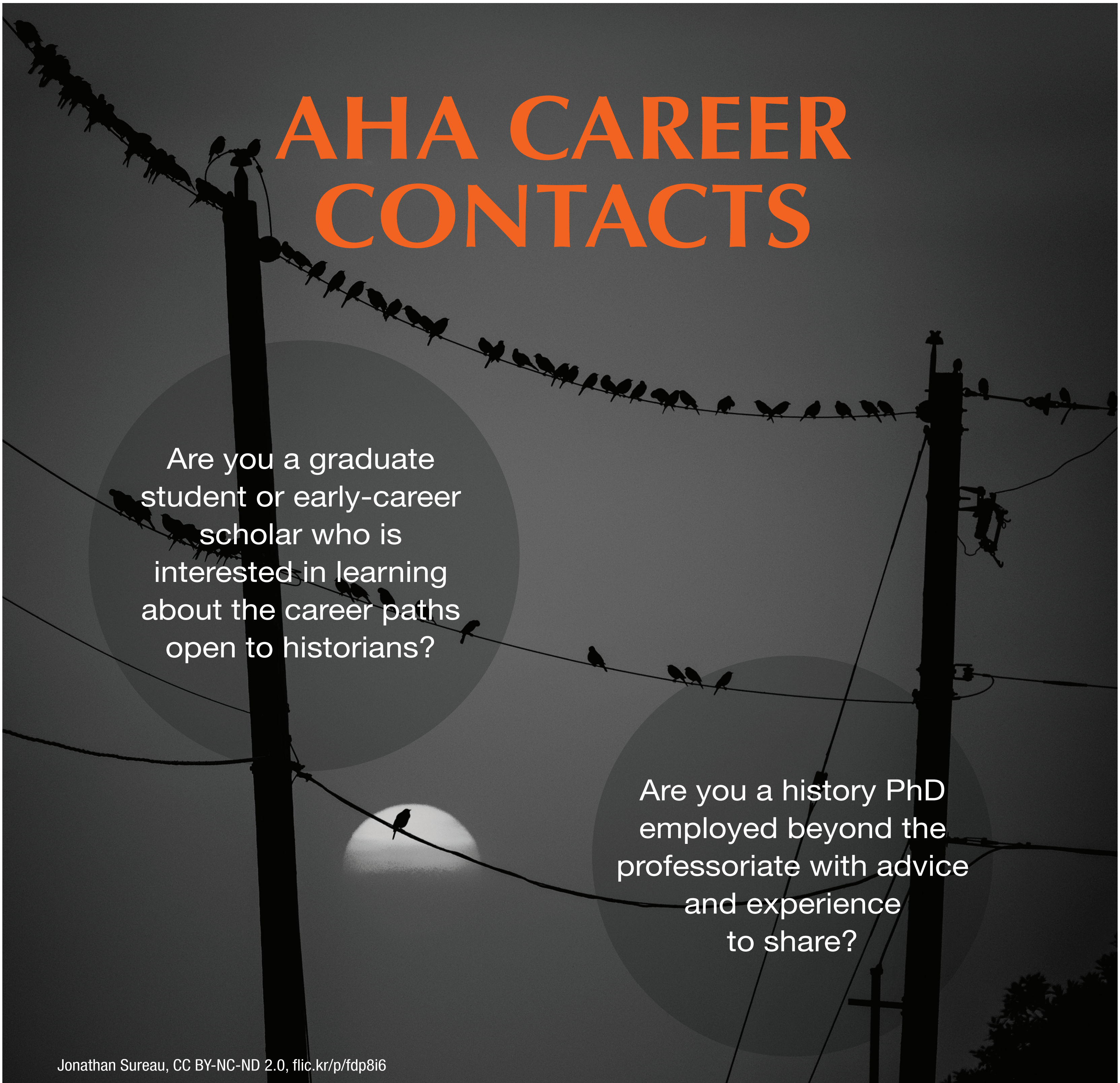

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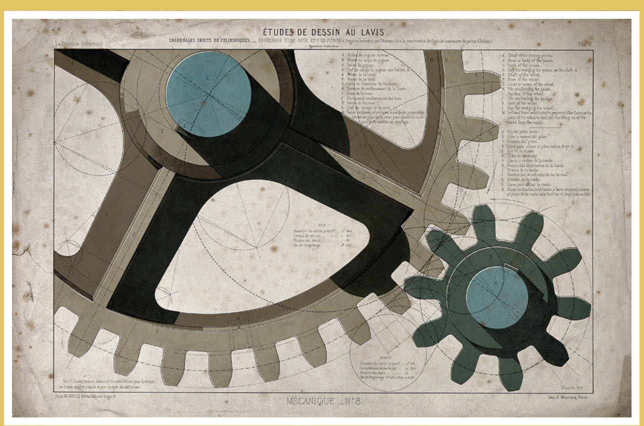
Questions and feedback about the program should be directed to Dylan Ruediger, Career Diversity Coordinator, druediger@historians.org

FEATURES



ON THE COVER

What's the best way to represent "class participation" visually? We rejected the idea of featuring a large class full of students raising their hands. It was a cliché, and not all kinds of participation include speaking aloud. So we chose an engineering schematic from the early 20th century, reasoning that student participation is essential to a well-oiled classroom. The four authors in our special section attest to this principle.

Cover image: "Engineering: Large Cogs Meshing Together . . ."/Wellcome Images via Wikimedia Commons

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ALLISON MILLER

TOWNHOUSE NOTES

One Take on Class Participation

My lifelong aversion to being graded on anything didn't serve me in my teaching career. It wasn't simply that grading written work required intense bursts of critical thinking, which I was told should take no more than 20 minutes per research paper and even less time for bluebook exams. It was also that I couldn't understand what students were saying and why they thought as they did without immersing myself in their worldview, as captured in the words on the page. This took time, and a great deal of reading inside the grain.

But this wasn't how most people I knew graded. There seemed to be a governing principle that you looked for ways to take "points" off. Docking papers one-third of a letter grade for each day late seemed harsh, but it was de rigueur. A common policy was to mark down for "unexcused" absences (those not accompanied by written documentation, which for some colleagues included memorial service programs in the case of family deaths). One syllabus threatened to fail any paper whose pages weren't stapled together.

These policies all rewarded behavior that came naturally to those colleagues who were good at school when they had been students. When I thought about how I would have responded to these rules when I was a student—smart but also struggling with my grades—I knew they would have struck me as arrogant and patronizing.

The same apprehension came with grading class participation. I'd read pedagogy about student-centered teaching, but its descriptions of magical students who blossomed under charismatic tutelage fell short of reality. Student engagement was essential to student learning, but the equation of engagement with talking in class (or even in small groups) seemed wrongheaded. Not only would grading class participation penalize the reticent, it would treat a quiet student the same way it would treat an absent student. Additionally, keeping track of the quality and quantity of student contributions interrupted the flow of discussion, for me and for them. (There was also corruption: class participation grades could be quietly inflated at term's end to give justice to students who wrote good papers and tested well but weren't noisy.) Like other policies, class participation requirements were all stick and no carrot.

But encouraging students to participate for a grade, and then grading their efforts fairly, is something most teachers must figure out how to do. Emotionally engaged students learn more and learn it better. The four authors in our special section on class participation (as well as Mary Beth Norton, in her first AHA presidential column) have hit on strategies to ensure this, and their contributions as a whole convey not only the practical but also the idealistic, including the thrill of witnessing student learning.

Perspectives has published articles on class participation before. In "Should Class Participation Be Graded?" (November 2009), Bonnie M. Miller weighed the issue from students' point of view as well as teachers', urging the latter to consider "providing alternatives to traditional ways of measuring participation that acknowledge different personality and learning styles." In that spirit, I hope this special section serves as a starting point for people whose job is to communicate history.

Allison Miller is editor of Perspectives. *She tweets @Cliopticon.*

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TO THE EDITOR

I received the October issue of *Perspectives on History* and noted the article on declining enrollments in history courses ("Declining Enrollments in History Courses: A Follow-Up Report").

I taught European history for 36 years. Since retirement, 15 years ago, I teach in a volunteer program called Veritas, for students over age 55. I never have a problem with small enrollments. On the contrary, there is a waiting list.

In my opinion, the problem you mention is that now teachers bore their students with statistics instead of telling them exciting stories. History has become past sociology. That's one of the reasons I retired at age 62.

WILLIAM SCHRADER
Tennessee Technological University (emeritus)

TO THE EDITOR

Congratulations and many thanks to Mark Grimsley and to Lauren N. Haslem and Jennifer L. Foray for their illuminating essays on mental health and the academic world ("The 'Third Resource'" and "A Mind of One's Own," November 2017)—a matter of great concern not merely for historians but for all professions.

ROSS W. BEALES JR.
College of the Holy Cross (emeritus)

TO THE EDITOR

I read "A Mind of One's Own: Promoting Mental Health among Grad Students" (November 2017) with interest. What strikes me powerfully as I look back on my own graduate education is that the attitudes and behaviors conducive to good mental health in graduate school are not the careerist ones that many graduate programs now promote.

Recent discussions of graduate education in history have emphasized the goals of getting students to finish their PhDs quickly and of cultivating career-minded behavior from the moment they set foot on campus. Legitimate concerns underlie both emphases, and certainly, those of us who were in graduate school 20 years ago might have benefited from being more worldly-wise. But encouraging graduate students to think in careerist ways and focus intensively on careerist goals carries a price; this outlook can dampen the joy of learning, discourage exploration and innovation, make every assignment a high-stakes endeavor, and undermine peer relationships. It is easier to dodge anxiety and depression if one fully embraces the opportunities of the present and does not try too hard to predict or master an uncertain future.

Sometimes, too, the careerist approach is at odds with developing a meaningful career. When I spoke on career panels at NYU and Columbia this fall, I was chagrined to discover that some humanities graduate students today do almost no teaching. Funding packages that do not rely on teaching assistantships were introduced to help graduate students concentrate on research and reduce their time to degree, but how can PhD candidates commit to academic careers when they don't even know whether they like teaching or are good at it?

One of the best supports of mental health, in graduate school as elsewhere, is finding meaning and satisfaction in the present. Building significant work experience—whether in teaching, publishing, librarianship, museums, or other fields—into graduate programs is vital to promoting graduate students' sense of capability and self-worth. Graduate students are adults; they need the dignity of contributing to society even as they pursue advanced studies. Valuing intellectual exploration—even if not of immediate utility—and building strong relationships, outside one's field as well as in it, also support mental health. It is easy to understand why graduate students and their mentors feel the need for a disciplined, careerist approach to graduate studies, but too much strategy and careerism in graduate school may not ultimately be the best strategy for life.

DARCY R. FRYER
The Brearley School

CORRECTION

An In Memoriam essay for Thomas Haskell (November 2017) misstated the co-author of one of Haskell's articles. The co-author's name is Sanford Levinson, not Sandor Levinson. *Perspectives* regrets the error.

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MARY BETH NORTON

DISCUSSION AND DEBATE

What Works in Undergraduate Teaching

My first presidential column is a contribution to this month's examination of undergraduate teaching techniques; I applaud the innovative ideas our colleagues present in this issue. Throughout my career, I have primarily taught undergraduates, both in my first teaching job at the University of Connecticut and then at Cornell University (although I "inherited" my first graduate student in the fall of 1971, when I moved to Cornell). Our department's graduate program has always been quite small, and I have trained relatively few graduate students. On the other hand, I have taught many undergraduates in both lecture courses and seminars.

I have become particularly fond of teaching the seminars that our department aims at freshmen or sophomores, especially those who are or intend to become history majors. The goal is to introduce students to analyzing primary sources and to writing short (10- to 12-page) research papers, in part to prepare them for the more demanding seminar we require for graduation, for which they need to write a longer (25- to 30-page) research paper based on primary materials. Over the years, I have steadily decreased the amount of reading and increased the amount of writing in my lower-division seminars.

In fact, I now structure the syllabus in such a way that the students spend the last month of the semester writing and rewriting their papers—and reading one another's drafts and exchanging critiques among themselves. It is one thing when a professor complains that a concept or a sentence is unclear. It is entirely another when students convey the same message to their fellow writers. I read and critique all the drafts too, and I require students to share their critiques with me, so I can assess how seriously everyone took the assignment. I devote two classes to meetings in which they discuss their drafts in small groups. It helps that I state on the syllabus that the quality of their comments on others' papers will factor into their grade for course participation, which counts for half the credit in the class; the other half is composed of their own papers. This method has greatly improved the quality of the papers I receive at the end of the semester. (A colleague who adopted essentially the same syllabus for her seminar in a very different field last year reported that it had the same effect for her as well.) In the fall 2017 iteration of this seminar, I asked the students at the last class to reflect on what they had learned, in addition to the factual content of their papers. One student blurted out that she now realized how "awful" were the papers she had turned in for grades in other history courses. Another student chimed in, "Revise, revise!" and I smiled to see a key lesson learned.

> It is one thing when a professor complains that a concept is unclear. It is another when students convey the same message to their peers.

As for lecture courses, I have discovered that there is nothing like a good debate to stimulate student engagement and learning. But what to debate? Not hot-button issues that solely or primarily draw on students' preconceived notions about historical values or events, but rather topics framed in a way that leads them to develop their own interpretations of primary or secondary sources.

I have used debates in two ways, but I always structure them in the same manner. I ask the students a question at the beginning of the class and tell them there will be a debate. (Sometimes I warn them in advance that the class will begin with that question, so they can think about their response.) Everyone has to answer; I go around the room systematically eliciting a statement from each. Students can say they agree with someone else; they do

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not have to give different replies. But I record all answers on the blackboard, sometimes requesting clarification, with checks for additions to the same response. I vary the amount of time I spend on this phase, depending on the size of the class, aiming for 10 or 15 minutes to put all the options on the board if it is a standard 50-minute class.

After all students are on record, I call for discussion of the various options, asking students to defend their answers, some of which usually contradict other responses. After another 10 or 15 minutes, I call for a vote by show of hands. In this round, students vote for three options, so they don't vote only for the ideas they originally proposed. I erase the lowest vote-getters from the board and call for another round of discussions. Those with surviving answers now try to recruit those whose responses have disappeared or try to persuade others to change their minds. Again, after 10 or 15 minutes, I call for a vote. This time, students can vote for two answers. The debate proceeds in the same manner, with a reduction to only one vote each, until just two options are left, at which point students become quite heated and specific in their support for one or the other. By the end of the class there is a "winner," and the students have surprised themselves with how much they collectively know about the subject in question.

> I state on the syllabus that the quality of students' comments on others' papers will factor into their grade for course participation.

Not every topic lends itself to this sort of approach, but when there is no obvious "right" response, it works well. Currently, I co-teach a course on the history of exploration, and in that context questions that foster debate relate to explorers' assumptions and mistakes.

For example, the students read Peter Mancall's book about Henry Hudson, *Fatal Journey*. I ask them: what was Hudson's fatal mistake? Their answers, all drawn from Mancall's account, have included hoarding food; deciding to winter in Hudson's Bay rather than returning to England; demoting a key crewman; behaving too autocratically or, conversely, failing to control his men adequately; favoring certain crew members; and seeking the Northwest Passage too single-mindedly. I don't care how these debates end (and they tend to end differently in every class). The crucial idea is for the students to gain better knowledge of the material and to develop skills in assessing evidence as well as learning to argue in support of their positions.

> After a debate, the students have surprised themselves with how much they know about the subject.

I have used the same debate idea in a different context as well—as a final wrap-up discussion in a course. I ask the students in advance to come to class prepared to answer this question: what was the single most important event or development covered in the course this semester, and why? I then run a debate as described above. This technique helps students review for the final exam in classes as diverse as American women's history and the American Revolution. The students are surprised by how much they have learned during the semester. And again, there is no "right" answer; sometimes they surprise me by how the vote turns out. Once a visiting father sat in on such a class and at the end came up to tell me how impressed he was with the students' knowledge of the subject. I was too. P

Mary Beth Norton is president of the AHA.

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JAMES GROSSMAN

STILL WATERS

When the AHA "Does Nothing"

Readers of this column are accustomed to commentary on AHA activities across an array of landscapes. Our staff of 19, in collaboration with Council and committees, accomplishes far more than such small numbers suggest. These efforts make up the usual fodder for my monthly combination of claims and calls to action.

This month we'll try something a bit different. Instead of trumpeting and drumming, I will turn to silences. When does the AHA choose to remain on the sidelines? When do we stay quiet, even in the face of members clamoring for action, reporters seeking juicy quotes, and supporters wondering why we aren't crowing or asking for money?

> If a substantial number of members think something—anything—is important, we take that *level* of interest seriously.

In the interest of walking our career diversity talk about using bullet points, I offer what might be described as a memo to members, beginning with a list of the questions we put to ourselves whenever we feel compelled to scratch a civic itch:

- Is this consistent with our mission?
- Is this one or two people speaking frequently or truly a clamor? How many are members?
- Is this more complicated than it seems?
- Is this the right time to say or do something?
- What is the right venue for AHA commentary?
- Is AHA involvement prudent?

Mission

Much that is important to human existence lies outside the scope of the AHA's charge. Whether it's disaster relief or a more chronic venue of human suffering, a crisis of democracy somewhere in the world or misguided policy making at home, the AHA receives requests to weigh in and, on occasion, to "do something." We must draw lines, the first of which marks a boundary around the very purpose of the Association.

Our members pay dues with an expectation that we will put them to purposes publicly stated. The inside cover of this magazine refers to promoting "historical research, study, and education"; our web page adds "the professional work of historians and the critical role of historical thinking in public life." Laying aside for a moment my imperial maxim that "everything has a history," these references mark a territory whose boundaries are ambiguous but structurally significant and sound. A committee of the AHA Council recently revised our *Guiding Principles on Taking a Public Stance* (historians.org/public-stance), which provides more detail on this articulation of scope; AHA president Mary Beth Norton, who chaired that committee, will expand on these principles in an upcoming column for *Perspectives*.

Clamor

AHA staff members monitor news sources and social media assiduously, and although it might not always be apparent, I read all of my e-mail. When we receive e-mail or see "the AHA should do something" posts in social media, we take note and initiate conversations within staff and Council. A good idea is a good idea, whether it comes from one person or one hundred.

Conversely, if a substantial number of members think something—anything—is important, we take that *level* of interest seriously. Routine staff duties in working include noting the number of likes and retweets on social media suggestions. More than once, a Council member has received a message or a handful of e-mails referring to activity, conversation, or outcry on social media, when, in fact, the number of individuals posting remains quite small: in the single digits or, in some cases, from only one or two actual members.

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And membership matters. Petitions, open letters, and Twitter threads signify more when the signatories are members, or at the very least historians. We cannot reply to all correspondence, but we do reply to all mail—paper and electronic—from AHA members. Not infrequently, we receive a request or a complaint from a historian whose membership expired years or even decades prior or who was never a member at all. Taking action requires the time and resources for careful research: the AHA never speaks or acts without sufficient evidence, work we could not accomplish without member dues.

> If the AHA cannot figure out exactly what is happening, we might initiate queries, but we will not make statements.

The Facts

In her May 2014 presidential column, "The AHA as Bully Pulpit," Jan Goldstein referred to "confirmation of basic facts" as "only the beginning. Interpretation is, as we historians well know, a more elusive and contentious art." But even the facts are not always clear when it comes to what Professor Goldstein called the "outrage of the week."

Interpretation is even more slippery. If the AHA cannot figure out exactly what is happening, we might initiate queries, but we will not make statements. Even with facts in hand, we also must achieve some clarity as to explanations and implications before we reach conclusions.

Professor Goldstein's column offers good examples of how ambiguity and complexity can induce caution. To draw on a more recent example, we are not likely to issue a statement based on a single newspaper story or series of social media posts unless we can find appropriate documentation. When it comes to making public statements or taking action, the AHA maintains a high bar for facts, narrative, and interpretation.

Timing

Recently, in *Fortnightly News*, the AHA highlighted an upcoming House of Representatives vote on taxing tuition waivers for graduate students. We did not speak out with equal force on the Senate debate that immediately followed, because the timing was wrong: the Senate bill did not include the relevant clause, and the right time—the most *effective* time—to act is when the Senate is actually making a decision. We have been urged to take stands on legislation that our sources told us would never make it out of committee or even be taken seriously by the relevant committee. To keep our requests for member action to a minimum, we must ask whether an intervention should take place now or later. Often the answer is later, and in some cases, "later" thankfully becomes "never."

Timing matters. We do not participate in Giving Tuesday, for instance, because we see no reason why that particular date is meaningful. When we solicit donations, our case for contributions is based on what we have accomplished, not on the fundraising equivalent of a greeting card holiday (well-meaning though it may be). Our timing is driven by our work.

Venue

Intervention is not only a matter of *whether* and *when*, but also *where*. Twitter? Facebook? Letter? Public statement? These are case-by-case decisions. Some situations require a letter from the executive director or president; others, a public statement. Our general policy is that we do not respond to tweets. Serious conversation on controversial issues (as opposed to announcements, references, questions, promotions, and the like) cannot take place in 280-character bursts. Nor do we comment on other blogs, which would entail our staff spending days scanning the Internet—writing and debating here, there, and everywhere. When something on social media seems to merit a response and is posted by a member, we will generally either respond privately by e-mail or offer a public commentary on *AHA Today*.

Prudence

Sometimes it's important for an organization to "go on record," even when leverage is minimal. But it's also important to exercise caution, even if taking a stand buttresses one's sense of virtue. Speaking out can cause harm. There are times when experts in a particular field advise us that weighing in on a controversy in another country will be counterproductive, that the *American* Historical Association risks being mischaracterized as either an official agency or a troublesome outsider. In some cases, decision makers—and many of our members—are more likely to listen to a voice that has a reputation for careful judgment. Advocacy is not merely about conscience, but is also about politics—even diplomacy. Our disciplinary mandate to take the long view applies not only to our study of the past, but also to our plans for the future. P

James Grossman is executive director of the AHA. He tweets @JimGrossmanAHA.

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ELIZABETH ELLIOTT

STREET VIEW

Photographing Spanish Harlem in the 1980s

In the late 1980s, documentary photographer Joseph Rodriguez immersed himself in New York's Spanish Harlem community and captured intimate moments from residents' everyday lives—from sidewalk salsa dancing to stairwell socializing. The unexpected success of the project led to a May 1990 cover story for *National Geographic*, a 1994 Smithsonian book publication, and a parade of exhibitions at art houses and museums. Now, powerHouse Books is re-releasing the series, including previously unseen images, in *Spanish Harlem: El Barrio in the '80s*.

Rodriguez's photographs were (and remain) a rare window into a place that is considerably less famous than its adjoining neighbor to the west, the historically African American neighborhood of Harlem. Between the 1920s and 1940s, thousands of Puerto Ricans began settling in the area, also known as East Harlem or El Barrio, transforming it into a cultural hub. Rodriguez was raised in Brooklyn but frequently visited his uncle's candy store in El Barrio as a child. In *Spanish Harlem*, he writes about being part of a spirited community where "people on the block would come by to play dominoes, listen to the music of Puente, Palmieri, Colón, drink beer and talk about baseball."

"When I was growing up in New York City," Rodriguez told *Perspectives*, "I didn't see any Puerto Rican American photographers like myself.

Rodriguez spent much of his early career trying to persuade public media outlets to embrace Hispanic perspectives.

Everyone was one color." He was determined to change all that: "What I was hungry for, when I was getting into my career, was to speak about a community I was close to, from a different spin." Rodriguez was frustrated that the newspapers seemed to mention El Barrio only to report crime. "When you grow up feeling like you're the Other, which is what you're told, when you're a young person," he says, "it's like salmon trying to swim upriver."

Rodriguez spent much of his early career trying to persuade public media outlets to embrace Hispanic perspectives. In early 1990, the Spanish Harlem photographs played a role in an infamous shake-up at *National Geographic*. Shortly before the cover story featuring his photographs was published, the magazine's then-editor, Bill Garrett, was ousted for attempting to drive the publication in a more contemporary direction—recent issues had featured stories on AIDS, the Exxon Valdez oil tanker spill, and postwar Vietnam. The old guard "felt they should not be doing stories about poverty in America," recalls Rodriguez. The story ran nevertheless, and Rodriguez subsequently visited the National Museum of American Art (now called the Smithsonian American Art Museum) in Washington, DC, to gently complain, "I don't see us represented here." It worked—the museum printed his photographs as part of its *American Scene* series.

This new publication is a book of documentary photography, but its creator thinks a lot like a historian. "I tend to work on long, long, long, long projects," Rodriguez said. "I'm kind of different that way. A lot of other photographers tend to go in and photograph and leave and go on to the next thing." He acknowledged being influenced by other photojournalists who "changed the arc of the country with their photographs," such as Dorothea Lange. "That's the way I was trained in school: where's the issue, where's the problem, let's document the problem so we can hopefully talk about the problem and change the discourse."

Rodriguez was first assigned to shoot Spanish Harlem as a student, and his familiarity with the community helped him build trust with

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his subjects. Over time, families opened up to him and welcomed him into their homes. "Little by little, a peek here, a shot there," as the book describes, he amassed his portfolio. After years of searching, the photographer recently reconnected with the individuals pictured in the book's cover image, the Rodriguez family (no relation). He remembers feeling nervous during the reunion when he first showed *Spanish Harlem* to the father of the family, who is depicted in other images selling drugs. "There's always anxiety about how subjects are going to react," said Rodriguez, but he was surprised by the man's immediate embrace of the work. "He said it was important to him to show his children and grandchildren how it was back then. Because the kids are different; they didn't follow his road." "What I believe in and what I honor is the word redemption, which for me is also part of history," he added. "People can change. It's the American way."

Why revisit the collection now? "It just so happens that the '80s are popular in America again," Rodriguez joked, referring to the current surge of nostalgia for '80s fashion and films in popular culture. But more seriously, he described how he and powerHouse Books sensed that the book would resonate with the public during a time when America is beginning to come to grips with its rapidly expanding Hispanic population. He recalled, "I was telling the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the Smithsonian . . . 'Hey, guys! We're growing!' And now we are where we are. I saw that coming back in '85."

The photos in *Spanish Harlem* have no captions, which some readers might find vexing. But Rodriguez emphasized that this was a purposeful decision, given that the images have been so widely viewed and taught. "This time we wanted to just let the photos speak for themselves," he said. "The project was really about me being a Latino, trying to look at a community that was basically reflecting who and what I was about, and seeing if we could document that, to just put down in New York history that we existed. Now it *is* part of New York history." P

Elizabeth Elliott is program associate at the AHA.

All images courtesy of Joseph Rodriguez and powerHouse Books. As in the book, they are reprinted here without captions.

> "When I was growing up in New York City, I didn't see any Puerto Rican American photographers like myself."

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AHA Awards

★★★

Know a great historian who deserves to be recognized?

Every year the AHA honors distinguished historical work with dozens of awards and prizes for books, articles, teaching, mentoring, public history, digital history, and more.

Nominations are due May 15 2018

Learn more about past winners, how to submit a nomination, and how you can support prize endowments at historians.org/prizes.

KRITIKA AGARWAL

INSIDE HIGHER ED

College-in-Prison Programs Flourish, but for How Long?

The very first credit-bearing course toward a bachelor's degree that Tyrone Harvey Muhammad took—Islamic Architecture—ignited a new passion. "It started my love for history," he says. But Muhammad wasn't a typical undergraduate; he was incarcerated at the Danville Correctional Center in Danville, Illinois, and the course was offered through a college-in-prison program called the Education Justice Project (EJP).

Muhammad had taken credits toward an associate degree at the prison but quickly exhausted all his educational options. He took general education courses and received certifications in horticulture, cosmetology, and substance abuse education, among others. "After I completed just about everything I could," he says, "they told me that I couldn't take any more classes." So when the EJP came along in 2006, he was one of the first to enroll.

Muhammad is one among many students who have earned transfer credits, or even bachelor's degrees, while incarcerated. The Bard Prison Initiative (BPI), for example, one of the most successful and well-known college-in-prison programs, has awarded nearly 450 Bard College degrees since it began in 1999. Another program, the Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison in New York State, has awarded over 500 college degrees in less than 20 years. As BPI's associate director of national programs, Jessica Neptune, says, there is tremendous interest today in teaching in prisons and in ensuring that courses inside are credit-bearing. Historians have been at the forefront of initiating, teaching in, and preserving these programs. But despite success stories and enthusiasm from students and teachers alike, many college-in-prison programs today are on shaky ground. Concerns about funding, as well as renewed focus on "law and order" by some of the nation's top officials, have put many programs on the defensive.

The idea of providing education to incarcerated people is as old as the nation itself, writes Ellen Lagemann, a scholar of the history of education and a former dean at Harvard, in her book *Liberating Minds: The Case for College in Prison* (2016). The first "penitentiary house" in the United States, the Walnut Street jail in Philadelphia, offered "instruction in morals and religion through Bible reading," and its model was "quickly copied in other states," she writes. In the early to mid-20th century, prison reformers succeeded in extending education to the incarcerated, but students often resented these programs for being mandatory. In 1965, the Higher Education Act made incarcerated people eligible for Pell grants, but as Neptune explains, the 1971 Attica uprising was "the turning point in gaining concessions around education" in prison. Hundreds of college-in-prison programs subsequently emerged and flourished across the country. In some states, like New York, nearly every prison had a college program by the 1990s.

> Historians have been at the forefront of initiating, teaching in, and preserving these programs.

In 1994, however, President Bill Clinton signed an omnibus crime bill, making those incarcerated in state and federal prisons ineligible for Pell grants. States followed by further blocking access to funds through regional programs. The sudden withdrawal of public funding proved a death knell for college-in-prison programs around the country; with ordinary citizens struggling to pay for college, the case for college-in-prison simply could not pass political muster. By 2005, according to American Public Media, "just 12 college programs, in 12 prisons, remained."

Yet people in prison and on the outside started taking matters into their own hands. In 1998, for example, a group of incarcerated men at Sing Sing Correctional Facility in Ossining, New York, set out to create a college program after theirs shut down due to lack of public funding. They wrote

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to incarcerated women at the nearby Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, who had, with local volunteers, set up a degree-granting program involving 13 area colleges. The women wrote back with a playbook, and eventually, with the help of local religious and academic volunteers, Sing Sing's men founded Hudson Link. Today, the organization enrolls 588 students and operates in six correctional facilities. Its executive director, Sean Pica, was a member of its first graduating class, and over 50 percent of the program's staff now consists of formerly incarcerated men and women.

Around the same time, Max Kenner, a history major at Bard College, organized fellow student volunteers to offer tutoring in local prisons. By 2001, largely due to the efforts of Kenner and other Bard students, tutoring had become a fully accredited college program, and by 2005, Bard had awarded its first degrees to incarcerated students. The initiative now leads a consortium of about a dozen colleges throughout the country focused on teaching liberal arts in prison.

Several other college-in-prison programs were initiated by humanists, including historians. Rebecca Ginsburg, co-founder of the EJP at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, says that this might be because faculty in humanities disciplines often show significant interest in teaching in or about prison. After meeting at a new faculty orientation at the University of Mississippi, Otis Pickett (a historian) and Patrick Alexander (an English professor) started the Prison to College Pipeline program at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman. (Pickett is now at Mississippi College.) Margaret Garb, a historian at Washington University in St. Louis, had followed the work of BPI and eventually co-founded the Washington University Prison Education Program. In each instance, the founders were interested in doing something about the problem of mass incarceration and looked for institutional resources to help.

But teaching in prison comes with challenges. Stephanie Rolph (Millsaps Coll.), who teaches history at the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility for women as part of the Prison to College Pipeline, explains that at prisons, teachers must abide by stringent rules. Often, teachers can't carry big bags, cellphones, or electronic devices; there is usually no access to audio-visual equipment; and prison guards usually review all material for content when it enters or leaves the prison. Students might not have access to computers, the Internet, or sometimes even books.

History instruction, which necessitates research and the evaluation of sources, is more difficult than might be expected. Lila McDowell, development director of Hudson Link, cautions those interested in college-in-prison programs to think about what it means to teach incarcerated students to evaluate sources when most don't even have access to Google. The BPI is able to make the college's library catalog and JSTOR available on prison servers, but programs with fewer resources often rely on low-tech scanning and printing of primary and secondary source materials.

Students in a Bard Prison Initiative classroom.
China Jorrin

High-quality research from inside the system is indeed possible. While she was still incarcerated, Michelle Jones wrote a 2015 *Perspectives* article describing the work of the Indiana Women's Prison History Project. Filtering their requests through undergraduate and graduate students on the outside, the incarcerated women accessed sources from the Indianapolis Public Library and the Indiana State Archives to produce original scholarship. Jones, who was released from prison earlier this year, is now a PhD student in New York University's American studies program. (Kelsey Kauffman, volunteer director of the Indiana program, is this year's AHA Nancy Lyman Roelker Mentorship Award winner.)

Despite challenges, incarcerated students earn high praise from instructors. Most programs require students to have GEDs or high school diplomas, and to be within a few years of release. "The students are some of the best I've ever had," says Rolph. And they bring experiences to the classroom that are often absent in a university setting. She recalls a particular session in which students read *Jubilee*, a 1966 novel by Mississippi author Margaret Walker chronicling the life of a mixed-race woman from enslavement to freedom. "I'd just sort of prepared to do my regular spiel on Reconstruction and Redemption," says Rolph, but the students started making connections between their lives and the novel. "They became really animated and started relaying a lot of specific experiences they'd had with prison administrators and the general lack of respect that they confront on a daily basis, and the lack of humanity that is extended to them." The students, Rolph said, empathized with the struggles of the novel's protagonist.

Despite the success of college-in-prison programs (largely measured by calculating recidivism rates among

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graduates), there is much uncertainty surrounding the future of college-in-prison programs. In 2016, the Obama administration breathed new life into the idea of college-in-prison by launching the Second Chance Pell pilot program, which selected 68 colleges and universities around the country to provide educational access to incarcerated people. The future of Second Chance Pell under the Trump administration, however, remains unclear.

"The headiest day in the past 20 years" for anyone working in the field, says Ginsburg, was the announcement of Second Chance Pell. "Now no one knows what's going to happen." Many college-in-prison programs that were operating before the announcement of Second Chance Pell did not apply for the grants and continue to rely on private and university funds. The EJP recently received a $1 million grant from the Mellon Foundation; Hudson Link, which began as a response to losing Pell in the first place, relies only on private funding to support its $1.5 million budget; and BPI ran exclusively on private funds until very recently, when it was awarded grants from the Manhattan District Attorney's office. Both the Washington University Prison Education Program and the Prison to College Pipeline at the University of Mississippi rely exclusively on support from their universities and regional humanities councils to continue the work they do. These programs are unlikely to be affected, but Ginsburg believes that those started as a result of the Pell grants—as many as 40 percent of the recipients—are likely to shut down if funding isn't renewed.

Besides funding and the issues surrounding instruction, college-in-prison programs face other challenges. Logistical and administrative issues often arise when dealing with correctional facilities, and there's the question of changing the public's attitude toward those who are incarcerated. Notions about inherent criminality are still widespread and, as Rolph explains, there is a lot of stigma attached, especially to those who have committed violent crimes. As McDowell says, incarcerated people are not a "popular service demographic."

In an age when college is increasingly unaffordable, spending money on college-in-prison programs is still unpopular. As Muhammad says, work needs to be done to change societal attitudes toward the incarcerated. With help and assistance, the formerly incarcerated can become active, contributing members of their communities, he says. The prison system in the United States is broken, he adds. "Maybe it's time to do something different. And programs like EJP are models to do something different." P

Kritika Agarwal is associate editor, publications, at the AHA. She tweets @kritikaldesi.

The **Peace History Society** congratulates the winners of its 2017 awards.
These awards were presented at the conference on "Remembering Muted Voices: Conscience, Dissent, Resistance and Civil Liberties in World War I through Today" at the National World War I Museum and Memorial, October 19-22, 2017 in Kansas City, MO.

The Scott Bills Memorial Prize for an outstanding English-language work in the field of Peace History by a first time author, published in 2014 or 2015:

Leilah C. Danielson, *American Gandhi: A.J. Muste and the History of Radicalism in the Twentieth Century.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.

The Charles DeBenedetti Prize for an outstanding article on Peace History published in 2015 or 2016:

Ryan J. Kirkby for "Dramatic Protests, Creative Communities: VVAW and the Expressive Politics of the Sixties Counterculture," *Peace & Change* 40, no. 1 (January 2015): 33-62.

The Lifetime Achievement Award for a PHS member who has contributed outstanding scholarship and exemplary service to peace history:

Harriet Hyman Alonso Professor Emerita of History, City College of New York

The 2019 awards will be given at the next biennial conference to be held at Kent State University, October 24-26, 2019. For more information about the awards, please go to our web site: <peacehistorysociety.org> or contact PHS President Deborah Buffton at dbuffton@uwlax.edu.

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ADVOCACY BRIEFS

AHA Statements Make an Impact

In the past few months, the AHA has released statements both on the importance of historical thinking in the public sphere and on the need for historians to be able to pursue their work without undue and unforeseen financial burdens. It was joined in these efforts by thousands of individual historians and dozens of historical and scholarly organizations. The AHA is gratified to report on the impact of these statements.

AHA Joins Associations in Opposing Tax on Student Tuition Waivers

Following an alert to members on November 7, the American Historical Association joined our colleagues in 33 other scholarly associations to oppose the proposal to tax graduate student tuition waivers as income. The associations, representing diverse disciplines across the humanities and social sciences, recognize both the burden this change would place on graduate students living on modest stipends and the devastating effects this would have on higher education. The November 28, 2017, Statement Opposing US Proposal to Tax Tuition Waivers can be read at bit.ly/tuition-tax-waiver. At press time, the AHA was pleased to learn that the proposal was dropped from the final version of the bill that passed.

AHA Statement Influences Dallas Task Force on Confederate Monuments

On August 24, two weeks after a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, Dallas mayor Michael S. Rawlings organized a task force to evaluate the city's public art and to make recommendations about removing or relocating commemorations to the Confederacy. The task force relied heavily on the AHA's Statement on Confederate Monuments, which was released on August 28, 2017 (historians.org/confederate-monuments), to craft its response. The task force also conducted multiple public briefings on the history of the so-called Lost Cause and on the history of Dallas during the era of Jim Crow.

Jennifer Scripps, director of cultural affairs for the city of Dallas, found the AHA's statement "extremely valuable" in providing an authoritative counter to community concerns about "erasing history." Scripps compared using the AHA's statement to a parent relying on recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics. At a hearing on the issue, Dallas city council member Omar Narvaez pointed in particular to the AHA's recommendation that "it's time to reconsider these decisions." The AHA's reputation as a "prestigious, well-known organization" and "the authoritative body for historians," said Scripps, gave weight to the statement and the task force recommendations that applied them to the Dallas context.

While the task force completed its charge, the Dallas City Council voted on September 12, 2017 to remove the city's Robert E. Lee statue. The task force issued its final recommendations, which were in line with the principles set out in the AHA's statement, to city leadership on September 29. After a contentious public hearing on November 1, the mayor slowed down the process, postponing the final vote on the task force's recommendations to 2018, in order to allow the city manager time to compile a detailed report on the costs involved. Learn more about these deliberations at dallasculture.org/confederatemonuments.

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SARGON GEORGE DONABED AND DANIEL JOSEPH TOWER

REFRAMING INDIGENEITY

The Case of Assyrians in Northern Mesopotamia

In June 2014, the so-called Islamic State (IS) gave Christian residents of Iraq's second-largest city, Mosul (ancient Nineveh), an ultimatum: conversion, expulsion, payment of *jizya* (a tax on non-Muslims), or death. IS marked Christian houses with the Arabic letter *nun* for *naṣara* (a Nazarene), and more than 500,000 people were forced to flee the city. Almost simultaneously, the 35 Assyrian villages along the Khabur River in Syria were attacked; many women and children were taken hostage and held for ransom.

Northern Iraq and the Syrian Jezirah are both currently described as Kurdish-controlled or Kurdish-majority regions. True to form, news reports and official statements from politicians and religious figures highlighted the plight of the region's Christians, but characterizations of their ethno-cultural heritage did not include the fact that the majority of them were Assyrians, an autochthonous people who have lived for over two millennia as Eastern Christians, and for thousands of years earlier as players in the rise and fall of the great Mesopotamian empires.

The media coverage implied two things. On one hand, these reports did aid the Assyrian community in gaining international sympathy briefly, especially from Western Christians, at least as far as all Christians in the region benefited from the visibility. But on the other, Assyrians were not usually named directly in these reports. Their antiquity and distinctiveness remained invisible, drowned out by the focus on the Arab and Kurdish character of the region.

There are three primary reasons for this denial. First, the Kurds continue to command political and popular attention in the region. Their trials and tribulations are real, but they outshine others because of their geopolitical significance—now largely accepted in such spheres as academia, media, culture, and literature. Second, the Kurds are viewed as the major ethnic group in the region without a homeland. Third, additional communities are either lumped into the conversation about the Kurds or are described as religious minority groups, such as Christians or Yezidi.

This misunderstanding has important consequences, not only for Assyrians but also for human history. Statuary, wall reliefs, churches, and shrines that have been standing for millennia, artifacts of the Assyrians' ancient past, are also irreplaceable components of world heritage. Before Iraqi forces ousted IS from Mosul last summer, Islamists managed to destroy many Assyrian antiquities. In one video, a spokesperson from the IS media office for the Mosul/Nineveh Province narrates in Arabic the destruction of antiquities dating to the historical period before the prophet Muhammad, or the age of *jahiliyyah* (ignorance). The forced mass exodus from the city separated Assyrians from the land of their ancestors.

> After the IS attacks on Mosul, media focus on the Arab and Kurdish character of the region erased the Assyrians.

In the wake of this destruction, Assyrians have increased their claims to indigenous status, but being separated from their ancestral lands and communities makes international recognition of their case less probable: rights are harder to assert in this context, especially for a transnational people. Moreover, unending conflict in the homeland makes mass displacement and emigration the only means of survival for a transnational ethnic, religious, and cultural minority. Assyrians are not recognized by any constitution or regime in the region as a distinct ethnocultural group, and when they are mentioned, it is only in terms of their sectarian religious identity.

But Assyrians face obstacles in their claims of indigeneity that are vastly unlike those of indigenous communities in Western countries. Assyrians'

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attempts to seek indigenous rights—accommodated under the United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)—are rejected due to regional tensions and rivalries. The United Nations Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) provides a platform for elevating indigenous voices to the international arena and for highlighting their culture, history, and claims to land. In 2014, the Assyrian Aid Society (AAS) represented Assyrians at the 13th session of the UNPFII. The organization outlined the indigenous heritage of the Assyrian peoples, the necessity for recognition from their host state, and the overall goal of autonomous governance to help preserve Assyrians' culture and history within the Iraqi political system.

Looking over the IS-controlled Nineveh Plains from Saint Hormizd Monastery, June 2016.
Daniel Joseph Tower

But the Iraqi response to Assyrian claims to indigenous status—and indeed to all ethno-religious minorities of Iraq who have made such claims—was outright denial.[1] What's more, at the 2014 UNPFII session, Assyrians were yet to experience the force of IS attacks on Mosul. Even afterward, when the Yezidi delegation joined forces with the AAS in 2015, the Iraqi position remained unchanged. As has been seen in the past few months with the Kurdish vote for independence, the Iraqi government fears that claims for independence will threaten the nation's stability. Hence, there are officially no indigenous peoples of Iraq. Formal political channels have made Assyrians' position ambiguous at best.

This situation finds echoes in the academic realm, where there is little attention to the legitimacy of indigenous claims in the Middle East outside of debate on the Israel/Palestine question. Generally, discourse about indigenous issues works within a European colonial and postcolonial paradigm—that is, case studies of peoples colonized by Europeans dominate the literature, from Native American nations to the Ma'sai of Kenya to the Temuntikans of Costa Rica.

Indigenous peoples such as the Assyrians break the mold of the discussion, because the actions of European colonizers form only one part of the group's history. Briefly, Assyrians were colonized by the British and French, as were most other Middle Eastern peoples. They had also experienced colonization in a different context at the hands of Western Catholic and Protestant missionaries, who were unable to make much headway in predominantly Muslim communities. Even earlier, Assyrians had experienced multiple waves of Arab/Islamic colonial conquest. They now live amid a burgeoning Kurdish nationalist project. In other words, colonization is not a solely European-oriented matter.

Most of the voices that have addressed indigeneity in the Middle East have arisen from the debate over the Israel/Palestine question.[2] In academic circles, the leftist argument for a native-Palestinian narrative squares off against an analysis that supports the Jewish claim to the "land of milk and honey." But leftists often see Israeli subjection of the Palestinian community as Western colonial action, enfolding it into the normative discourse about indigeneity. Similarly, among leftists there is a propensity to see the Palestinians (and interestingly, more recently the Kurds) as victims of oppression but also as heroes—people who actively resist Western colonization. Middle Eastern indigeneity, it seems, doesn't exist without a Western gaze.

In this way, limiting the concept of Middle Eastern indigeneity not only fails to acknowledge the many indigenous peoples of the region, it also inadvertently legitimizes their persecution. In the Assyrian case, it may be that few know about them or their case because their movement has refrained from violence.

Looking forward, how can Assyrians and other indigenous groups find a place in the Middle East and in their

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homelands? Recognition and reconciliation require that both parties—the dominant and the indigenous—agree on their roles within the national structure. As long as Middle Eastern states do not recognize Assyrians and other peoples as indigenous, the process cannot commence; first peoples will be unable to negotiate in the political forum as long as their host countries monopolize their rights.

The configuration of the current Middle East does not allow for the cathartic opportunity of reconciliation, leaving acts of past aggression, massacre, and even genocide unrecognized and erased from history. Assyrians lack official recognition of their ethnocultural existence in all of the Middle Eastern states containing portions of their homeland: Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. This restricts Assyrians' rights. Without recognition, no case can be made.

Due to internal conflict and the continued Western/Eurocentric gaze, the Middle East has been seen as an exceptional case and is thus absent from many discussions of indigeneity. This lacuna brings into question our own scholarly analyses, as well as our very integrity. As scholars, we must extend to the histories of Middle Eastern indigenous peoples the same urgency we bring to more normative cases—of communities resisting European colonization—by accepting that there is more than one historical framework through which to see indigenous peoples.

Sargon George Donabed is associate professor of history at Roger Williams University. He is the author of Reforging a Forgotten History: Iraq and the Assyrians in the Twentieth Century. *Daniel Joseph Tower is a PhD candidate in the Department of Studies in Religion at the University of Sydney. He is the co-editor of* Religious Categories and the Construction of the Indigenous.

NOTES

1. The Iraqi delegation's official position is that Iraq does not have an indigenous people; instead, it has various ethno-religious minorities. This position, however, stands in contrast to the definition of "indigenous peoples" set out in the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

2. There has been some discussion of Armenians' claims, including to land in Turkey, but this has been largely a legal response to genocidal acts and mass expulsions, separate from any rubric specifically concerning "indigenous" rights.

Please join us in congratulating **Texas Christian University history faculty and recent PhDs**:

Max Krochmal's book *Blue Texas: The Making of a Multiracial Democratic Coalition in the Civil Rights Era* (U. of North Carolina Press) has been recognized with several awards including the OAH's Frederick Jackson Turner Award and the TSHA's Coral Horton Tullis Memorial Prize.

Hanan Hammad's book *Industrial Sexuality: Gender, Urbanization, and Social Transformation in Egypt* (U. of Texas Press) has won the Sara A. Whaley Book Prize from the Association for Middle East Women's Studies, the Middle East Political Economy book prize, and honorable mentions from the MESA Book Awards and the Arab American Nonfiction Book Awards.

David Grua (TCU 2013) received the Robert M. Utley Prize from the Western History Association for his revised dissertation, which was published by Oxford University Press as *Surviving Wounded Knee: The Lakotas and the Politics of Memory*.

Glen Ely (TCU 2008) has won several awards including the West Texas Historical Association's Rupert Richardson Best Book Award, the Westerners International top book award, and a Will Rogers Medallion Award for his book *The Texas Frontier and the Butterfield Overland Mail*, based on his TCU dissertation and published by Oklahoma University Press.

TCU

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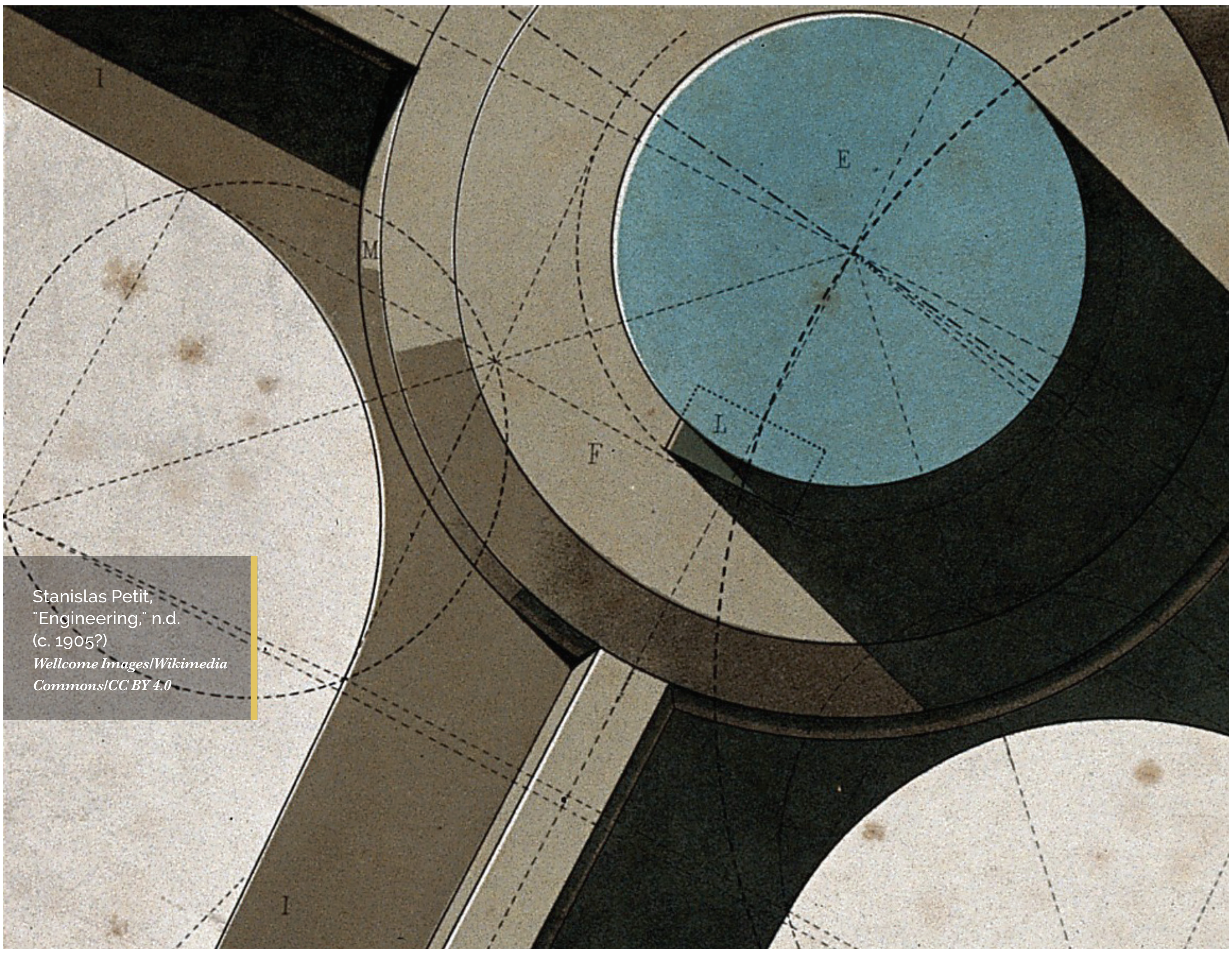
THE MECHANICS OF CLASS PARTICIPATION

How to Get Students to Think, Talk, Share, Collaborate, Learn, and Come Back for More



Stanislas Petit, "Engineering," n.d. (c. 1905?)
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WE'VE ALL BEEN THERE. Our syllabus specifies that a percentage of the course grade will be based on participation. We've presented riveting material or assigned a provocative reading. We show up for class, stand at the front of the room, and begin lobbing questions at the students. And the silence is deafening.

Our intentions are good, but something is missing in the execution. The four pieces offered here offer strategies and ideas for lifting our class discussions out of the doldrums and making them meaningful and efficacious for students.

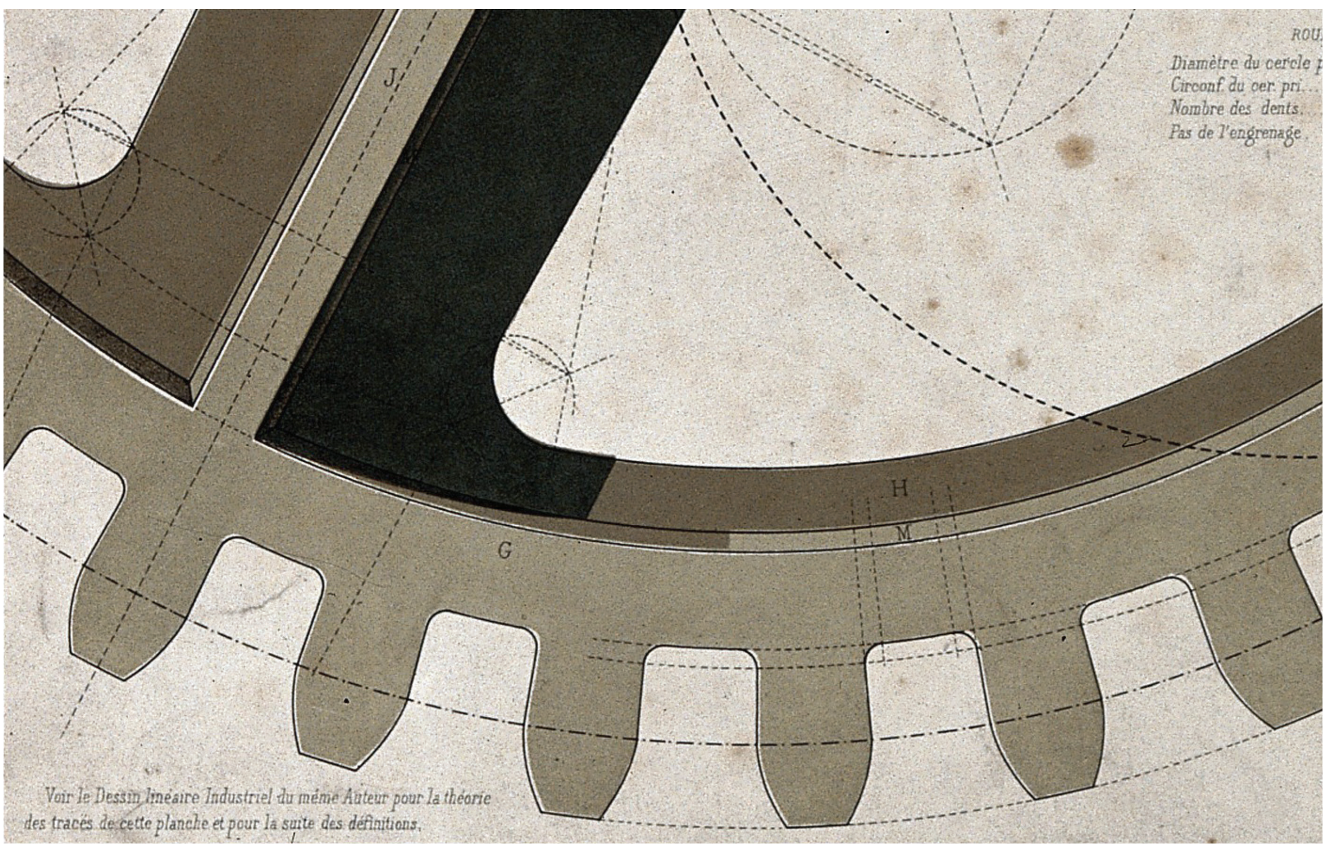
What unites these essays is the willingness of each author to be self-reflective and to think deliberately about their teaching. Each author has clearly asked tough questions about his or her pedagogy and what works and what doesn't. Their suggestions acknowledge the complexity of the 21st-century classroom. In the tradition of recent work in pedagogical practice, like James M. Lang's *Small Teaching* (2016), several of the enumerated strategies are relatively straightforward adjustments or assignments that don't require a massive course overhaul to implement. Lendol Calder's Point Paragraph supplements the effective (and much-beloved) Think/Pair/Share activity with a short assignment that helps students prepare effectively. Susan Rhoades Neel promotes discussion when her students are literally in different locations, connected only by a video feed, by using technology strategically and consistently. With a simple tweak to his attendance sheet, Charles S. Young keeps track of student engagement, while collecting data on his own performance.

What unites these essays is the willingness of each author to be self-reflective about their teaching.

The final essay, by David A. Gerber, begins with an admission: simply imparting facts and dates, which he attempted to do for a long time, was a recipe for failure. Instead, he advises, find "big questions," stemming from issues all humans should grapple with.

The overall result is a useful primer that offers hope for transforming the deafening silence of the lackluster discussion into opportunities for lively student learning.

—*Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt, vice president, AHA Teaching Division*



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LENDOL CALDER

POINTS OF INTEREST

One of the most widely used strategies to increase participation in class discussions is an activity called Think/Pair/Share. The technique is effective enough that if I had to teach on a desert island with only one strategy for running class discussions, Think/Pair/Share would be my choice. But every teaching technique has its limits. I have found that the effectiveness of Think/Pair/Share improves considerably when students are prepped for class with an assignment called the Point Paragraph.

First, though, what is Think/Pair/Share? Nothing could be simpler. On days when I want students to explore a concept, discuss a problem, or do a close reading of an assigned text, nothing gives more bang for the buck than posing a question to the class and allowing students a few minutes alone to write out their thoughts. They then share their thoughts with a partner, giving and receiving feedback, and reconvene as a whole class to consider further what the pairs discussed. Think/Pair/Share (along with its many variants; this activity is wonderfully adaptive) works equally well in classes large and small to get more students involved in discussions.

But if students aren't keeping up with reading assignments, the quality of thinking and sharing falls off. And when there isn't time or opportunity for everyone, including some of the more thoughtful students, to put in their oar, questions of fairness arise when grading for class participation. To address these problems, I juice up the value of Think/Pair/Share with the Point Paragraph.

A Point Paragraph (PP) is 250–400 words students write after completing a reading assignment. In their PP, students name a worthwhile discussion point inspired by the reading(s) and develop that point with evidence and argumentation. On class days when they will discuss the readings using Think/Pair/Share, the syllabus instructs them to bring a PP as their "ticket" to class. I check tickets at the door; those without a PP are kindly turned away. (I generally have to do this only once per semester.) This policy counteracts the free rider problem, ensuring that every person in the room comes with at least a modicum of readiness to contribute to a meeting whose success or failure depends on students' willingness to risk their ideas out loud, something they are more likely to do if they have already thought through some ideas on paper. If my "ticket to class" policy seems harsh or a lot to ask, bear in mind that a PP need not be particularly brilliant. A merely acceptable Point Paragraph will admit a student to class.

An acceptable PP has three components. The paragraph begins with a statement called the "They Say," which briefly summarizes "what everyone knows" or what an authority has said or what the student used to think before encountering a new idea in the reading. (The book to read is Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*.) Next comes an "I Say," a point responding to the "They Say," either to agree, to disagree, or to agree but with a difference. Requiring students to position their "I Say" in conversation with others increases their awareness of the social dimension of thinking, where the significance of a point depends upon how much it surprises others in some way, providing new insight into the material at hand. The rest of the paragraph explains and supports the point, using quotations, data, and reasoning to demonstrate the plausibility of one's claim.

Thus an acceptable Point Paragraph does three things: it makes a single, significant point focused on the reading for the day, marshals strong evidence in support of the point, and exhibits good writing style. PPs can be graded quickly using a three-point scale: an acceptable PP earns two points, one that is almost there gets one point, and when no grading categories are met, zero points are earned. I let students write as many PPs as they want, up to 30 total points or 30 percent of the final grade; others will have their own grading schemes. I do not accept late Point Paragraphs.

The Point Paragraph assignment carries a lot of water. It prepares students for robust participation in Think/Pair/Share. It helps me identify themes that the students find interesting so that discussion can be steered in those directions. Clearly, PPs help develop analytical writing. A big surprise since I began assigning PPs is the positive response they get from students. On unprompted mid-course "stop/start/continue" evaluations, I generally find three out of five students singling out PPs as something they value and want to keep doing. The general opinion goes something like this: "I am glad that you have the Point Paragraph system; I find it very useful for understanding the readings, and it improves my ability to form concise theses."

That's powerful testimony. If I am ever marooned on a desert island and need to teach a class (on boat building, perhaps?), I hope I can use two strategies for running class discussions: Think/Pair/Share and Point Paragraphs. P

Lendol Calder, professor of history at Augustana College, was the 2010 CASE/Carnegie Illinois Professor of the Year. His performance in the swimsuit competition was unremarkable.

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SUSAN RHOADES NEEL

NEVER TOO FAR AWAY

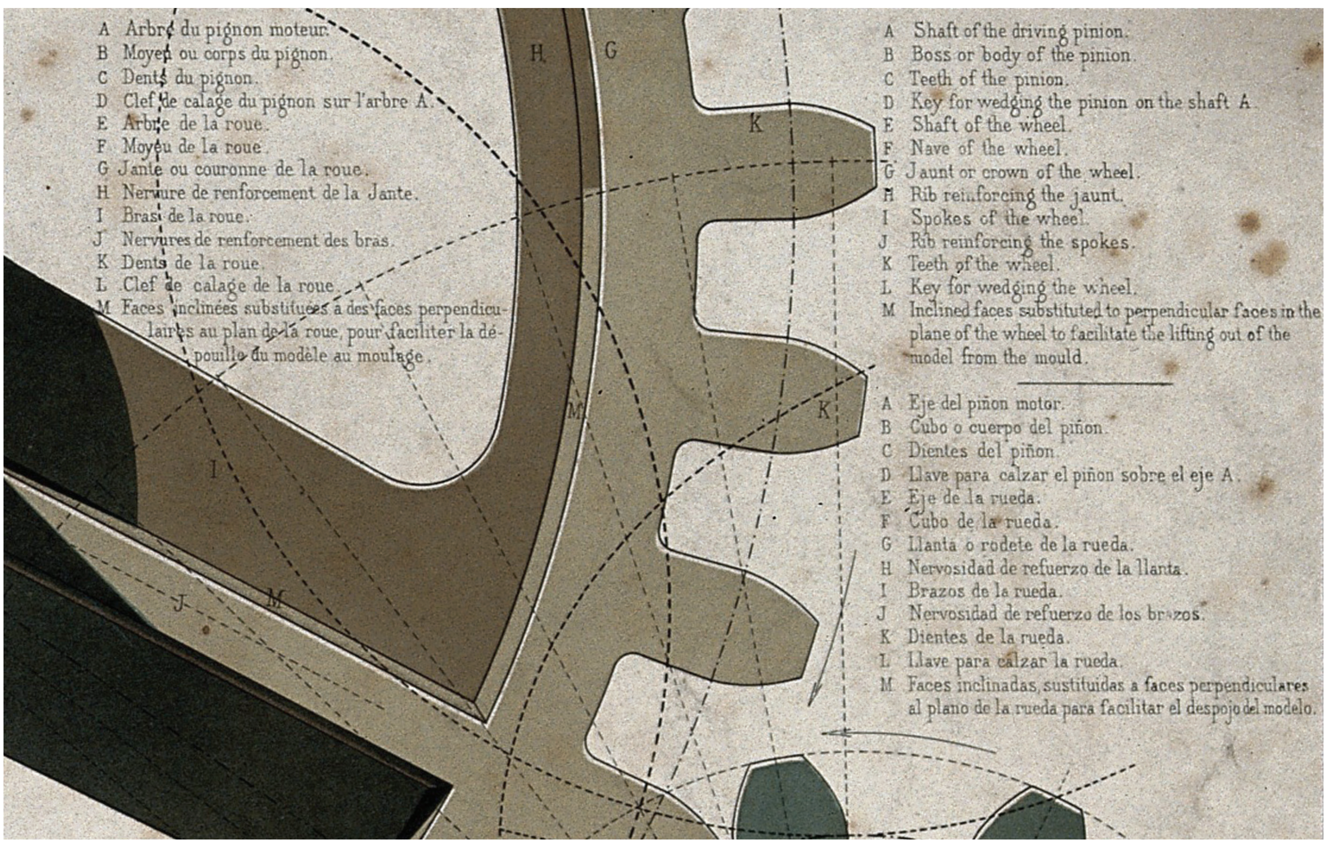
Student engagement is a particularly difficult challenge in history courses offered through Utah State University (USU)'s interactive video conferencing (IVC) broadcast system. Students enrolled in IVC courses attend classes at a scheduled time and place, just like students in face-to-face courses, but instruction is delivered through a real-time audio-visual link. An instructor may or may not have students present in the room from which she is broadcasting. Students from as many as 10 different classrooms throughout the state may be participating in the class.

How do you engage students who are not in the same room with one another or with the instructor? Are there ways to encourage student participation other than clicking the microphone and asking, "Hey, out there, what's on your mind?"

A useful approach is one I take in the lower-division US history survey. Students take this course to fulfill general education requirements; most are not (nor do they intend to become) history majors. Some are pursuing bachelor's degrees, but many are enrolled in USU's two-year associate's degree program. The class thus comprises people aiming to become nail technicians and diesel mechanics alongside young MBA and law school hopefuls.

I devote a portion of each class session to lecture. Lectures model historical thinking for students and convey wonderful stories that help capture their interest. Despite the recent trend in dissing the format, a well-crafted and elegantly presented lecture remains central to the way I teach history. But I also couple lectures with daily in-class activities, which is effective in keeping general education students engaged over a 16-week semester.

The key to getting all students, including those at remote sites, involved in classroom activities is coordinated use of instructional technology. The technology I use is simple and readily available to most instructors, including those in traditional face-to-face classrooms. For each in-class activity, I load instructions and relevant secondary and primary sources to USU's learning management system (LMS), so that students can either prepare in advance or access the materials on the spot during class (USU uses Canvas, but this can



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be done with any LMS, such as Blackboard or Sakai). This enables the classroom activity to go forward even for those students who have not prepared. I use the same slideshow with the lecture outline to present and pace in-class activities so that all students, regardless of geographic location, can see each step or component on the screen. Any presentation software works (I use Apple's Keynote), but the key is to integrate lecture slides and slides for in-class activities into the same slideshow. Giving visual coherence to each day's session is a simple but surprisingly effective way to keep everyone attentive and engaged through the different learning tasks.

In some activities, students respond to questions with a polling application. I use iClicker's inexpensive Internet-based application (called REEF), which students use with their own smartphones or laptops. At other times, we just use our microphones for open discussion. If students are working on an activity in groups, we use the Canvas discussion board and the collaboration platform Acano. Often, students just like to text or tweet one another on their phones.

> Working in groups helps create a sense of camaraderie and common purpose.

In one class activity, for example, we discuss political cartoons of the Gilded Age. As preparation, students have been asked to read an essay on political cartoons and how to analyze them, but I review the main points in class. Student groups are then assigned a cartoon to analyze, using high-resolution images that I have uploaded to Canvas. The groups meet for 15 minutes to prepare to present an analysis of their cartoon to the rest of the class.

Simultaneously, a presentation slide projects activity instructions, and an embedded countdown timer ensures that everyone knows how much time they have to get the analysis done. When time is up, I randomly call on groups to present their analyses, and I call up the respective cartoons so that the entire class can see what each group is referring to. We don't always have time for all the groups to present their work, but I ask everyone to type their analysis into Canvas. With these responses, I can award each student who participated some points.

Making the in-class activities low-stakes, in terms of the overall course grade, but providing modest feedback, either verbally during the class presentations or through the Canvas grade book, seems to encourage student participation. Ensuring that everyone has access to the activity's components (images, instructions, background reading) prior to and throughout the class period keeps everyone involved. Working in groups helps create a sense of camaraderie and common purpose. Giving the activity visual coherence through the presentation software and linking it with the LMS keeps the whole process focused and user-friendly.

We do a different in-class activity every week. Although each activity in this survey course is different, all have key elements in common. They reinforce rather than replace lectures; they use Canvas for advance preparation and in-class participation; they use presentation software to enhance focus, coherence, and pacing; they include coordinated use of educational technology to facilitate the participation of all students; and they are low-stakes, can be done in a single class session, and are engaging.

Integrating good lectures and creative in-class participation activities using tools commonly available today on most campuses is an easy and effective way of engaging students across distance. Instructors may find this to be as true for students sitting in large, cavernous classrooms as it is for my geographically dispersed students. Disengagement can be as much of a challenge with students who are only a few seats away from one another as with those separated by many miles. P

Susan Rhoades Neel is associate professor of history at Utah State University.

CHARLES S. YOUNG

A DOT MATRIX

Napoleon admired the dangerous chances soldiers took for bits of ribbon. I get students to take risks for dots on paper.

Large survey courses are the hardest for encouraging class participation. First-year students might not ask questions, even when we befuddle essential points. Many also assume that contributions will not scratch the final grade, no matter how sharp they may be. And since sustained conversation is difficult, we instructors easily fall into monologue, perhaps with perfunctory queries (". . . and when did FDR take office? Anyone?").

For big classes, I have formalized rewards for participation by recording dots on the attendance sheets. Students

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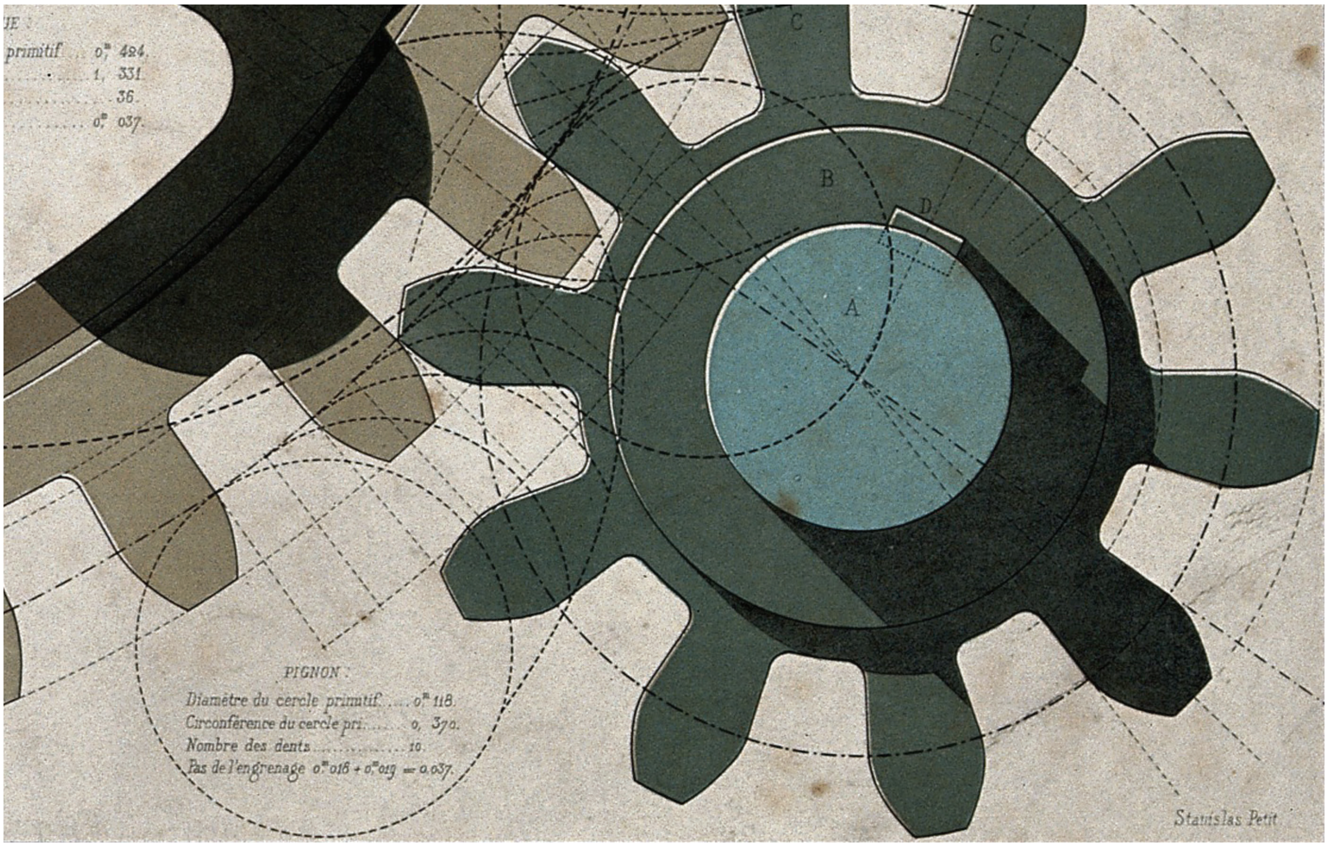

receive two extra points on an exam if they get three dots in a current cycle. They get dots for asking a question, answering a question, or making me laugh. I announce the policy the first day, sententiously proclaiming that "the dot is the highest form of public recognition awarded in this class." It is goofy, but students become surprisingly possessive of their dots.

Dots are also a check on instructor performance. If no one has three dots by exam time, you know you need to climb out of your head.

Contrary to pedagogy that recommends avoiding calling on students directly, I often pick a name off the attendance sheet when I ask a question. Students tell me it helps them pay attention when they may be called on at any time. Commonly these are easier questions; harder ones are opened to volunteers. The attendance sheet helps me spot the dotless, so I can draw out the reticent. I give dots for wrong answers and half answers. The only phrase that is not rewarded is "Wha, who me? I dunno."

Besides points on the exam, good participation can also raise borderline final grades. For this, a solid record is a must. It ensures that students without striking personal traits get credit for participation. Generally, I give someone only one dot per day, but I may have a sale close to exam time. I offer three dots to anyone who catches me in a factual error, but so far only the student who knew that *Mein Kampf* did not mean "my life" has collected.

The drawback of dots is that pausing to ask last names can interrupt the flow of discussion. Once students are habituated to the system, I often wait and dot a bunch at once, or wait until the end of class and have them give their last names on the way out. And they do. I have also used volunteer dotters for classroom debates. Surprisingly, I have never detected a problem with students sneaking dots onto the attendance sheet.

Once, the day after a big exam, a student who had seemed tightly wound all semester paused to chat. He said he would not have come to class that day, but his wife made him. "Tell her she gets a dot," I said. He smiled for the first time that term. P

Charles S. Young is associate professor of history at Southern Arkansas University and the author of Name, Rank, and Serial Number: Exploiting Korean War POWs at Home and Abroad *(2014).*

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DAVID A. GERBER

ARE WE GIVING STUDENTS SOMETHING WORTHWHILE TO TALK ABOUT?

I struggled for years to stimulate classroom discussion in undergraduate courses, and mostly was unsuccessful. I alternately blamed the students and the format of the courses I taught, especially the two-semester US history survey—an unpopular requirement for all students. But advanced undergraduate elective seminars shaped around student participation were equally a problem.

The fault lay basically with me, because I was busy trying to teach disciplinary knowledge, whether in the form of a conventional narrative of US history I regarded as necessary for all literate Americans, or of insight into what historians do—how historians derive interpretations from evidence, how interpretive traditions develop, and how interpretations of the same events and processes might so radically disagree.

Of course, these are wholly legitimate intellectual goals, but I never saw greatly positive results from this sort of history pedagogy when it came to stimulating discussion. Over time, I came to understand why. It wasn't the failure of history, nor the fact that my students were destined semester after semester to be disengaged and uninterested. It was that I did not understand what there was in the study of the past that might engage them. I was busy laying on them notions of what they should value that they did not understand and that did not comport with what moved them to become engaged with learning. Teaching the narrative of the past too often descended into chronology and stipulating facts, which left nothing to talk about. Trying to teach the average undergraduate non–history major how historians think—say, the so-called four C's (context, causality, contingency, and complexity)—and extracting conversation about that tended to demand a level of abstraction many couldn't handle comfortably and were not interested in pursuing.

In *What the Best College Teachers Do* (2004), Ken Bain, the president of the Best Teachers Institute, urges instructors to engage students by moving away from excessive dependence on the conventional scripts of the disciplines and from conventional disciplinarity itself, and to abandon what he calls "bulimic education" (asking students to cram information before exams). Such methods only succeed in preparing students for tests, and after those tests, which encourage them to give us back exactly what is necessary to get a respectable grade, the subject is forgotten. Using our disciplines as a foundation for more meaningful investigation, Bain calls attention to another goal: exploring "the big questions." By this, he means, for example, the moral and ethical issues that lie at the heart of defining the purposes of the nation and that invite us to interrogate who we are, if we aspire to be right-thinking individuals.

Sounds good, but what does it mean for classroom practice and stimulating student participation? Long before I read Bain, I had begun to come to his conclusions, mostly because everything else really did not work, and I found making the same errors repeatedly dispiriting. My first venture into departing from my usual script was to base a survey discussion section on President Truman's decision in 1945 to use atomic weapons against Japan. The purpose of the discussion was not *why* the president used the bombs, which an assigned reading addressed, but rather another question: "If you were Truman, would you have used the atomic bombs?" A "big question," to be sure. The former question had three possible answers: to defeat Japan; to assert American power and intimidate the Soviet Union; and the old, reliable "Why not, maybe, both?" The latter question has had as many answers as there were students in the room. They rose to the position of moral power they were asked to assume and usually willingly addressed it, because it mattered to them.

> Students rose to the position of moral power they were asked to assume and usually willingly addressed it, because it mattered to them.

Later, I extended the search for an engaging model for stimulating discussion by teaching undergraduate seminars on Supreme Court decisions concerning the First Amendment (whether regarding the religion clauses or

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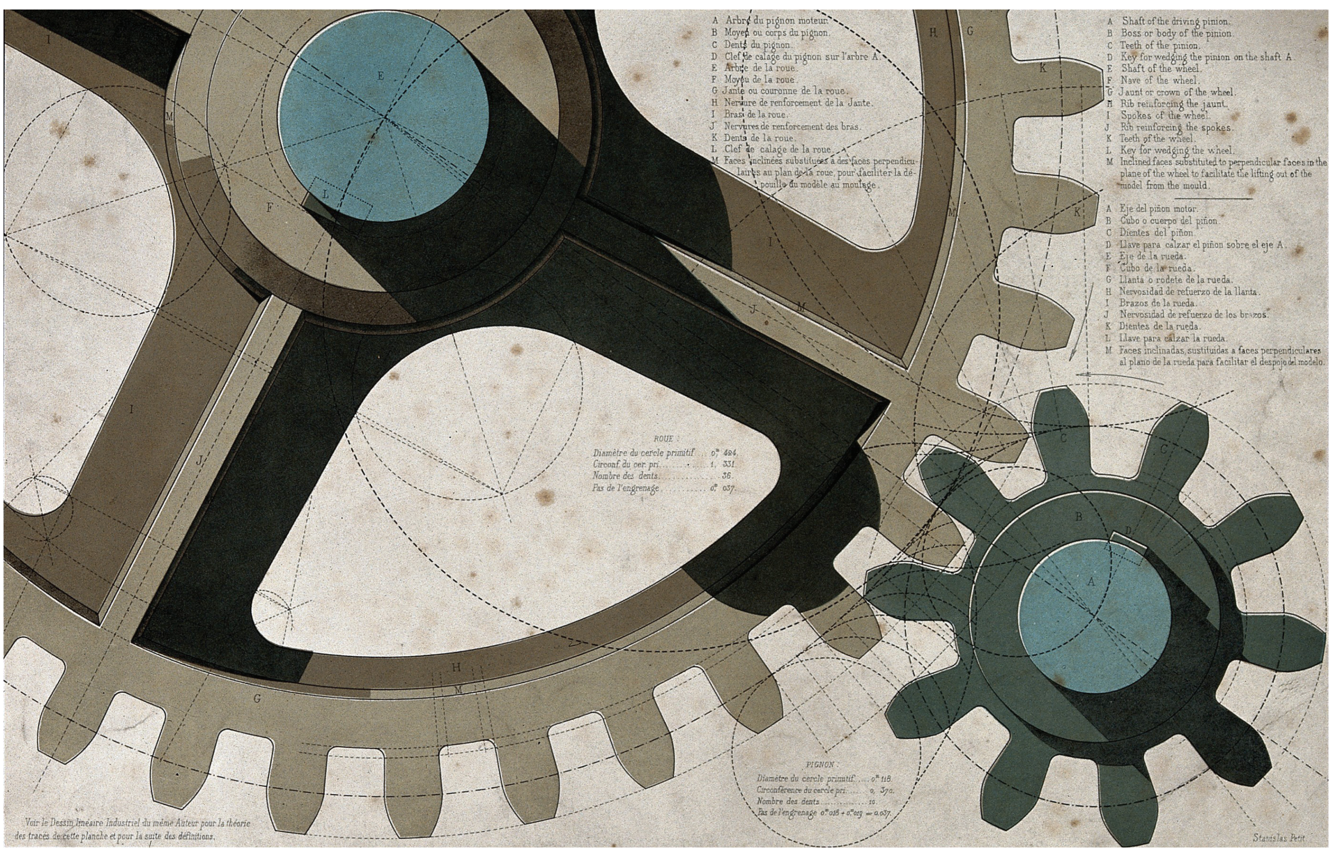
freedom of speech). I invited the students in court decision after court decision to interrogate their values, fears, and aspirations, and to balance order and justice, as the justices have to do. No one could escape involvement, because every week a third of the students were charged with arguing the case of the appellants and another third that of the appellees. The rest sat as the sitting justices, with one chosen by peers to be chief justice. The next week at the start of class the court majority presented its ruling, and the minority, if there was one, its dissent (or dissents). The historical context for these cases was, mostly implicitly, presented by the students in arguing their side of the case.

The benefits of such instruction go beyond soliciting student participation. Students are encouraged to hear one another out in a civil fashion, work cooperatively toward truth (or *truths*), and above all perhaps develop the habit of caring about caring, all of which assists in reviving civic education, which is much on the minds of many people in higher education. That "the big questions" usually have no one right answer, and that many of us aren't always sure exactly how we will answer them, is a continuing and productive challenge at the personal level for an instructor. If that position is shared with students, it contributes a democratic, "We're all in this together" feeling to class discussions.

My advice is to break loose of conventional disciplinarity in the classroom and find your own "big questions." Student participation may well then take care of itself. P

David A. Gerber is University at Buffalo Distinguished Professor of History Emeritus. He continues to teach undergraduate seminars on the First Amendment.



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ALLISON MILLER

LEADING HISTORIAN

An Interview with New AHA President Mary Beth Norton

Mary Beth Norton cuts an impressive figure. A leading practitioner of early American history, the AHA's new president earned her PhD at Harvard University in 1969. After teaching full time at the University of Connecticut, she moved in 1971 to Cornell University, where she is currently the Mary Donlon Alger Professor of American History. Her books include *The British-Americans: The Loyalist Exiles in England, 1774–1789* (1972); *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750–1800* (1980); *Founding Mothers & Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society* (1996); *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692* (2002); and *Separated by Their Sex: Women in Public and Private in the Colonial Atlantic World* (2011).

> "I found it a real challenge to write about men in a gendered way at the time because people weren't doing that."

But that's only scratching the surface. Norton holds the distinction of being one of the founders (so to speak) of an entire field—women's and gender history—that continues to flourish inside and outside academia. Along with contemporaries like former AHA presidents Linda Kerber and Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, Norton began asking questions about the era of the American Revolution that stood it on its ear: How would it look from the point of view of women?

The AHA welcomed Norton as its 134th president at the 2018 annual meeting in Washington, DC. This interview was recorded in mid-December 2017. It has been edited for length.

Allison Miller: How did you get bitten by the history bug?

Mary Beth Norton: Oh, I can't even say when. My parents both had advanced degrees in history. When I was a child, we took family trips all over the country in the summers—my dad was an academic, and we had the summers off. We would always visit historic sites, battlefields, state capitals, universities—you name it, we saw it. So by the time I graduated from high school, I had been in all 48 adjacent states.

AM: Can you talk a bit about your teaching? Did you like working with students at first, have problems in the classroom, or surmount any difficulties?

MBN: I'd always been something of a public speaker. In high school, I was on the debate team, so I had experience speaking to audiences. But even so, when I carefully wrote out my first lectures—of course, I was using a manual typewriter—I realized very quickly that I was doing it all wrong. I went to the University of Connecticut with what I thought were a month's worth of lectures ready to go and discovered they weren't, because students' eyes were glazing over. I realized that I had put them together in a totally wrong way—I was giving the evidence and then the conclusions. I quickly realized that I had to change the lectures all around.

AM: What advice do you give to your grad students about teaching?

MBN: I'm done with graduate teaching; my last graduate student got her degree last year and is teaching now. I usually have my graduate students be my TAs at some point. They give guest lectures in my courses so I can observe them and give them suggestions and feedback.

Over the years I've discovered that graduate students often need help going with the flow, as it were, in a classroom. Let's say I went into a discussion section with a plan and the students didn't seem to want to follow that plan. In the beginning, I didn't let them do that—I insisted they follow my plan! So now I tell my graduate students, and I watch them do it, that the best thing to do is to go into a section with maybe five or six points that you want to get to by the end of the class and let the students determine what order they want to learn them in.

When you're a graduate student and feeling your way through teaching and you don't know the material very well, you want that piece of paper that tells you something explicit. You're not prepared to wing it. But you really do have to wing it to have a successful discussion section.

AM: Can you talk more about mentorship? I know Mary Maples Dunn was an early mentor for you.

MBN: When I was just starting out, she took me under her wing and made sure I got to the right parties at AHA annual meetings, like the early American parties. She would introduce me to people. I try to do the same thing for my students today. I tell them to hit the book exhibit the way I learned to do as a young person, telling them how to use the book exhibit as a way of not just getting books but meeting people you'll keep running into basically for your entire career. And you never know when one of those people could turn out to be very important to you as a potential editor on some manuscript you're interested in peddling.

AM: What were your first impressions of the AHA ?

MBN: I started going to AHA conventions as a graduate student. I always had a good time. I liked to go to the parties and sessions on early America. I especially remember going to the book exhibit. I remember when I got my first teaching job, I went through the book exhibit very carefully and ordered free copies of textbooks and other works that I might assign as collateral reading.

AM: Does writing come naturally to you?

MBN: I work really hard at revisions. My first drafts are always awful. I have a tendency to write very long sentences that get very involved. That's why I love having a computer because I can change it in the middle. And I tell my students that you have to be aware of your own writing quirks. One of my writing quirks is writing paragraphs that are 12 lines long. But everybody has different quirks, and you just have to learn what they are, and learn to revise accordingly.

AM: *Liberty's Daughters* came out in 1980, and in the following decade, gender history took off. Can you

Mary Beth Norton is president of the AHA.
Cornell Marketing Group

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talk about how you experienced the turn from women's history to women's and gender history?

MBN: I understood where the people were coming from who said we've got to have women's history and not gender history. I understood that feminist commitment. I remember Gerda Lerner saying that after we've had 200 years of women's history, then maybe we can have some gender history. But I never agreed with that. When I was doing *Liberty's Daughters*, I realized that to understand the women I was studying, there were things I had to know about their husbands and their sons that I didn't understand. My next book, *Founding Mothers & Fathers*, is also very deliberately about men as well as women.

I found it a real challenge to write about men in a gendered way at the time because people weren't doing that. I recall reading the records of the Maryland colonial legislature, and I asked myself: What laws are being adopted because these legislators are men? And what laws would have been adopted if the legislators were women? These turned out to be really interesting counterfactual questions to ask myself. It helped me think about the impact of gender on people in the 17th century in Maryland and in other places. But it was tricky. People hadn't done that; they had just written about government as government. They hadn't written about it as government by men.

> "I work really hard at revisions. My first drafts are always awful."

AM: **The story of Thomas/Thomasine Hall has especially lived on as an example of the workings of class and gender in colonial Virginia. [*Editor's note: Hall was a 17th-century servant who was brought to court as a woman after an encounter with a female servant; the court inspected Hall's body and ordered Hall to wear men's and women's clothing at the same time, to accord with Hall's ambiguous genitalia.*] Do you have any opinions on the evolution of interpretations of this case?**

MBN: For me the real breakthrough came from a former student of mine, Tom Foster, who wrote a paper for me on that case. In it, he didn't use a gendered pronoun. And everybody who'd written about it had always called Thomas/Thomasine "he." I decided that was the only way to write about the case, to not use a gendered pronoun. I thought it was really crucial to talk about this person as someone we would say today is an intersex person. I think that Thomas/Thomasine was clearly an intersex person trying to live in an extremely gendered world.

AM: How can the AHA serve all of its constituencies—professors, grad students, museum professionals, archivists, librarians, and more?

MBN: Well, I think that the AHA is and always has been an extremely varied organization. As an AHA office-holder [on the Nominating Committee, from 1976 to 1979], I remember vividly being struck by the wide variety of people that the Association was trying to serve. I think the AHA is working very hard these days, under the direction of our terrific executive director, Jim Grossman, to deal with issues facing everybody. More and more, at the annual meeting and through its outreach activities, the AHA is working with a variety of different groups and not trying to limit itself strictly to academics. I think that's tremendously important.

AM: Do you have a sense of whether our discipline is changing as a result of the current political climate?

MBN: It's not as though there is one theme or issue that is dominating discussion today. Historians are part of the skepticism that the nonacademic world has about academia. Historians right now have to deal with things like complaints about Confederate monuments. There's of course sexual harassment. So I don't know that there's any one unified problem. It's not like, shall we say, the McCarthy era, when there was pressure from the national government to conform politically. We don't have *that*. But we do have all kinds of areas in which historical perspectives can be important. And I'd like to see us offering those perspectives.

AM: I have one last question. There's a rumor that you play the banjo. Is that true?

MBN: No. Guitar! The banjo?! I've never played the banjo. Actually, that's not true; someone once gave me a banjo, and I tried to play it, but it didn't work. There is actually a picture of me playing a guitar at a Berkshire Conference.

AM: Classical, rock, jazz . . . ?

MBN: Oh, folk, of course! And a red-tailed hawk just flew by my window. P

Allison Miller is editor of Perspectives. She tweets @Cliopticon.

KATHARINA MATRO

FOR THE LOVE OF TEACHING

My Journey from Graduate School to High School

One day, during my first year of teaching ninth-grade history, a student asked, "Dr. Matro, no offense, but why are you teaching *us*, when you could be doing so many other things with all the degrees you have?" Another chimed in: "Yes! Why? I'm not kidding, I lie awake at night thinking about this!" What a teachable moment, handed to me on a platter. I flubbed it, I'm afraid. I blushed and mumbled something unconvincing about how there are many factors to consider when choosing a career, eliciting a chorus of sarcastic cheers. Yet there was so much more I could have said—teaching those girls was exactly what I wanted to be doing with my career.

When I entered graduate school 10 years ago, I would not have considered teaching high school history for a second. Although my undergraduate adviser warned me about the academic job market, I was confident that I would end up writing books, researching in archives, and teaching history at a small liberal arts college somewhere in New England. It did not take long, however, to realize how difficult and unlikely achieving that vision would be, no matter how well I did. I began to ask myself whether the academic career I thought I'd always wanted was feasible or even desirable. Was I prepared to move—with my husband and two young children—all over the country, from one job to the next, in the hopes of landing a tenure-track position? While I loved graduate school, I could not justify the sacrifices that academia demanded.

Fortunately, I discovered in graduate school that I loved teaching and that I was pretty good at it. I loved introducing students to new worlds, texts, and points of view, demonstrating the importance of studying history and helping them become better writers and critical thinkers. I poured a lot of effort and energy into teaching and remember leaving campus on Friday afternoons feeling accomplished and happy. When a recruiter from a nearby private high school contacted graduate students in the department, I realized that higher education was not the only place where historians who love to teach might work.

> I realized that higher education was not the only place where historians who love to teach might work.

Katharina Matro in her element teaching ninth-grade world history.
Emma Cowan

As I was finishing graduate school, I asked for an informational interview with the head of the history department at the school where I now work full time. He encouraged me to start filling in as a substitute teacher. I hesitated at first, anxious about finding the time to write while teaching on the side. I also worried that I was simultaneously overqualified and underqualified. On the one hand, what I'd learned in graduate school surely was "too much" history for the high school classroom. On the other, I had not studied education—I knew next to nothing about classroom management, differentiated learning strategies, or teenagers. I wasn't sure why I would pursue a career that did not draw on my specific training and for which I had not specifically trained.

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I stepped into my first high school classroom one morning in late October that year, with some notes about the French Revolution in hand, to find 19 tenth graders staring at me. My hesitation quickly dissipated. Teaching here would and could draw on my strengths and expertise. My love for teaching *and* learning would help me acquire the skills that I still lacked. That morning, I asked students the same questions I would have posed to undergraduates: Why does this matter? Why are we studying this? After spending the class unpacking the events, clarifying different versions of the narrative, and listening to students think out loud, I felt energized. Of course, I also struggled that day: two girls seated across the room from each other carried on a conversation using hand gestures, laughing intermittently. Another put her head on her arms and fell asleep. Some of the questions I asked drew blank stares and silence. But I knew these were challenges I could and wanted to overcome.

Almost three years later, I am still learning. I now know more about how teenagers learn. I check to make sure that students are comfortable with me and with one another, and that they trust the classroom to be a safe space for intellectual debate. I think more consciously about what I say and how I say it, and I teach my students how to read and process information. I have become a more patient teacher of writing and cast about for effective ways to teach it and give useful feedback.

As a high school teacher, I also feel a greater sense of responsibility to engage all students and to appeal to different kinds of learners. I know it is up to me to figure out how to have students buy into what I teach. So I try to be transparent about my objectives, explaining to students why we practice so much writing and read difficult primary sources and different texts about the same event. Teenagers might balk at memorization, but they enjoy thinking about the relevance of history to their own lives. I still struggle, however, with pacing class time and finding the right mix of lectures and student-centered activities. When I see my senior colleagues conduct a carefully planned 80-minute lesson without losing a single student's attention, I am humbled and awed.

Still, I am convinced that my background adds value to the classroom. Studies suggest that the most effective teachers are passionate about what they teach. My students know that I have great passion for history—I devoted almost a decade of my life to pursuing an advanced degree in the subject. They see my face flush with excitement when we talk about interpreting primary sources. My training helps me take the historical details that high school students must learn and draw out the larger questions that historians ask. This school year, I had my students compare different textbook accounts of Charlemagne's reign—the thought that school textbooks could disagree baffled them. They were motivated by the fact that I was interested in their opinions about these texts, and that I saw them as critical readers not only of primary sources but of narratives. On a good day, students walk out of my classroom feeling like we have accomplished something and, as a result, they are motivated to continue learning. And when my students exhibit the same thrill at discovering stories from the past that I have felt since high school, I feel like I have made a difference and am exactly where I belong.

There are aspects of the job that have confirmed this sense of belonging. I have grown to appreciate the immense value of working on a team of dedicated, bright, funny, and warm colleagues who encourage me when I fail and cheer me on when I succeed. I work a lot every day, but I find the unrelenting pace of the school year, the hard work, and the creative demands of the job exhilarating. Teaching high school history has also pushed me to read widely outside of my field.

I wasn't sure why I would pursue a career that did not draw on my specific training and for which I had not specifically trained.

Then there are my students. When my ninth graders asked, "Why do you teach *us*?" they emphasized the word "us" in a way that made clear that they did not think of themselves as deserving objects of my efforts. Part of my role as a teacher at an all-girls high school has been to give teenage girls the confidence to take up more room in the world and, possibly, to change it for the better. Many of my students will not major in history in college, and some may not take any history classes at all. At this point, I could not feel more certain that teaching history to these students is vital. My department chair had us read Timothy Snyder's *On Tyranny* this summer. In the epilogue, Snyder writes, "To understand one moment is to see the possibility of being the cocreator of another. History permits us to be responsible. . . . And to make history, young Americans will have to know some." This is why I teach history to high school students. P

Katharina Matro teaches world history and economics at Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart in Bethesda, Maryland. She graduated from Stanford University in 2015 with a PhD in modern eastern European and German history.

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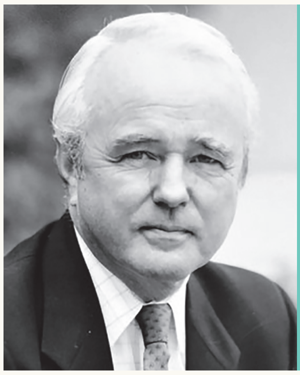

Otis L. Graham Jr.

1935–2017

Historian of Modern America

One of his generation's most distinctive historians of modern America, Otis L. Graham Jr. died on November 14, 2017, in Westlake Village, California. He was 82.

Born in Nashville, Tennessee, Graham attended Yale (BA 1957), where he majored in history. After college he served for three years as a Marine Corps officer, mostly in Hawaii. Completing military service, he took up graduate study at Columbia under Richard Hofstadter and William E. Leuchtenburg and earned his PhD in 1966. After teaching briefly before then at Mount Vernon Junior College (since merged into George Washington University), in 1966 he joined the faculty of the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he taught until 1980. In that year, he became Distinguished University Professor at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill, before returning in 1989 to Santa Barbara until 1995 to direct its graduate program in public history. He then taught at UNC Wilmington until 2002, before retiring.

Graham's first scholarly work was *An Encore for Reform: The Old Progressives and the New Deal* (1967). This was followed by other books meant to influence policy outcomes as well as historical understanding, including *Toward a Planned Society: From Roosevelt to Nixon* (1976) and *Losing Time: The Industrial Policy Debate* (1992).

Graham's most controversial public engagement as a historian—one that brought him much criticism, which he withstood with decent aplomb—was in favor of immigration restriction. As an undergraduate, he was already deeply troubled on environmental grounds by population growth. His argument against immigration grew from that concern. His two major books on the subject, *Unguarded Gates: A History of America's Immigration Crisis* (2004) and *Immigration Reform and America's Unchosen Future* (2008), made arguably the best possible liberal case for immigration restriction—to protect the nation's environment. His final book, *Presidents and the American Environment* (2015), surveyed presidential environmental policies from Benjamin Harrison to Barack Obama. His long associations with Robert M. Hutchins and Rexford G. Tugwell at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions and with the Federation for American Immigration Reform, the Center for Immigration Studies, and Californians for Population Stabilization (he served on the boards of the last three) reflected these interests.

Graham also deeply involved himself in extra-academic work. Most significantly, he helped nurture the infant public history movement. Following the lead of Santa Barbara colleagues Robert Kelley and G. Wesley Johnson, Graham served on the founding editorial committee of *The Public Historian* and, from 1990 to 1997, as its editor. As editor, he pioneered the effort to bring "gray literature"—unpublished government reports employing historical knowledge that typically escape assessment by professional historians—under critical review. As a practicing public historian, he wrote a short history of the Santa Barbara County wine industry and, with others, an account of the devastating 1990 fire that threatened the city of Santa Barbara. He also offered expert scholarly testimony in defense of the tobacco industry, an act that also brought him criticism.

Graham served between 1971 and 1974 on the AHA Council. During his career, he held fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the Woodrow Wilson Center, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Studies. In 1999, the National Council on Public History recognized him with its Robert Kelley Memorial Award.

All who knew Otis Graham experienced his bonhomie, broad laugh, and strong address to the world. A man of forceful personality, he was a college varsity wrestler and a Marine Corps officer (of which he was always proud), experiences that joined with his erect carriage to offer a challenging presence to others. His powerful and independent mind also had to be reckoned with. No one left his company without being impressed, and often amused, by his easy, colloquial use of language, which he could delightfully contort into fresh expression. Such stylistic flexibility found its way directly onto the printed page and into the fluent informality of his written works. There are few whose spoken voice can so easily be detected in their writings.

Graham is survived by his two children, historian Wade Graham and Lakin Crane; his brother, retired journalist Fred P. Graham and Fred's wife, Skila Harris; four grandchildren; and his first wife, Ann Graham Ehringer. He was predeceased by his second wife, Delores; his sister, Jenny Nunes; and his brother Hugh D. Graham, also a historian.

James M. Banner Jr.
Washington, DC

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(Signed)
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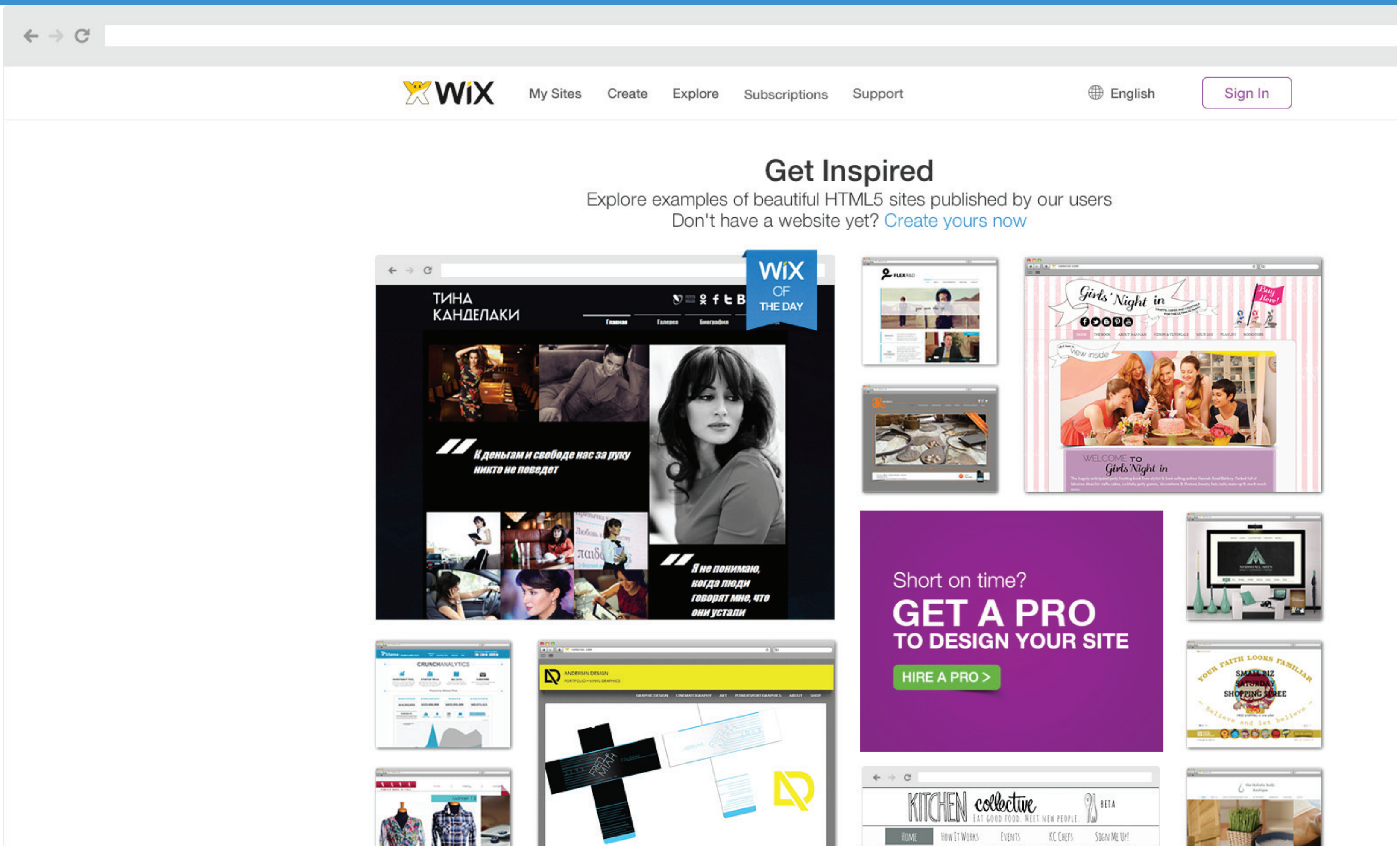

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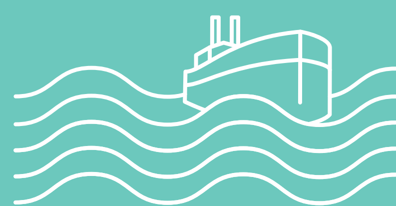

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