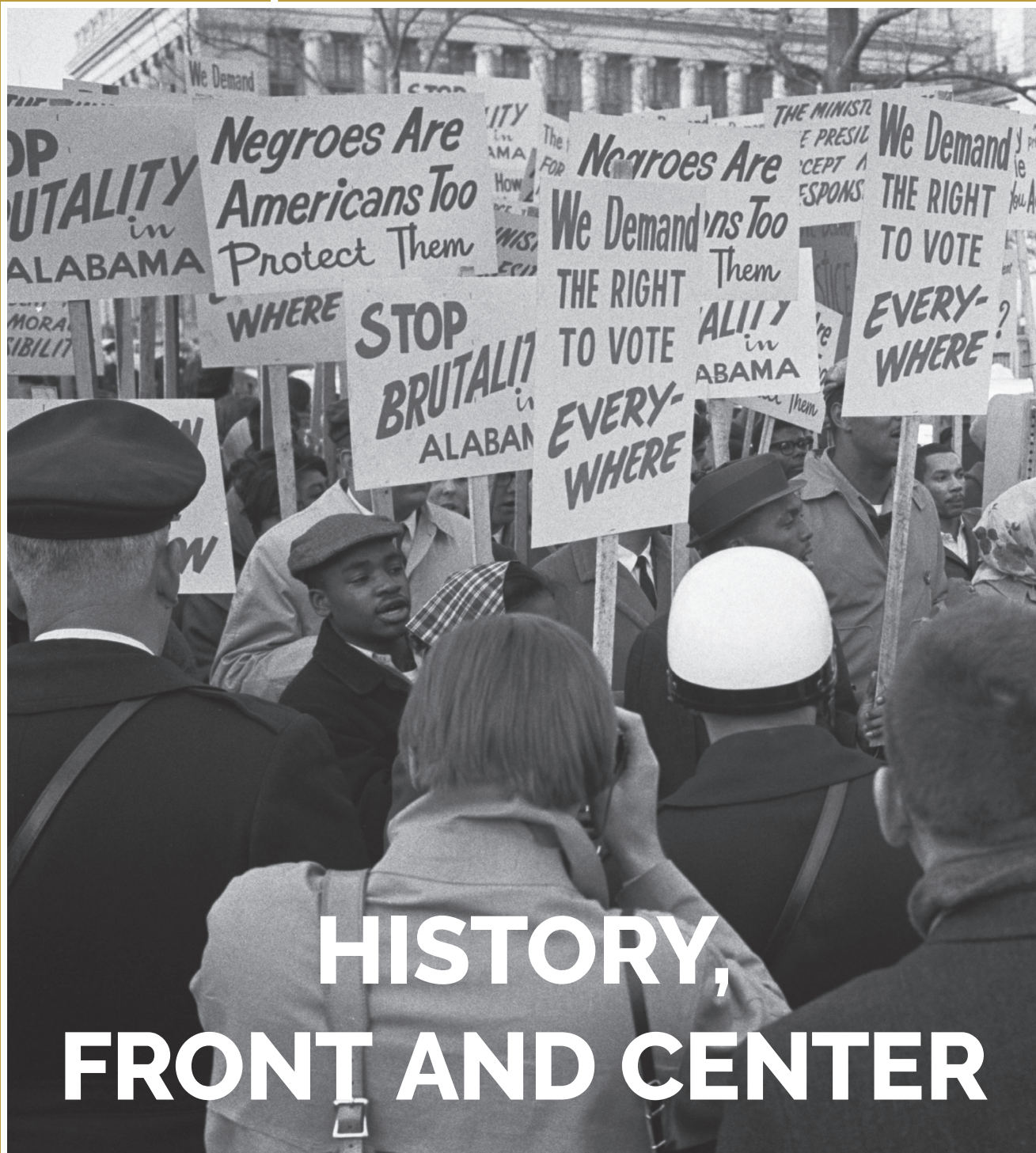


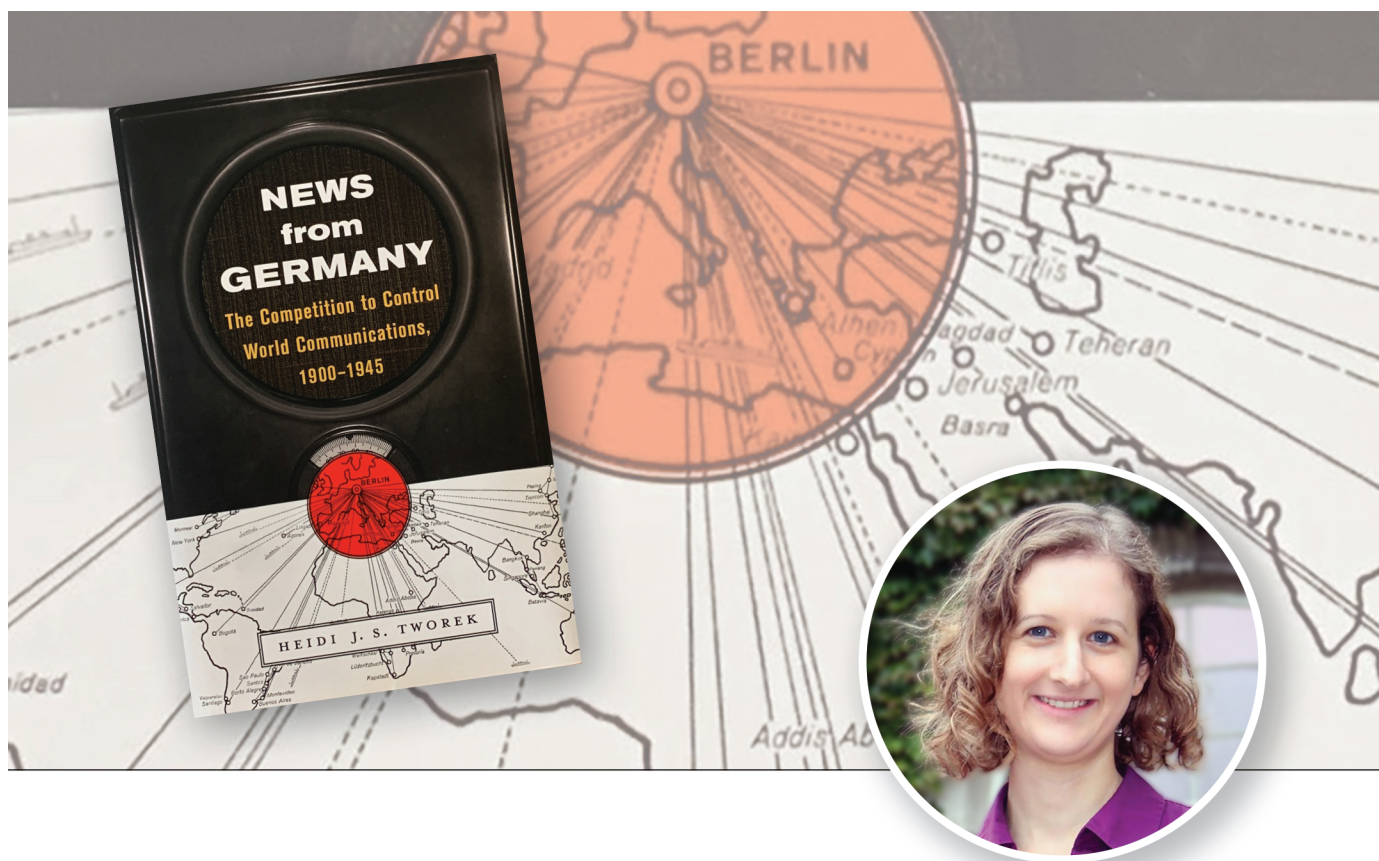
The newsmagazine of the American Historical Association

PERSPECTIVES ON HISTORY

Volume 58: 6
September 2020



**HISTORY,
FRONT AND CENTER**



The Ralph Gomory Prize

The 2020 Ralph Gomory Prize of the Business History Conference was awarded to Heidi Tworek, The University of British Columbia, for her book, *News from Germany: The Competition to Control World Communications, 1900-1945* (Harvard University Press) at the Business History Conference annual meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, on March 14, 2020.

The Ralph Gomory Prize for Business History (made possible by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation) recognizes historical work on the effect business enterprises have on the economic conditions of a country in which they operate. A \$5,000 prize is awarded annually. Eligible books are written in English and published two years (2019 or 2020 copyright) prior to the award. The 2021 Prize will be presented at the annual meeting of the Business History Conference to be held in Detroit, Michigan, March 11-14, 2021.

Four copies of a book must accompany a nomination and be submitted to the Prize Coordinator, Carol Ressler Lockman, Business History Conference, PO Box 3630, 298 Buck Road, Wilmington, DE 19807-0630 USA. Email: clockman@hagley.org.

The deadline for submission is November 30, 2020.

Information is available at <http://www.thebhc.org/gomory>



www.thebhc.org

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ON THE COVER

We worked on this election-themed issue of *Perspectives* throughout a summer defined as much by Black Lives Matter protests and escalating attacks on Americans’ voting rights as by the COVID-19 pandemic. “We demand the right to vote, everywhere” and “stop brutality” signs, held aloft by Black people demonstrating outside the White House in 1965, are as relevant and necessary today as they were a half-century ago. In “So Far Away from 1965,” Julian Zelizer provides us with a history of the Voting Rights Act and outlines the various ways that its critics have succeeded in reversing its progress.

Library of Congress/Warren K. Leffler, 2014645538. Image cropped.

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ASHLEY E. BOWEN

TOWNHOUSE NOTES

Joining and Supporting the Community

We were still shaking hands when I interviewed at the AHA townhouse in early March. By the time I accepted the position as *Perspectives on History*'s new editor, Philadelphia, where I'm based, had been on a stay-at-home order for a few days. I still thought I'd be in Washington, DC, by midsummer and would soon lead lively editorial board meetings in person, share printed proofs with the magazine's managing editor, or write my editor's note from the comfort of a café.

Although how and where I do my work has changed a great deal because of the pandemic, the why has not. Despite everything that COVID-19 has upended, *Perspectives* continues to cultivate the community of historians and promote our work.

Community building takes many forms. Our team worked with the three winners of *Perspectives*' graduate student summer column contest—Rachel Basinger (Norwich Univ.), Allison Robinson (Univ. of Chicago), and Leah Valtin-Erwin (Indiana Univ. Bloomington)—to prepare six articles for publication. Their columns, on the history of the US Census, digital pedagogy, and grocery shopping in the German Democratic Republic, began appearing online in July and will continue to be posted throughout the autumn. Another summer series, “Lessons Learned from Career Diversity,” brought together the AHA's Career Diversity fellows to reflect on their work over the last two years. In “Peer-to-Peer Research Exchange,” I wrote about the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations' online forum, which enables historians to share archival materials while archives and libraries are closed.

Communities are, of course, made up of individuals. Ángela Vergara's (California State Univ., Los Angeles) “Productivity Moves with Our Bodies” was a powerful reminder that productivity is dependent on “our bodies, our feelings, our communities.” We cannot separate our intellectual work from the demands of the body. If you

have been feeling pressure to sustain the level of productivity you had before COVID hit, I encourage you to read her article (and then, perhaps, take a break).

It was almost distressingly easy to promote the work of historians this summer. Each day brought a new, often horrifying headline that needed historical context and analysis. We began the summer with a piece by Chad Lower (Brazosport Coll.) recounting the experience of Columbus, Ohio, in running “School without Schools” in 1977. His article offered an important reminder that a massive, rapid shift to off-site teaching had happened before and that the creativity, cooperation, and patience that are helping us through COVID are skills teachers have relied on previously. As Black Lives Matter protests pressed the nation to reckon yet again with its racist past, Austin McCoy (Auburn Univ.) unpacked resistance to calls to defund the police in ““Defund the Police”: Protest Slogans and the Terms for Debate.” We closed the summer with a series in early August on monuments in the US.

Looking forward, this issue and the October issue of *Perspectives on History* will feature articles by leading historians on topics likely to be vital to the coming election. Although we cannot possibly cover every relevant issue, we hope that these articles are useful to educators, students, and voters looking to understand what is at stake. We invite you to access each article online, where you can find short reading lists the authors created for use in the classroom.

It has been both a great honor and utterly surreal to step into this role right now. I am grateful for the smart and meaningful work created by my fellow historians. It offers me hope in moments of despair and reminds me that we are actors in much longer struggles for justice, health, and knowledge. **P**

Ashley E. Bowen is editor of Perspectives on History. She tweets @AEBowenPhD.



Recently Published Online in *Perspectives Daily*



Named for the Enemy

Ty Seidule

A historian and retired brigadier general discusses what he considers "the US Army's Confederate problem."

A Monument to Black Resistance and Strength

Chris Myers Asch and George Derek Musgrove

DC's Emancipation Memorial is under discussion for possible removal.

Setting the Lost Cause on Fire

Karen L. Cox

Protesters burned the United Daughters of the Confederacy's headquarters in Richmond, Virginia.

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STATEMENT ON HISTORICAL RESEARCH DURING COVID-19

COVID-19 is not just altering historians' everyday life; it has also upended historical research. Although most university and college administrators have issued FAQs, guidelines, and resources that relate to the continuance of laboratory and human subjects research, they have not always addressed the conditions under which historians work or considered how to make accommodations for historical research during the pandemic. Moreover, in assessing productivity at this moment, it is imperative that university administrations recognize the distinctions among disciplines in types of research and to take into account the unusually burdensome tasks of teaching now affecting all instructors.

Historical research generally involves identifying and analyzing primary documents, which can include written, visual, aural, or material resources. Archives, special collections at historical societies and libraries, museums, historic sites, and other repositories typically hold these materials. In many cases, scholars must travel to a particular archive to consult materials that are not available for external loan or in digital form. University departments and divisions, government sources of funding, and private sources such as foundations frequently support such research. Presently, however, domestic and international travel is prohibited or limited by many institutions, and many of these entities are suspending or postponing distribution of research money and cancelling fellowship competitions. Such actions are delaying or inhibiting historical research for an indefinite period. In addition, students and non-tenure-track and contingent faculty are in many cases experiencing restrictions to onsite-only library privileges. For graduate students, limited access to research is extending time to graduation. For early career scholars, limited research access is already slowing the publication of articles and books on which employment and tenure decisions are largely based. Lack of access to research materials also potentially disadvantages mid-level scholars in the promotion process.

At the same time, repositories that safeguard and allow access to researchers have suffered staff layoffs, lost revenue, and in many cases the closing of their doors. The tasks of librarians, archivists, and curators have multiplied; they have taken on new public health training duties while continuing to try to answer reference questions in the absence of shelf access. Future conservation and digitization projects have been put on hold. Libraries are instead engaging in many cases in rapid-response collecting initiatives to capture peoples' experiences during the pandemic. Serving researchers under such conditions is difficult at best.

The AHA recognizes that sustaining historical research during the COVID-19 crisis requires flexible and innovative approaches to the conduct of research itself as well as to how we gauge productivity.

The AHA recognizes that sustaining historical research during the COVID-19 crisis requires flexible and innovative approaches to the conduct of research itself as well as to how we gauge productivity. To that end, the AHA makes the following observations and recommendations.

Because PhD students and early career scholars are especially disadvantaged right now, we suggest the following:

- Under the current circumstances, advisors and departments should assist PhD students in exploring dissertation topics that can, at least in the early phases, be

Continued on page 7

STATEMENT ON DEPARTMENT CLOSURES AND FACULTY FIRINGS

The AHA has issued a Statement on Department Closures and Faculty Firings urging higher education administrators to “respect the established principles and procedures of faculty governance and consult with faculty from all disciplines at their institution” before making budgetary decisions that relate to academic priorities and programs. “History education must retain its vibrancy and institutional integrity”; closing or decimating history departments “comes at immense cost to students and to colleges and universities themselves, and to society as a whole.”

All students benefit from studying history at the undergraduate level. The American Historical Association has, and will continue to, assist history departments in making the case for the imperative of historical learning and thinking in higher education.

The Association recognizes that the compounding crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic implications have resulted in a dramatic decline in higher education revenues. Given the uncertainties—financial, epidemiological, and otherwise—of the upcoming fall term, administrators confront difficult choices. As historians, we recognize that an unprecedented combination of circumstances complicates decision-making even further.

Wise decision-making by leaders in higher education, however, must be informed by historical perspective. Historians know how to take the long view. Their work, by its very nature, draws from, integrates, and synthesizes a variety of disciplines. Colleges and universities need these faculty members as participants in governance. The negative consequences of closing a history department would not take long to observe but would take years to reverse.

A glance at recent references in the media reveals that our discipline is an attractive target for the budgetary axe. Because history education prepares students for careers rather than jobs, its benefits are readily underestimated. This is especially ironic given that the historical knowledge

and thinking that undergird the work of citizenship are arguably more essential now than ever. For this reason alone, history education must retain its vibrancy and institutional integrity.

The AHA recognizes that every discipline has a claim to its centrality to higher education; moreover, each institution has its own mission, its own priorities, and its own culture. What we ask, however, is that individuals making budgetary decisions in higher education respect the established principles and procedures of faculty governance and consult with faculty from all disciplines at their institution. We expect that leaders will prioritize the educational missions of their institutions in a manner consistent with the humane values that stand at the core of education itself.

The negative consequences of closing a history department would not take long to observe but would take years to reverse.

The AHA stands prepared to help history departments state their case. The content and methodology of history are crucial to the education of intellectually agile graduates who are well-prepared to navigate dynamic work environments and participate fully in civic life. History students not only gain knowledge and develop insights and judgment that help them succeed in college and contribute to their communities; they also learn skills—in communication, analysis, cultural competence, and research, among others—that are consistently cited by employers as important credentials. To succeed in college, and subsequently to be effective participants in workplaces and communities, students must learn to evaluate one or more potentially competing accounts and interpretations of things that (ostensibly) happened in the recent or distant past—whether those are accounts of an election, a riot, a

religious awakening, changes in workplaces, or an intellectual breakthrough. Citizens of a democratic republic need to be able to evaluate sources and evidence in a glut of digital information, and to think clearly in the midst of a cacophony of voices in the public sphere.

Several higher education institutions have recently closed or consolidated history departments, or laid off substantial numbers of historians. Others now contemplate such measures. Doing so comes at immense cost to students and

to colleges and universities themselves, and to society as a whole. To eliminate or decimate a history department is a lose-lose proposition: it deprives students of essential learning and skills, even as it strips institutions of the essential perspectives and intellectual resources so necessary to confront the present and shape the future. **P**

Approved by the AHA Council on July 27, 2020. For a full list of signatories, please see the online version of this statement.

Continued from page 5

STATEMENT ON RESEARCH

accomplished using currently accessible source materials. Experienced scholars should also assist graduate students and early career scholars in crafting research proposals and methodologies to take account of what sources are and are not available at this time.

- When possible, graduate programs should work to achieve extended funding for students in order to facilitate the successful and timely completion of dissertations.

Now is the time to acknowledge a wider range of scholarly productivity.

Evaluators of scholarship and dissertation and thesis advisors should keep in mind current limitations on research access when evaluating scholarly work. Now is the time to acknowledge a wider range of scholarly productivity. Under the current circumstances, several ways exist to facilitate historical research:

- Departments, universities, libraries, archives, museums, and funding agencies should encourage collaborative projects across fields, ranks, and institutions.
- Departments, universities, and funding agencies should extend existing research funding, allow scholars to adjust budgets, and, in some cases, redirect funds to domestic and/or foreign research assistants for the digitization of sources.
- Research libraries should permit research fellows to defer on-site visits when possible and in accordance with public health and safety guidelines.

Departments, universities, and employers of historians should consider ways to document how the crisis is affecting research, writing, and the ability to disseminate research by introducing appropriate accommodations to the rate of productivity while preserving existing standards of quality. Advisors, chairs, directors of programs, and administrators should work to ensure conditions that allow scholars to progress toward their goals and advance their careers. These include:

- Cancelled conference presentations and talks, and postponed fellowships, grants, and other funding should be included on *curricula vitae*.
- Departments, universities, and historical organizations should encourage alternative ways for scholars to network and to receive feedback on their work, such as participating in virtual conference sessions and workshops.
- Departments, colleges, universities, and other employers of historians should review existing frameworks of assessment to ensure that they are evaluating a broad range of work that may fall outside the normal scholarly parameters.
- Universities and historical organizations should consider finding ways for contingent faculty and independent scholars to have access to online databases and special collections. The AHA is committed to supporting these scholars; see the AHA's *Statement on Research Access* (2020). **P**

Approved by the AHA Council on July 23, 2020. For a full list of signatories, please see the online version of this statement.

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MARY LINDEMANN

GOING REMOTE

Is This Remote Teaching or Just Remotely Teaching?



Almost every educator reading this column has performed their own experiences—the good, the bad, and the ugly—with remote teaching. COVID-19 transformed the pedagogical world and required almost all of us to develop means of teaching our students remotely, often with little preparation. We did this in an atmosphere of crisis, fear, and general economic and social upheaval. After months of “going remote,” I felt it might be time to ask: is this remote teaching or just remotely teaching?

Before I go any further, I should lay out my own prejudices and experiences. First, if I thought teaching remotely (not the same as online instruction) was my new normal, I would retire fast. I like being with students and face-to-face interaction. In short, I enjoy teaching in a traditional classroom. As much as I prefer that relationship with students, I realize the traditional classroom does not work, or work well, for everyone. One of the great advantages of online instruction is that, at least in its best forms and in principle, it can democratize education. Many students gathered under the rubric of “nontraditional” can profit significantly from online teaching. Older students, students with disabilities, parents, caregivers, or students who work full-time rarely have the opportunity to benefit from traditional classroom settings. It is shortsighted (and cruel) to frustrate their desire for education. Of course, as has become glaringly obvious over the course of several months, these students also tend to experience the greatest difficulties with remote learning, often the result of a lack of proper equipment, technical assistance, or privacy.

Second, my experiences with teaching remotely or online are limited. This spring, I taught just one small graduate seminar by Zoom, and it worked reasonably well. Many historians, especially teachers in part-time positions, have developed expertise in online history education that has yielded impressive results.

In order to get some idea of what remote teaching was like “in the trenches,” I asked a few colleagues to share their experiences with me and to be candid in evaluating the pros and cons. Unlike the *Chronicle of Higher Education* study, published under the headline “Screen Test: Was Remote Learning a Success?” on June 12, my informal poll hardly counts as a statistically valid sample; it is a very small ($n=10$), nonrepresentative group made up of colleagues at smaller liberal arts colleges and R-1 and R-2 universities, both public and private. It has the distinct advantage, however, of focusing on the experiences of historians and not a general group of instructors and administrators. I solicited comments from faculty at different stages in their careers, including two contingent or non-tenure-track faculty, and with varying levels of experience with online teaching. My colleagues were, without exception, honest and forthcoming, writing thoughtful and lengthy emails to me, weighing carefully what they had discovered.

COVID-19 required almost all of us to develop means of teaching our students remotely, often with little preparation.

Unsurprisingly, the results were mixed. No one was totally negative, and no one entirely positive, although the level of enthusiasm varied a great deal. I took away four key points from their experiences with remote teaching.

First, with perhaps only one exception, everyone who responded praised their colleagues and their departments for moving quickly to support faculty. Representative of this feeling were comments like, “Overall . . . my colleagues were flexible and exhibited a generosity of spirit in demanding circumstances.” Some faculty members organized their own online help sessions, independent of any assistance provided institutionally. In one person’s

words, these sessions were “a huge help and a positive community experience.” Several colleges identified “power users” or point-people for the frustrated and confused to consult. The technical services staff members who assisted faculty and students also received high praise. Their work purchasing mobile hotspots, loaning computers and headsets, providing simple online instructions on how to deal with Zoom, record classes, and teach either synchronously or asynchronously was invaluable.

Second, my colleagues proved especially inventive in creating new assignments that allowed rich pedagogical experiences. Two respondents turned to their schools’ archives and asked students to explore material objects available online. Another expanded a course that was already “image heavy.” For these faculty members, remote teaching enabled new instructional methods and suggested subjects that would work just as well in an in-person classroom. One person commented that his own historical interpretations benefited while working with students on archivally based materials. He was quite grateful for the new insights and, for that matter, for the new *kind* of knowledge he had acquired.

I was impressed by my peers’
ability to do more than just “make
it work.”

Third, my colleagues praised students’ willingness to cope with unexpected situations but felt nervous that students were moving too rapidly or superficially through materials. One instructor observed that assignments she expected to take about two hours to complete were done too quickly. She wondered if “students had found a way to hack the system to get their full credit because I could see that they generally only spent twenty minutes on each chapter.” Others felt that although students read the assignments and responded thoughtfully to the questions, the deficits due to the lack of the give-and-take of in-person discussion were sorely evident. Several people I spoke to worried that their students’ success online this spring depended on the rapport they had built up before COVID-19 hit. Starting with remote teaching “from scratch,” where the faculty and students never meet except on screen (as will be the case for many of us this fall), might not produce comparable results.

Finally, although I did not find overwhelming enthusiasm for remote teaching, I was impressed by my peers’ ability to do more than just “make it work.” The semester was not

“lost.” However, we should not shy away from the negative assessments. To my surprise, complaints about cheating and plagiarism were infrequent. More often, my peers worried that the students were being cheated and that the level of learning had been significantly reduced. Moreover, and especially in the larger classes, “students got a lot less feedback than normally would have been the case.” The response by some leaders to faculty and student concerns boiled down to “make do” and “release yourself from high expectations.” My colleagues felt that neither should become a pedagogical goal.

My colleagues’ experiences reflected a kind of “learn as you go” attitude to online teaching last spring. I hope that, for the many institutions that will be teaching remotely in the fall, and perhaps for the entire 2020–21 academic year, things will run more smoothly now that instructors and students have gained more familiarity with the medium and now that institutions have done more work to make the technical side of remote teaching function better. In addition, a vast amount of advice now exists about “how to teach remotely.” A series of *Perspectives Daily* articles this spring and summer addressed various issues regarding remote teaching, with more to come this fall. Additionally, with the support of an NEH CARES Grant, the AHA is compiling several resources to support online teaching. The Online Teaching Forum is a series of virtual events, from webinars to workshops, on pedagogical moves and digital content to enhance the teaching of history online and in hybrid environments.

It will be interesting to see if remote teaching will become the “new normal.” Or will it, like much teleworking, rapidly lose its appeal once (hopefully) we emerge from the shadow of COVID-19—a recovery that is looking ever more remote. **P**

Mary Lindemann is president of the AHA.

JAMES GROSSMAN

HISTORY, FRONT AND CENTER



I woke up this morning (July 30) and learned that the president of the United States had tweeted, “With Universal Mail-In Voting (not Absentee Voting, which is good), 2020 will be the most INACCURATE & FRAUDULENT Election in history. It will be a great embarrassment to the USA. Delay the Election until people can properly, securely and safely vote???”

At least there were question marks. But the calculation was clear—as was the threat—in the president’s readiness to float an idea that proved unthinkable, even among Republican leadership inside the White House and on Capitol Hill.

That idea was merely an extreme example of an old ritual: the invocation of “fraud” as a justification for suppressing voter participation (“extreme” because the very idea of *not* holding an election raises the possibility of rather substantial interference in participation). The invocation of fraud has a long history, dating to the overthrow of Reconstruction and then to the late 19th century, when southern states systematically stripped African American men of the right to vote (women, already unenfranchised). The mechanisms were varied, and sometimes creative, but they shared a rhetoric that emphasized fraudulent elections as the justification for eliminating Black Americans from the polity.

Rhetoric is not the only element of voter suppression that has a history, of course. The reality does too. There was no evidence of widespread voter fraud then, and there is no evidence today. But for more than a half century, historians were complicit in the propagation of this insidious myth: that Reconstruction was an era drenched in political corruption and “redeemed” by white southerners, who recognized Black disfranchisement as the key to ensuring the “integrity” of their democracy. Historians have since scoured the landscape of the 19th-century South: the only significant voter fraud they’ve found was the fraud

necessary to enforce disfranchisement. The same holds true today. As Tom Ridge, the first secretary of homeland security (under George W. Bush), explained: “There is absolutely no antecedent, no factual basis for [Trump’s] claim of massive fraud in mail voting.” In this issue of *Perspectives on History*, Julian Zelizer refers to the sophisticated statistical work that political scientists use to corroborate Ridge’s informed observation. Given what we know about the use of fraud by those who claim fraud, it is important to watch what is happening at the US Postal Service, which historically has an excellent record of providing access to the ballot, in states with a wide range of political profiles.

Voter fraud is the stuff of
conspiracy; voter suppression,
the stuff of history.

So, yes, the AHA is “taking sides” on voter suppression and the integrity of American elections. We are taking the side of integrity in our own discipline. Regular readers of this column are well aware that I have advocated for a decade on behalf of framing policy issues historically, bringing historians to tables of policy formation and analysis. In this case, historians at the table will point to the red flags raised all around it that say: we are seeing something that has happened before. Voter fraud is the stuff of conspiracy; voter suppression, the stuff of history.

The president himself has centered our discipline in the electoral arena by casting debates over public memorials in terms of “preserving” or “erasing history.” Debate over the fate of Confederate monuments is nothing new. But in June, an executive order raised the stakes:

Key targets in the violent extremists’ campaign against our country are public monuments,

memorials, and statues. Their selection of targets reveals a deep ignorance of our history, and is indicative of a desire to indiscriminately destroy anything that honors our past and to erase from the public mind any suggestion that our past may be worth honoring, cherishing, remembering, or understanding.

In case anyone hasn't gotten the message yet that history matters, the executive order continues:

It is the policy of the United States to prosecute to the fullest extent permitted under Federal law, and as appropriate, any person or any entity that destroys, damages, vandalizes, or desecrates a monument, memorial, or statue within the United States or otherwise vandalizes government property.

Hence the administration's justification for dispatching unidentified but heavily armed federal law enforcement personnel to Portland, Oregon, despite the opposition of local authorities. This has a history, but not good precedent. President Washington had a court order to send military personnel to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794; President Eisenhower sent clearly identified National Guard and 109th Airborne troops to protect court-directed rights of children in Little Rock in 1957.

This fall, history matters to public culture, public policy, and politics more explicitly than it has in recent memory.

This fall, history matters to public culture, public policy, and politics more explicitly than it has in recent memory. As historians, we typically draw on our expertise to explain the imperatives of thinking historically. This time, the president of the United States has explicitly put our discipline on the table.

We approach an election in which not only history sits front and center; so too the values of historians. This is no small matter—and in less dangerous times, these issues can be complex and ambiguous. The AHA frequently invokes its *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct* in response to queries about ethics, or to establish procedures in such venues as our annual meeting or online members forum. We are an evidence-based discipline: “All historians believe in honoring the **integrity of the historical record**. They do not fabricate evidence.” It matters to

historians when a president makes false or misleading claims (20,000 as of mid-July). It matters to historians when an administration removes data from federal websites. It matters to historians when overwhelming evidence about life-threatening health issues is summarily dismissed.

This issue of *Perspectives on History* marks the 10th anniversary of my first executive director's column, in which I invoked “the importance of history to public culture” and encouraged readers to “Take risks. Get out there in public and talk about history and why it matters.” I never imagined, then, writing an AHA column like this one, and I hope never to do so again. This issue of *Perspectives* offers historical context for four questions facing us in the November election; next month, we'll add three more. That is what we should be doing, rather than worrying about the integrity of our elections or the role that institutions like the AHA must play to help maintain them. Last October, when I stepped out further than I'd once expected, I explained why:

Like the media, the infrastructure of scholarship is a bulwark of a free society. I have not been among those who see fascism creeping into our political processes, but I do see something happening that differs from anything I've seen before. If a clear and present danger does exist—and I recognize the legitimacy and imperative of debate here—then we must recognize the obligations of institutions of civil society when the rule of law itself comes under threat from those sworn to enforce it. Under such circumstances, the AHA has a responsibility to participate beyond its normal conventions.

This is not Weimar Germany. But I take seriously the increasing levels of concern expressed by our colleagues who study that era, and who bring to the table comparable expertise on relevant issues. This president has threatened to call off an election and refused to promise that he will accept its results. We have become accustomed to White House staff assuring us of their boss's love of sarcasm and overstated provocation. But whether the president's words are empty threats or denial of evidence-based medical science, it is clear that, in the moment, he has meant what he said and said what he meant. A clear and present danger apparently exists, and as a historian and a citizen I am obliged to call attention to it. **P**

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

GABRIELLA VIRGINIA FOLSOM

ADVOCACY BRIEFS

AHA Advocates for Historians in Uncertain Times

During this time of uncertainty, the AHA has continued to support historians in the invaluable work they do—advocating for both students and history departments in higher education, contextualizing our racist history and what it means for our society today, and encouraging administrators and lawmakers alike to understand the inherent value of history.

Letter to Congress on Further CARES Funding for Higher Ed

In June 2020, the AHA joined 33 other societies in a letter to Congress requesting additional relief for higher education, which has been hit hard by challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic. The letter outlined the struggles that universities, especially HBCUs, community colleges, underfunded public institutions, and tuition-dependent nonprofit private colleges have faced in the wake of this crisis, and asked for greater investments in higher education to provide for the common good.

AHA Statement on the History of Racist Violence in the United States

In June 2020, the AHA issued a statement urging a reckoning with the United States' deplorable record of violence against African Americans. The killing of George Floyd at the

hands of Minneapolis police officers stands within this sordid national tradition of racist violence. It is past time for Americans to confront our nation's past, using insights from history to inform our actions as we work to create a more just society. Ninety-four scholarly organizations have co-signed this statement to date.

AHA Endorses Senate Resolution Recognizing the Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial

The AHA endorsed a resolution introduced by Senator Elizabeth Warren on July 2, 2020, recognizing the forthcoming centennial of the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921. "Everything has a history, including white supremacy and the many forms of violence, coercion, and cultural practices that have legitimated and enforced it," said AHA executive director Jim Grossman. "What happened in Tulsa was extreme, but not unusual. It is part of our nation's heritage. We must acknowledge that heritage, learn from it, and do whatever each of us can to ensure that it is just that—heritage, rather than continuing practice."

AHA Issues Resolution Regarding Affiliations between ICE and Higher Education

The AHA issued a resolution in June 2020 acknowledging credible

allegations of serious and systematic violation of human rights committed by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the US Border Patrol, and encouraging higher education institutions to consult with historians and our colleagues in other relevant disciplines before entering into arrangements with both agencies.

AHA Writes Letter Opposing New ICE Obstacles to Students from Foreign Countries

The AHA sent a letter in July 2020 to the deputy director and senior official performing the duties of the director of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, strongly objecting to "modifications" declaring that foreign "students attending schools operating entirely online may not take a full online course load and remain in the United States." Whether driven by nativism or an agenda to pressure higher education to reopen campuses, this ruling is likely to have a devastating effect on hundreds of thousands of foreign students and the colleges and universities they attend.

AHA Signs on to AAS Statement on the 2020 Hong Kong National Security Law

In July 2020, the AHA joined several scholarly societies in signing the Association for Asian Studies' Statement on the 2020 Hong Kong National Security Law. The statement expresses

concern over the People's Republic of China's curtailment of Hong Kong's freedom and expresses concern that such a law would inhibit academic exchange.

AHA Issues Statement on Historical Research during COVID-19

The AHA issued a statement on July 23, 2020, urging universities to make accommodations for faculty and students whose research has been interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. "Sustaining historical research during the COVID-19 crisis," the statement argues, "requires flexible and innovative approaches to the conduct of research itself as well as to how we gauge productivity." Recommendations include deferral and extension of research funding awards, increased access to online databases, require on-site research, and incorporation of virtual

scholarship in professional evaluations. Forty-six scholarly organizations have co-signed this statement to date. See page 5 for the full statement.

AHA Writes Letter Condemning Tenured Faculty Layoffs at Canisius

On July 24, 2020, the AHA sent a letter to the president and members of the board of trustees of Canisius College expressing grave concern about a dramatic restructuring of academic departments, drastic reduction of the history curriculum, and termination of three tenured faculty members. The AHA urged the college to reconsider its course of action, asserting that the college's plan "diminishes the quality of a Canisius degree" and "identifies the college with employment practices that have no place in American higher education."

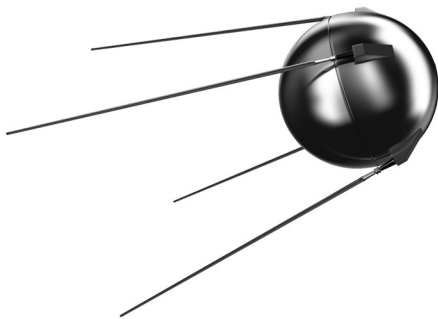
AHA Issues Statement on Department Closures and Faculty Firings

On July 27, 2020, the AHA issued a statement urging administrators to "respect the established principles and procedures of faculty governance and consult with faculty from all disciplines at their institution" before making budgetary decisions. The AHA emphasized that "history education must retain its vibrancy and institutional integrity" and that closing or decimating history departments "comes at immense cost to students and to colleges and universities themselves, and to society as a whole." Twenty-six scholarly societies have co-signed this statement. See page 6 for the full statement. **P**

Gabriella Virginia Folsom is the communications and operations assistant at the AHA. She tweets @gabby_folsom.

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JULIAN E. ZELIZER

SO FAR AWAY FROM 1965

Voting Rights in the United States



In 1965, Black protesters gathered outside of the White House to demand the expansion and protection of their voting rights after "Bloody Sunday".

Library of Congress/Warren K. Leffler, 2014645538

IT IS WRONG—deadly wrong—to deny any of your fellow Americans the right to vote in this country,” President Lyndon B. Johnson declared in the wake of “Bloody Sunday,” a day of brutal encounters in Selma, Alabama, between peaceful civil rights activists and police in 1965. The protest in Selma was just one in a series of voting rights protests that took place across the South in the mid-20th century. After the end of slavery in the United States and in the wake of Reconstruction, when the 15th Amendment prevented states from denying men the right to vote based on “race, color, or previous condition of servitude,” southern states imposed new laws that erected immense barriers to voting for African Americans. Literacy tests and poll taxes helped reverse many of the political gains won after the Civil War. White southerners also resorted to outright violence, including lynching, as a way to intimidate African American voters.

African Americans struggled to end this regime. Those who moved north as part of the Great Migration in the 1910s and 1920s became an essential part of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal coalition. Civil rights activists mobilized to build pressure on southern states and on the US Congress, and voting rights became a central goal for the Civil Rights Movement that blossomed in the 1950s and early 1960s under the leadership of figures such as Martin Luther King Jr.

The federal government finally took action following the confrontation in Selma. With Lyndon Johnson in the White House, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA), whereby the federal government committed to protecting the voting rights of all Americans, regardless of race. The legislation prohibited the use of literacy tests and required certain states and local governments to obtain preclearance for any changes to their voting laws if they had a demonstrated pattern of denying voting rights. The legislation also established a formula for how jurisdictions subject to preclearance requirements would be identified.

The VRA enabled the federal government to step in to prevent states from making policy that kept people away from the polls. It complemented the Supreme Court’s one man—one vote rulings between 1962 and 1964; among other things, *Baker v. Carr* in 1962 and *Reynolds v. Simms* in 1964 ensured that states could not create districts that gave heavily populated urban areas the same representation as sparsely populated rural areas.

The VRA worked. The reforms of the mid-1960s were incomplete, with many issues still left on the table, but the trajectory was clear. In Mississippi, the state with the worst

track record of race-based voter suppression, the percentage of eligible African American voters jumped from 7 percent in 1965 to 67 percent by 1969. The number of black elected officials in states where the federal government stepped in to enforce the VRA increased from about 72 in 1965 to over 1,000 by the mid-1970s.

The promise, however, was never fulfilled. By the early 1980s, a new generation opposed to African American political participation was resurrecting the old bromide of “voter fraud” in what would eventually become a successful attack on the VRA. A generation of conservative lawyers, many of whom cut their teeth in the Reagan White House (including future Supreme Court justice John Roberts), developed arguments that would be deployed by conservatives for gradually restricting the federal protections enacted in the 1960s.

The VRA enabled the federal government to step in to prevent states from making policy that kept people away from the polls.

This legal strategy relied on false claims of widespread voter fraud to justify greater restrictions on voting throughout the nation. This is nothing new. Politicians have ginned up anxieties about voter fraud since Reconstruction in order to roll back suffrage. These warnings are often not grounded in reality. According to a 2017 report by the non-partisan Brennan Center, incident rates of voting fraud were between .0003 percent and .0025 percent, hardly enough to sway an election. In other words, the drive to protect elections has been used as a cover for curtailing the ease of voting.

After Republicans took control of the House in the 2010 midterm elections, Republican state legislators accelerated a drive to implement new voter restrictions. Their efforts culminated, and received legal legitimation, with the Supreme Court’s *Shelby County v. Holder* decision in 2013. This landmark decision struck down the VRA’s preclearance formula and the requirement that the federal government had to approve of changes to election law in municipalities with a record of discrimination. Roberts, now chief justice, was the major voice in the opinion. He justified the decision by saying that, because voting discrimination was minimal, the law wasn’t necessary. “Coverage under the law,” Roberts stated, was “based on decades-old data and eradicated practices.” There was “no longer such a disparity,” he said.

Numerous Republicans praised the decision. South Carolina Senator Lindsay Graham insisted that “my state has made tremendous strides. I feel comfortable that we can have fair elections.” His colleague from Alabama, Jeff Sessions, called it, “good news, I think, for the South, in that [there was] not sufficient evidence to justify treating them disproportionately than, say, Philadelphia or Boston or Los Angeles or Chicago.”

Civil rights activists viewed the decision as a stunning blow to the right to vote. President Obama said he was “deeply disappointed” by the decision. Critics contended that the Court took the perverse step of saying that because the law worked, it was no longer needed. “Hubris,” wrote Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, “is a fit word for today’s demolition of the VRA.”

The right to vote is the most basic element of a healthy democracy.

The *Shelby* decision unleashed a torrent of activities to restrict the right to vote. As soon as the decision was announced, Texas passed a new law that required a photo ID to register to vote, which over 600,000 eligible voters did not have. Many Texas counties with large black populations had no Department of Public Safety offices where one could obtain a state ID. The US District Court found that the measure created an “unconstitutional burden on the right to vote, has an impermissible discriminatory effect against Hispanics and African Americans, and was imposed with an unconstitutional discriminatory purpose.” But when the US Supreme Court issued a ruling that voting restrictions were permissible in October of the following year, Texas legislators revamped the law, simply giving people without photo ID the right to vote as long as they signed a legal document attesting to one of seven reasons why they didn’t have one, which many critics believed to be an act of intimidation meant to dissuade vulnerable voters.

In 2014, voters in 15 states encountered new voting restrictions when they went to the ballot box. In Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin, voters navigated an entirely new landscape of voting policies and procedures that required photo ID, limited same-day registration or early voting, and placed other limitations making it more difficult to vote.

Many of the recent voting restrictions target low-income and historically marginalized populations. Most experts

agree that the Republican Party benefits more from lower turnout than Democrats—an outgrowth of the fact that modern Republicans have been relying on an increasingly narrow coalition of voters. High turnout on Election Day often means that Democrats will do better. There is a long record of statements by Republicans who openly discuss the benefits accrued from suppressing the vote. President Trump recently warned of “levels of voting that, if you ever agreed to it, you’d never have a Republican elected in this country again.” One of President Trump’s campaign aides was recorded at a private meeting as saying, “Traditionally, it’s always been Republicans suppressing votes.”

Preventing individual people from voting is only one strategy for reducing voting power. Redistricting, the process whereby state governments draw House districts, enables states to craft unfair and inequitable maps. These districts, in turn, undercut the voting power of certain constituencies. While weak court supervision of the districting process has been most to blame, along with state processes that still generally give the most power to state legislatures to handle this matter, changes in computer technology have revolutionized the process. GIS technology has transformed the potential of what could be done, and the Republican Party has invested far more resources into this project than the Democratic Party.

The combination of voting restrictions and more precise gerrymandering leaves governments with lower participation at a time when our most urgent goal should be to expand the number of people who participate in the political process. Many activists thought that the main goal in the post-civil rights era would be boosting levels of voting participation, but we have moved in the opposite direction. As President Obama said in his farewell address: “When voting rates in America are some of the lowest among advanced democracies, we should be making it easier, not harder to vote.”

The right to vote is the most basic element of a healthy democracy. In 1965, the government took a huge step to guarantee this right. Since then, we have done immense damage in dismantling it. Whether we reverse this development in the coming years will have huge implications. **P**

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MAE NGAI

WHO IS “ESSENTIAL”?

US Immigration Policy in Historical Context



On June 21, 1977, officials in Illinois conducted a workplace immigration enforcement raid. The distinction between “economic” and “political” migrants has always been artificial. Historically, migrants have been impelled by both political and economic conditions.
Library of Congress/Marion S. Trikosko, 2017651370

THE CORONAVIRUS pandemic has laid bare the contradictions in American society, especially regarding America's broken immigration system. Predictably, some politicians and pundits blamed foreigners—Chinese, Mexicans—for bringing the virus into the country, feeding popular nativism and racism. At the same time, the pandemic made clear that immigrants, including the undocumented, are the nation's "essential workers," who grow food and process meat, deliver takeout and Amazon orders, drive taxis and clean subways. They work in hospitals as orderlies, technicians, nurses, and doctors. And they do so—often without protective equipment or access to health care—at great personal risk. Immigrants themselves have protested abusive racist scapegoating, contagion within detention centers, disproportionately high rates of infection and death, and exclusion from federal stimulus payments.

But how the increased visibility of immigrants will influence immigration policy remains to be seen. Political polarization over immigration did not begin with COVID-19, of course; nor did it begin with the election of Donald Trump in 2016. Immigration and refugee policies, shaped by civil rights and human rights frameworks since the 1960s, have long been used as a response to and as part of efforts to control the changing ethno-racial composition of the United States. Nativist politics have waxed and waned throughout American history, with policy implications reaching an apex with comprehensive immigration restriction in 1924. After a half century of reduced attention to the issue, immigration policy has reemerged as a "hot-button" issue since the 1970s.

Much of the controversy since the 1970s has centered on undocumented migration. Refugee policy comprises the second point of contention, especially since the early 2010s, when people fleeing violence in Central America and civil wars in Syria began seeking refuge and asylum in the United States. The two issues are governed by different laws but are closely related. At one level, racist suspicions of Latinx people and Muslims link refugees with "illegal" immigrants. Also, for Central Americans arriving by land via Mexico, asylum requests became wrapped up in the racial politics of the border. The rate of denial in Central American and Mexican asylum cases is so high—70 to 80 percent in FY2018—that many people enter the United States without authorization or remain after losing their cases rather than risk return.

Undocumented migration and asylum will undoubtedly preoccupy immigration debates for the foreseeable future, regardless of the outcome of the 2020 general elections. A look at immigration policy and reform since the mid-20th century provides some historical perspective on the politics of the present.

It is notable that it has been nearly 35 years since Congress passed the last major immigration legislation. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) legalized nearly three million undocumented people and provided for sanctions against employers of workers without documents and for a buildup of border enforcement. The last bipartisan efforts in the Senate, in 2008 and 2012, used the same model—dubbed "comprehensive immigration reform" after its multi-pronged approach—but were defeated in the House by conservatives categorically opposed to legalization.

Comprehensive immigration reform has never been really "comprehensive." It is better understood as a negotiation between competing interests. In this model, legalization of those already here was traded for enforcement aimed at preventing "future flows." In important respects, the bargain crossed ideological lines: some erstwhile conservative business interests favored a more stable (i.e., legal) immigrant workforce, and many moderates and liberals considered border security important. Notwithstanding the militarization of the southern border in the 1990s, undocumented migration continued until the 2008 recession. The rate of unauthorized entry from Mexico then reversed and since 2010 immigration from Mexico has remained at net zero, while migration from Central America across the US-Mexico border has increased.

The Hart-Celler Act of 1965 established the basic structure of American immigration policy.

Today's problems have their origin in an earlier immigration and refugee law and cannot be resolved without fundamental change. The Hart-Celler Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 established the basic structure of American immigration policy. Baked into the law are low numerical limits on high-sending countries, which all but guarantee that there will be ongoing unauthorized migration. Specifically, Hart-Celler sets an annual global ceiling on new admissions for permanent residence (290,000 in 1965; 425,000 today), distributes 80 percent to family members (mostly of US citizens), and limits each country to a maximum of 7 percent of the total (20,000 in 1965; 25,620 today). The country maximum serves as a quota, which for major sending countries—Mexico, China, India, and the Philippines—has created backlogs of upward of 20 years. It is the primary driver of unauthorized migration.

Like IRCA, the Hart-Celler Act was also a response to an earlier law. It was an effort to correct a 1924 law that established the national-origin quota system. Those quotas

intentionally discriminated against eastern and southern Europeans and Asians, according to a hierarchy of racial desirability. The 1965 act imposed quotas on countries of the Western Hemisphere where none had previously existed. By creating a global system of restriction with “equal” quotas for all countries, Hart-Celler reflected the ethos of formal equality characteristic of the civil rights era.

Hart-Celler was chiefly a symbolic reform designed to present a nonracist image to the world during the Cold War. Its substance was deeply protectionist, with a low global ceiling aimed at keeping American wages high and family preferences aimed at keeping the population white. The symbolism of equal quotas was, and remains, indifferent to sending countries’ diverse sizes and needs, and to domestic labor market conditions.

The civil rights and human rights frameworks of immigration and refugee policy were deployed as instruments of Cold War strategy.

The policies that regulate refugee admissions and asylum also originated in the Cold War but rely on a different concept: universal human rights—rights that transcend the prerogatives of nation-states. The 1947 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, conceived in the aftermath of the Second World War, includes the rights to exit and to be free from persecution and torture. But it has no enforcement mechanism, and the right to exit one’s own country did not come with the right to enter another.

The Geneva Convention on Refugees of 1951 established the international norms governing refugee resettlement. The convention recognized the idea that the international community bears some responsibility to help the citizens of states that fail them. It carved a space of exception in the otherwise highly restrictive immigration laws in the West.

But the convention was limited in important ways. First, it defined refugees as *individual* victims of persecution perpetrated by states against certain groups. It does not cover those fleeing from violence if they cannot prove they were *personally* imprisoned or tortured, or those displaced by drought and other climate-related disasters. Second, the convention was intended for Europeans fleeing the Soviet bloc. It excluded refugees who left mainland China for Hong Kong after the 1949 Chinese communist revolution because some of the primary resettlement countries (including the United States) still maintained laws excluding or restricting

Asians. Still, the United States did not sign the terms of the Geneva Convention until 1968 and did not pass a domestic refugee law incorporating international norms until 1980, under pressure from the human rights movement.

An enduring legacy of this system has been the artificial distinction between “political” and “economic” migrants. The distinction was conceived in the emergency of wartime displacements and restrictive immigration regimes throughout the West. Historically, though, migrants have been impelled by both political and economic conditions: Jews fleeing religious and economic restrictions in tsarist Russia, Chinese displaced by failed harvests and Taiping violence. Today, Central American migrants are fleeing both civil violence and economic precarity. Yet even before Trump was elected president, US asylum judges, under constraint of the law, were denying asylum to unaccompanied minors from Central America on grounds that gang violence against youth was not “persecution” of a “protected class.”

This brief history suggests that the civil rights and human rights frameworks of mid-20th-century immigration and refugee policy were not timeless principles but expressions of contingent politics and deployed as instruments of Cold War strategy. They are outmoded and incapable of addressing migration and asylum in our own time.

As we ponder whether the coronavirus pandemic will prompt a more fundamental reckoning with our immigration and refugee policies, it is worth recalling another historical pattern. Whatever their limitations, immigration reforms since 1970 grew out of popular demands and mobilization for change. Euro-American ethnic groups, especially second- and third-generation American Jews and Italian Americans, drove the post-World War II movement to repeal the national origin quotas. Latinx and Asian American civil rights activism mobilized for legalization in the 1970s and early 1980s, leading to passage of IRCA in 1986. Both movements drew moral and political inspiration from African American freedom struggles. Amnesty International and a generation of human rights activists may be credited with creating the conditions for passage of the 1980 Refugee Act. Today’s immigrant rights movement, which has its roots and experience in immigrant labor and DREAMer activism, organizes around justice, solidarity, and systemic change—making history in their own time. **P**

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NEMATA BLYDEN AND JEANNETTE EILEEN JONES

BETWEEN AFRICA AND AMERICA

Recalibrating Black Americans' Relationship to the Diaspora



Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie and President John F. Kennedy greet a crowd of Black and white people outside the White House during Selassie's state visit in 1963.

National Archives and Records Administration/Cecil Stoughton, 194270

IN A JANUARY 2018 meeting, President Trump asked a bipartisan group of senators why the United States needed “all these people from shithole countries here?” According to credible sources, he referred specifically to immigrants from Haiti and African countries, contrasting them to those from European countries that he deemed more desirable. In the wake of those comments, it seemed Americans suddenly became aware of an African immigrant population. In 2020, there are more than 2 million Sub-Saharan African immigrants in the United States, joining the millions of African descendants long resident in the nation. Today’s Black population (about 13 percent of the overall population) reflects centuries-long engagement with Africa on the part of the United States.

In the last 400 years, Africa has played an integral role in American life and history. Americans, Black and white, have developed various contradictory ideas about the continent. It is both a backward place and a source of identity, a place to keep at a distance and a place to embrace as an ancestral homeland. In recent years, the large African immigrant population in the United States has helped to shape ideas about the continent, recalibrating Black American identities, and engaging with the state in various ways.

What united these new African Americans was their unwavering critique of the anti-black racism that circumscribed their lives.

Trump’s disparaging words were uttered in the context of ongoing debates about US immigration policies, including Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Temporary Protected Status (TPS)—both affecting African immigrants. The Black Alliance for Just Immigration estimates that only 12,000 DACA recipients are Black, although 1.2 million Black migrants are eligible. In 2017, the Department of Homeland Security terminated TPS for Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, all West African countries ravaged by the Ebola virus. Today, TPS only covers three African countries: Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan. And African immigrants increasingly find themselves the target of immigration officials and anti-immigrant sentiment.

How do we put the administration’s decision to curtail TPS immigration and fight DACA in the historical context of US–Africa relations? First, we must understand that Black people in the United States have maintained their own relationships with Africa—dating back to the 17th

century—despite official US policy regarding the continent. Second, since the early 19th century, white Americans, and a significant number of Black Americans, positioned Africa as a continent in need of “uplift,” “redemption,” or “saving.” This image has persisted for centuries, and Trump’s designation of African countries as “shitholes” extends the US tradition of white supremacist, anti-black racism that scorns Africa as the source of African Americans’ blackness, and often shame.

Why then does Africa matter to the United States? While this short piece cannot comprehensively illuminate all aspects of the relationship, we outline some of its contours, looking toward the 2020 election and this contemporary moment in ongoing anti-black racism.

Many Americans understand the origins of the US–Africa relationship to be the transatlantic slave trade and the enslavement of men and women from Africa. The year 2019 marked the 400th anniversary of the landing of “20 odd Negroes” in Virginia. Their arrival in 1619 planted the seeds for future US–Africa relations cultivated in the history of transatlantic slave trading. Most American citizens know little about Africa outside of this context. Yet, the connection Black Americans maintained with the continent over time ensures that Africa remains in their consciousness. Those “African” women and men, disembarking the Dutch man-of-war that fateful day, became the ancestors (regardless of biological ties) of the millions of African Americans living in the United States today. They brought elements of Africa with them, allowing them to maintain a connection to their various homelands. Through the foods they ate, religions they practiced, hair they styled, or languages they spoke, these men and women had a sense of themselves as “African”—oftentimes retaining their ethnic identities.

By the 19th century, an increasingly American-born population of people of African descent created some cultural distance from Africa. While many maintained selected elements of African cultures and histories, these new “African Americans” rooted themselves firmly in the United States. As they moved away from their African pasts, they fought to be free and accepted as full citizens. Although some persisted in holding on to “African” as a way of defining themselves and their institutions (i.e., African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Civilization Society, etc.), others embraced their hybrid identities as African and American. They made claims upon the United States and engaged with the political realities of Black life. What united these new African Americans was their unwavering critique of the anti-black racism that circumscribed their lives. They

understood that their African heritage positioned them as “inferior” in the eyes of the white citizenry and the US government, and they strove to undermine that label at every turn.

One way that African Americans refuted Black inferiority was by participating in efforts to “redeem” Africa, while simultaneously claiming space in the nation as citizens of African descent. Others left the United States to settle the colony of Liberia, in part to prove that they could govern themselves independent of white oversight. Those African Americans who settled in Sierra Leone believed that they would play a vital role in cultivating “civilization” in the colony. By 1822, the US had established trade with both Sierra Leone and Liberia and had opened consulates and commercial agencies in other parts of the continent. When nations opened to US trade, Christian missionaries followed. Throughout the 19th century, Black and white missionaries, subscribing to the idea of African religions as “pagan” and “savage,” saw the need to proselytize and spread Christianity across the continent. Black Americans, especially, saw it as their duty as Africa-descended people to take up this mantle. Many Black missionaries affiliated with Black churches and congregations preferred to see Africans lead their own churches, creating opportunities for them to study in the United States at Black colleges and universities. Some missionaries became enemies of colonial governments. Presbyterian missionary William Sheppard, for example, was instrumental in disclosing the violence that the “scramble for Africa”—the partitioning and colonization of the continent from 1876 to 1914 by European nations—wrought on Congolese peoples.

Even as the United States adopted a policy of isolation in the wake of European imperialism in Africa, Black Americans continued their relationship with the continent well into the 20th century. The Black press actively reported on African issues, while Black activists championed the continent’s causes. In 1935, outraged when Italy invaded Ethiopia—one of two independent African nations—African Americans demanded that the United States intervene to support Emperor Haile Selassie. Black Americans continued to lobby on the continent’s behalf throughout the 20th century, even as they struggled for civil rights at home.

Some Black Americans, less interested in the continent itself, understood their historical ties to it. Indeed, some measured US–Africa relations in terms of how their government responded to its Black population. Throughout the 20th century, as African countries gained independence and the United States dealt with them as sovereign nations, Black Americans played a role in shaping US–Africa affairs, either as champions or as representatives of the US government in Africa. In

the 1960s and 1970s, the United States paid special attention to specific regions on the continent for political, economic, and strategic reasons, while in the 1980s and 1990s, many Americans saw the continent largely as a place in need of help, as images of famine, genocide, and war filled television screens. The United States provided economic and military aid to Congo, South Africa, and Somalia over decades.

Today's African immigrants, like their 19th-century predecessors, make claims on the United States, asserting their right to belong and participate as citizens.

The growing diversity of the Black population to include both immigrants from Africa and African Americans is reshaping US–Africa relations today. In the last 30 years, a growing population of immigrants with direct ties to Africa has found it useful to press the government for more engagement and better foreign relations with their home countries. As they become citizens, their American-born children identify with, or are identified as, Black Americans, with all the complexities and challenges that label encompasses. This generation, while situated squarely in the United States, also takes an interest in individual African countries. Some of their concerns make their way into the national arena, keeping Africa on the United States’ agenda. Nonprofit organizations, homeland associations, and social network groups formed in the United States lobby on behalf of the continent. Today’s African immigrants, like their 19th-century predecessors, make claims on the United States, asserting their right to belong and participate as citizens. American-born Africans run for and gain office in local and national races, and large segments of this population vote in elections. In 2019, Somali-born Ilhan Omar was elected as the first Black African to the US Congress. Others hold elected government positions and participate in civic organizations. They are part of a growing movement of Black Americans responding to the heightened anti-blackness of the last few years.

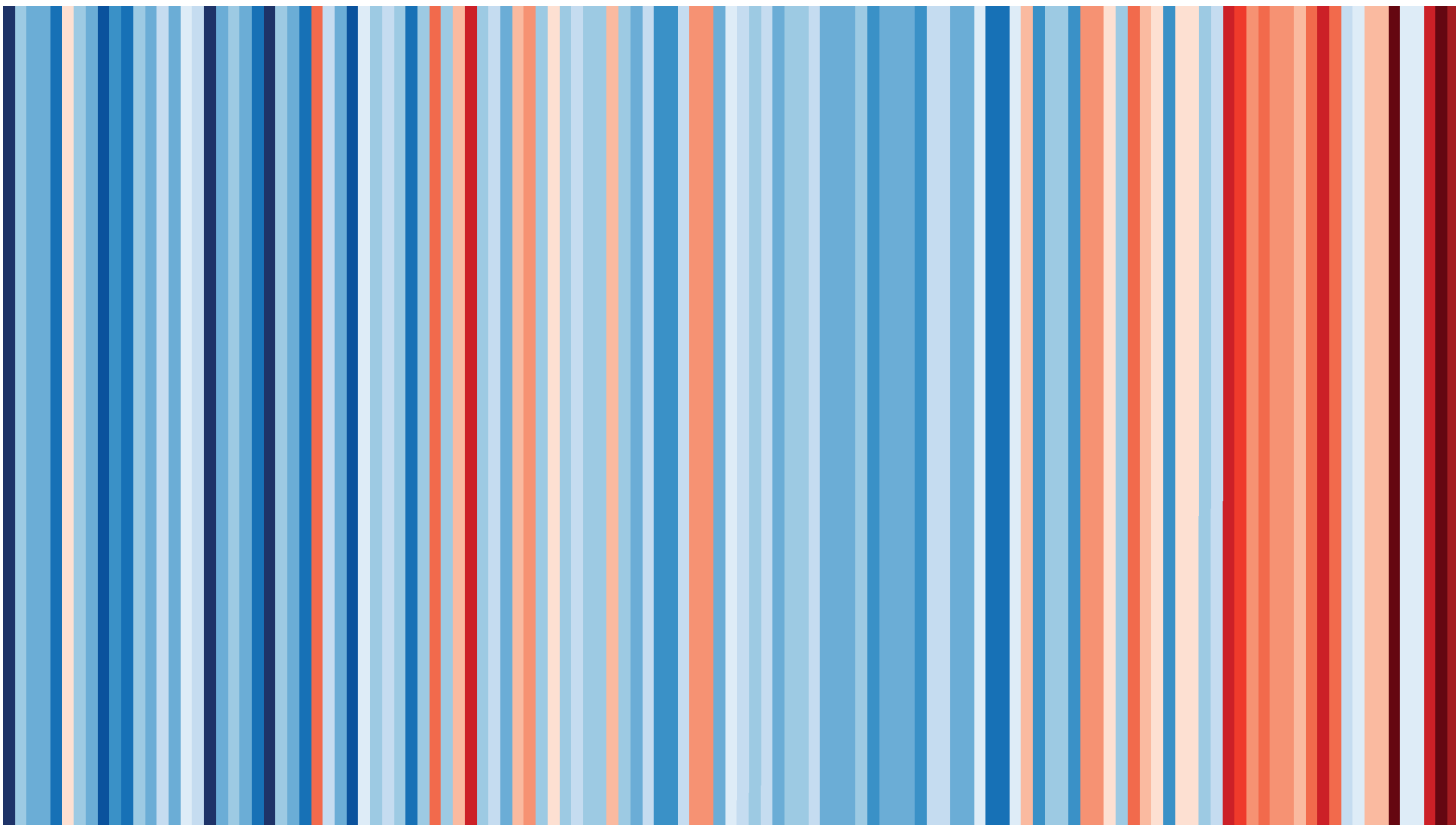
As we move toward a landmark election in which Black Americans are likely to play a decisive part, an imagined “Africa”—“shithole” to our current president and a source of pride to many citizens—remains as essential to American politics as it has been in the past. **P**

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DAGOMAR DEGROOT AND EMMA MOESSWILDE

CAN VOTING STOP GLOBAL WARMING?

What Americans Need to Know about the History of Climate Change



Annual temperatures for the contiguous United States from 1895 to 2017. The color scale goes from 50.2°F (dark blue) to 55.0°F (dark red).
Courtesy Climate Lab Book, ed. Ed Hawkins/CC BY 4.0

REMEMBER WHEN climate change seemed like the defining issue of the 2020 election? Believe it or not, it still is. Of every challenge faced by Americans, climate change may pose the most plausible existential threat to the future of humanity. It is a threat that can be greatly reduced over the next four years—or exacerbated to such a degree that we can no longer avoid catastrophic outcomes. In 2020, the future of the planet may hang in the balance.

Climate change may seem like a quintessentially 21st-century problem, but it has a history in electoral politics. Presidents since Lyndon Johnson have been briefed on the threat posed by human greenhouse gas emissions, which already amounted to billions of tons annually in 1963. Environmental issues, particularly efforts to regulate or remove pollution, have featured prominently in every presidential campaign since 1977. Scientific consensus emerged around the human responsibility for warming in the early 1980s, when calls for action by prominent congressmen garnered national headlines. In 1988, at a time when some solutions still had bipartisan support, George H. W. Bush called for concerted action to confront climate change. Since then, a well-funded effort to discredit climate science has both polarized attitudes toward climate action and kept the issue from the forefront of electoral politics. Only during the 2020 Democratic primary did climate change receive the attention it deserves—until COVID-19 burst onto the scene.

Yet the 2020 election should still focus on climate change, because the threat it poses is greater and more immediate than it may seem. To find out why, we must think like historians: we must consult the past. But we can't do it alone, because the history of climate change begins with the formation of the Earth, long before there were any sources for us historians to interrogate. We must work with and learn from archaeologists, geographers, paleoscientists, and others who consider the past with different tools, interests, and assumptions than we do.

We can “reconstruct”—that is, piece together—the history of Earth's climate using the same detective work that historians apply to the human past. Paleoclimatologists uncover aspects of the natural world altered by the influence of past climate change: rings in old tree trunks, for example, that were wider in wet years than dry ones; layers in ancient ice cores that contain more heavy oxygen isotopes when the Earth was hotter (and the oxygen in water therefore evaporated more readily). Modelers run computer simulations based on the physics of Earth's climate, producing “hindcasts” that begin in the distant past and run forward toward the present. Historical climatologists scour the human

record for evidence of long-term shifts in weather, from oral histories of lost ice to reports of winds and currents in mariners' logbooks.

What do these sources and simulations tell us? They reveal that, in the 300,000-year history of our species, we have endured some staggering climate changes. For example, during the chilliest stretch of the Last Glacial Maximum—the last long period colloquially known as an “ice age”—Earth may have been nearly six degrees cooler than it is today. We have been deeply fortunate to build our civilization in the Holocene, a long and globally stable warm period between glaciations. Yet our good fortune has always had an expiration date; the Earth, we now know, changes abruptly with just a little nudge—a little “forcing,” as climatologists call it—that alters the amount of solar energy that reaches us or escapes into space.

The threat climate change poses
is greater and more immediate
than it may seem.

Now we are not so much nudging the Earth as pushing it off a cliff. Today's warming is faster, more uniformly felt across the globe, and different in origin than anything complex human societies have encountered in 10,000 years. Our best bet is that, barring dramatic action, we will warm the Earth by around three degrees Celsius (relative to the 20th-century average) over the next 80 years, by doubling the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Those of us who work on climate toss around such numbers as though it's obvious what they mean, but for most people, it isn't. While most of us scarcely notice a three-degree difference in temperature, the Earth does. A world that is three degrees warmer than our own will be a fundamentally different planet. All of the world's ice sheets beyond East Antarctica, for example, may eventually melt, raising sea levels until present-day coastlines are entirely overwhelmed. Extreme heating, especially along the equator, will likely combine with fundamental changes in the circulation of the atmosphere and oceans to transform the distribution of life on Earth, including human life.

Reconstructions reveal that even the slightest temperature change has profound implications for the Earth. Therefore, we need to dramatically reduce the carbon emissions forcing Earth over the climatic edge, and then actively absorb the carbon we have already emitted. Presidential candidates

have proposed cuts before, but Congress has rarely cooperated. Now dramatic emissions reductions will be needed to limit global warming to two degrees Celsius.

Even if we act aggressively to limit carbon emissions, we will still need to adapt to unprecedented climate change. Reconstructions permit historians, archaeologists, geographers, and natural scientists to pursue “climate history”—the study of how past climate changes influenced human ideas and actions. The Holocene was, for the most part, globally warm and stable, yet regional climates could still change dramatically for decades, even centuries. For example, the best-studied period of pre-industrial climate change, the Little Ice Age of (arguably) the 13th to 19th centuries, reduced global temperatures by just tenths of a degree Celsius in its chilliest centuries, but likely cooled some regions by one degree or more in select decades.

Climate history suggests that some communities and societies were highly sensitive to these changes.

Climate history suggests that some communities and societies were highly sensitive to these changes. Traditionally, climate historians have focused on examples of societal crisis and “collapse” that unfolded as subsistence strategies attuned to one climate unraveled with the arrival of another. The Maya, for example, are alleged to have abandoned their great cities from the 8th through the 10th centuries amid prolonged drought; so too the many denizens of 15th-century Angkor Wat. The Norse settlements of western Greenland disappeared as unstable cooling undermined pastoral ways of life and weakened connections to hunting grounds and trade routes. A “fatal synergy” of cooling, harvest failure, malnutrition, disease, and warfare supposedly claimed a third of the world’s population during a 17th-century “global crisis” that coincided with the chilliest stretch of the Little Ice Age in the northern Atlantic. Waves of cooling and drought may have even delayed European colonization of North America.

Climate historians have mostly sought climatic explanations for disasters previously blamed on other causes, and so they have tended to overlook examples of populations that survived or even thrived amid climate changes. Yet a new wave of research reveals that climate change did benefit some societies or spurred development of “resilient” cultures and economies. Diverse societies that traded widely and provided for their poor may have been especially resilient, although

such resilience may have belied, or even exacerbated, the vulnerability of communities and individuals within them.

Here is another lesson for the 2020 election. Most societies likely will survive a three-degree warming, but only by changing, and only at great cost. Adaptation in the face of climate change has, until the development of the Green New Deal, largely entered public and political discourse through proposals to build new infrastructure, develop new technology, or encourage new practices in personal or professional life. Yet for individuals and communities to broadly share in climate change resilience, policymakers must think bigger: they must begin to reform every aspect of society that makes some communities more vulnerable than others.

While many climate historians differentiate between more or less direct social responses to climate change, most agree that shifts in temperature or precipitation reverberated through every aspect of past societies, affecting everything from military strategy to daily diets. This is doubly true today, when all of us, visibly and invisibly, both respond and contribute to climate change in everything we do.

This means, of course, that climate change is connected to every other issue on the ballot this November—sometimes in surprising ways. Republican voters who care deeply about the waning relative strength of the American military, for example, would do well to remember that climate change could fundamentally threaten the capabilities of the Department of Defense. Democrats should consider how the makeup of the Supreme Court could affect the viability of environmental laws. All voters should remember that stimulus bills present a priceless opportunity to reward or fund transitions to lower-carbon lifestyles and industries. They also offer a chance to build wealth and resilient infrastructure in predominantly Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous communities left vulnerable to heat waves or rising seas by generations of structural racism.

We were asked to explain what Americans should know about climate change as they head to the ballot box in 2020. Simply, it is this: climate is the foundation upon which all other policies stand, and a changing climate could transform everything. No matter what issues you hold dear, keep the trajectory of our warming world in mind this November. **P**

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Virtual | AHA

DON'T MISS OUR **VIRTUAL AHA** WEB CONTENT

- **AHA Colloquium**
(includes content from the canceled
2021 annual meeting)
 - **History Behind the Headlines**
 - **Online Teaching Forum**
 - **Virtual Career Development**
 - **National History Center
Congressional Briefings**
 - **Washington History Seminar**
- & more**

historians.org/VirtualAHA

2021 ANNUAL MEETING CANCELED

New Virtual AHA Will Include Some 2021 Program Events

After careful deliberation, the American Historical Association has determined that it will be impossible to hold the annual meeting in Seattle from January 7 to 10, 2021, as originally planned. The best available information—from public health authorities and medical experts, including the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, and state and local authorities—suggests that the global health crisis will not be sufficiently resolved by January to convene a national, or even regional, conference. Travel restrictions will probably remain in place, and a large gathering of people from around the country and the world would pose a health risk.

When the AHA announced this decision in July, we received many emails, all supportive, and a striking proportion noted how difficult the decision must have been. Actually, the decision wasn't difficult at all. By July it was clear there would not be a widely available vaccine for the novel coronavirus by January. We couldn't imagine asking AHA staff to travel across the country; nor could we in good conscience even suggest to our colleagues that it might be a good idea to gather in closed rooms, given the current state of knowledge about COVID-19 contagion.

That this decision was obvious did not make it any less disappointing. The AHA considers the cultivation of communities among historians to be one of its primary functions. One of the authors of this essay has dedicated much of her professional life to building and enhancing the experiences of these communities, at our annual meetings and elsewhere. The other author spends much of his work time learning from and enjoying collegial interaction with these communities. Our mantra, as many readers know, is "How can we help?" It's easiest to ask that question in person, and in the context of the energy of the annual meeting.

Perhaps even more important, thousands of AHA members rely on the opportunity to meet in person to build

professional relationships, share their scholarship, and engage in professional development. These functions of the meeting, therefore, have shaped our thinking about what to do instead. While we will not be able to connect in person, the AHA staff is preparing a variety of web-based programming over the next 10 months to continue to bring together our communities of historians with these activities in mind. This approach, rather than a virtual annual meeting taking place on only four days in January, seems more likely to address the needs of our members while also providing opportunities for innovation.

The AHA staff is working out
the details of web-based
programming, which will be
called Virtual AHA.

The AHA staff is in the early stages of working out the details of the web-based programming, which will be called Virtual AHA. This new series of video and online content will incorporate the AHA Colloquium, our name for content drawn from the canceled 2021 annual meeting. It will also include online teaching forums, career development workshops, a series of webinars on History Behind the Headlines, National History Center programming, and more.

This work has already begun with conversations oriented especially towards teaching, historical issues in public culture, and provocative historiographical debates. Live attendance has ranged from approximately 150 to 1,500, with hundreds more viewing later on YouTube. The genre is new to us, but we're learning quickly and are focusing especially on the utility of these presentations to teachers. Live viewers will find in the chat box links to readings mentioned in the conversations. We also welcome follow-up conversation in our Member Forum and other spaces in AHA Communities that focus on teaching or related issues.

We're currently trying to envision digital analogues for receptions and other networking events. Suggestions are welcome as long as they require only modest financial and staff resources. Right now, we're guessing these might take place during the days when the annual meeting would have occurred. We will definitely launch a virtual exhibit hall on October 1. See historians.org/VirtualAHA for details.

People originally scheduled to be on the program will have a variety of options to share their work. We will solicit feedback from them and from our membership as we develop plans over the course of the next few months. A preliminary survey of program participants revealed strong interest in presenting online. We are looking forward to working with participants on creative new ways to share their work. Keep an eye on the Virtual AHA website for regular updates.

A PDF program, documenting all sessions accepted by the AHA Program Committee and the affiliated societies, will be posted on the AHA website in the fall so that participants can document their expected participation for their CVs. Anyone who was expecting to deliver a prepared presenta-

tion will have the opportunity to post written remarks on the AHA website.

The AHA Council and staff express our deep gratitude for the hard work already done by the Program Committee, chaired by Jared Poley and Lisa Brady, our affiliated societies, and those who organized and submitted sessions. While we can't be together in Seattle, we will find ways to take advantage of the exciting program they have developed.

Everything has a history, including the largest annual gathering of historians. The year 2021 marks the second time the Association has canceled its annual meeting due to a pandemic. According to the *AHA Annual Report*, the 1918 meeting was canceled after "the recrudescence of influenza in epidemic form compelled the public health authorities of Cleveland to advise against holding the meeting." The meeting survived and continued to evolve after that pandemic subsided. We look forward to the day when we can meet safely in person again; we hope that will be in New Orleans in 2022. **P**

Debbie Ann Doyle is meetings manager at the AHA. James Grossman is executive director of the AHA; he tweets @JimGrossmanAHA.

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STORIES AND STORYTELLERS

An Interview with Ashley E. Bowen, Editor of Perspectives on History

In April, Ashley E. Bowen arrived at the AHA in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis. A historian of the Civil War era and medicine, she dove right into soliciting and editing articles for our online publication, *Perspectives Daily*, about historians' experiences during the pandemic and the histories that will help us understand the present moment. Ashley comes to the AHA after a two-year stint as the Mellon/ACLS Public Fellow at the Science History Institute in Philadelphia, working on digital engagement. She has worked in museums in a variety of capacities, serving as a guest curator at the National Library of Medicine, a docent at the Mutter Museum at the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, and a tour guide at the National Postal Museum in Washington, DC. She spoke with *Perspectives* about what draws her to history, how she wants to diversify the magazine, and who she most wants to talk shop with.

Where did your interest in history begin?

I read a lot of historical fiction as a child, starting with the American Girl books and then branching out into the work of Mildred Taylor and many others. I was lucky; my elementary school had a great librarian who knew I liked the American Girl books and helped me find more historical fiction. Stories about people drew me in, and then I became fascinated with the worlds they inhabited. My mom and I used to visit a lot of historic house museums, too, so material culture was really my way into history.

Your education comes from outside history departments. How does historical thinking tie together this varied background?

I've been doing historical work since I was an undergrad but somehow managed to do all that thinking under the tutelage of historians working outside of history departments. My bachelor's degree from Reed College is in art history, where I wrote a senior thesis on photography in an antifascist magazine, *Die Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung*, during the



Perspectives editor Ashley E. Bowen has been enjoying exploring Pennsylvania's state parks recently.
Courtesy Ashley E. Bowen

Weimar Republic. I earned an MA from Georgetown's Communication, Culture, and Technology department, where I researched Civil War reenactors and their deeply felt connection to an imagined version of the past, supervised by a historian.

After my MA, I worked in public health for a couple of years and became fascinated by the origins of the American medical system. Two things became clear to me in that job: first, that I didn't want to do biostatistics or epidemiology; and second, that I was much more interested in the "how we got to now" questions than in the contemporary practice of public health. I applied to Brown University's American studies PhD program, in part because I could get a second MA in public humanities along the way. At Brown, I worked with fabulous historians to create a dissertation that's recognizably a history of medicine and draws on methods from cultural studies. I loved reading archival sources like

pension applications and medical records alongside novels and artwork.

You come to the AHA from jobs in several historical museums. How does this experience in public history influence your thinking about *Perspectives* and the historical discipline?

Stories got me interested in history (remember all that historical fiction I read as a child?), so public history was a natural fit for me. I enjoy talking to people about the past and how it informs the present. The jump from a museum to a magazine doesn't feel so different—I'm still telling stories about history and collaborating with brilliant scholars to bring those stories to a large audience.

On a practical level, writing very short object labels is great practice for the kind of writing we feature in *Perspectives*. I learned a great deal about how to tell a tight, compelling story by writing for museums.

What are your goals as editor of *Perspectives*?

Right now, I'm focused on getting the September issue out while working at a social distance. I had any number of anxieties about stepping into this role when I accepted it in early March, but producing a magazine without ever setting foot in the office didn't even make the top 10. On a more general note, I'd like to include more coverage of material culture and public history in *Perspectives*. Look out for more objects and images in the magazine's pages soon!

Longer term, I'd like to see the demographics of the magazine's contributor base more closely mirror the demographics of the discipline as a whole. We must do better in terms of racial and ethnic diversity among our authors. We also want to work with historians at a broad spectrum of institutions, including those with nontraditional educational backgrounds or who occupy many different professional roles.

What are your passions outside of history?

I love to roller skate! I had a brief career as a roller derby girl with the DC Rollergirls, but a concussion and a knee injury a few years ago spooked me. I now do speed skating on my quad skates—I get to go fast but there's a much lower chance of serious injury. At least, that's what I tell myself.

Social distancing requirements mean I've been spending even more time than usual exploring Pennsylvania's state parks. My partner and I have been hiking almost every

weekend since the lockdown began. It's been restorative to spend time in nature and the excuse to visit the many parks near our home in Philadelphia is maybe the smallest bit of silver lining to come out of all this.

If I'm not skating or hiking, I'm almost certainly reading. I still read historical fiction but find that I now know too much to enjoy much of it—especially if it's set in an era I have studied. Now, I read a lot of detective novels and murder mysteries. There's nowhere I'd rather be on a Saturday afternoon than reading a good detective novel, sipping iced coffee, and nibbling on a chocolate chip cookie. Truly, paradise.

I'd like to see the demographics of our contributor base more closely mirror the demographics of the discipline as a whole.

Last question: If you were to hold your dream dinner party, which three historians (living or dead) would you invite?

This is an unfair question! How can you expect me to pick three—everyone out there will quibble with my choices, and it's all I'll ever hear about forever. Therefore, I'm going to reject the idea of a dinner party and host a great big dessert reception in a ballroom. I'd invite all the women thanked for typing but who never got a byline, the many anonymous clerks and stenographers who produced and cared for all the records I've relied on, and the keepers of family heirlooms, documents, and histories who think about the future while remembering the past. They may not have names we know, but they've been essential to the discipline. I think it'd be lovely to sit down with them over cake and champagne, ask them about what they know, and thank them for enabling me to ask (and answer!) the questions I do.

This interview has been edited for clarity and length. **P**

Laura Ansley is managing editor of the AHA. She tweets @lmansley.

KAREN LOU

NEW FACES AT THE AHA

Meet Gabriella Virginia Folsom, Alexandra F. Levy, Sarah Jones Weicksel, and Jeremy C. Young

Over the summer, the AHA welcomed four new staff members: Gabriella Virginia Folsom as communications and marketing assistant, Alexandra F. Levy as web and social media coordinator, Sarah Jones Weicksel as research coordinator for the AHA's Confronting a Pandemic: Historians and COVID-19 project, and Jeremy C. Young as communications and marketing manager.

Gabriella Virginia Folsom joined the AHA days after her virtual graduation from American University, where she majored in history and political science with a minor in Russian language. Outside of the classroom, Folsom participated in residential programs, started a Phi Alpha Theta chapter, and honed her research skills at the Carmel Institute of Russian Study and Culture. Her research took her on three fully funded trips to Russia, where she visited Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Kizhi in Russia's Republic of Karelia.

Folsom's interest in history began at a young age, but her coursework in political science deepened her appreciation for historical thinking. She observed that political actors tend to enact new ideas without fully understanding how they will play out. For Folsom, the answers often lie in history, and as she told *Perspectives*, "history is a great indicator of successful policy."

Folsom previously completed an internship with the AHA's Career Diversity for Historians initiative. As a first-generation college student, her work in Career Diversity taught her about the inner workings of academia and beyond. "History has a tendency to be hyper specialized, but I saw historians in different fields and sectors collaborating in spite of that," she remarked. Now back at the AHA in a new role, Folsom is most excited to expand her own interests through organizing and attending the annual meeting (eventually).

When seven-year-old **Alexandra F. Levy** opened a book on United States presidents, she was hooked. Many more books and a trip to the White House later, she knew she wanted to



Gabriella Virginia Folsom is the new communications and marketing assistant.

be a historian. She earned her BA in history from the University of Pennsylvania. Soon after, she completed her MA from the University of Virginia, where she wrote her thesis on democracy and denazification in post-World War II Germany.

Over the summer, AHA welcomed
four new staff members.

Prior to joining the AHA, Levy worked at the Atomic Heritage Foundation. There, she helped manage an oral history project that includes interviews with over 600 individuals, from veterans who worked on the Manhattan Project to historians and other experts. She also worked on the foundation's website and social media platforms. She especially enjoyed working in the overlap between historical and digital work, both areas of interest to her.

As the AHA's web and social media coordinator, Levy continues to work at the intersection of historical content and digital platforms. She looks forward to using the AHA's web presence to advocate for historians and educate the public



Alexandra F. Levy is the new web and social media coordinator. Sarah Jones Weicksel is the new research coordinator for the *Confronting a Pandemic: Historians and COVID-19* project. Jeremy C. Young is the new communications and marketing manager.

about the discipline. She is also excited to dig through years of *Perspectives* content, sharing older yet still-relevant content with the readership.

Sarah Jones Weicksel joins the AHA as the research coordinator for the *Confronting a Pandemic: Historians and COVID-19* project, supported by a National Endowment for Humanities CARES grant. She oversees the production of two digital publications: a remote teaching resource and a bibliography of historians' responses to COVID-19, both launched in August. A longtime advocate for expanding teaching resources, she looks forward to working with historians on compiling and making resources for remote teaching accessible.

Outside of the AHA, Weicksel's work centers on material culture. She grew up on a family farm dating back to the 1910s, where remnants of the past surrounded her from a young age. She attended college at Yale University, where she took John Mack Faragher's class on the American West. For Weicksel, the class was memorable in its use of objects and images as historical sources to access the past. It was the starting point in her pursuit of understanding how the material world shaped the past.

Weicksel's passion for material culture remained constant as she earned her MA from the Winterthur Program at the University of Delaware and her PhD from the University of Chicago. Her passion then took her to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History, where she continues to work part-time as a project historian. She is also at work on a book manuscript. The project focuses on how people used clothing

both to wage a cultural and political war against one another and as a tool for living through this conflict.

When asked how he came to be the AHA's new marketing and communications manager, **Jeremy C. Young** told *Perspectives*, "Sometimes I say that I have the training of a historian but the soul of a marketer."

Prior to joining the AHA, Young taught at Dixie State University (DSU), where he also directed the DSU Institute of Politics and Public Affairs. In addition, he served as the membership secretary for the Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era (SHGAPE). His work at the DSU Institute and at SHGAPE helped him realize an interest in administrative and nonprofit work. For Young, "being in an organization is in many ways like teaching. You're trying to create something successful and teach others to do the same thing." In his new role, he is most excited to grow the AHA membership while communicating history to the public. Young holds a BA in history from St. Mary's College and an MA and a PhD, both in US history, from Indiana University. In 2017, he published his book *The Age of Charisma* (Cambridge Univ. Press), based on his dissertation research, which explores the role of charisma in American politics.

In his free time, Young enjoys playing music. Alongside his history degrees, he is a trained pianist with a BA in music composition. **P**

Karen Lou is editorial assistant at the AHA.

PROTEIN, TERRITORY, ISOLATION

Introducing the AHA's 2020–21 Fellowship Winners

The AHA welcomes the 2020–21 recipients of the J. Franklin Jameson Fellowship in American History, the Fellowship in Aerospace History, and the Fellowship in the History of Space Technology. These three annual fellowships assist early-career scholars by supporting full-time research. The fellows selected this year bring a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives to their historical research.

The Jameson Fellowship, sponsored jointly by the AHA and the John W. Kluge Center at the Library of Congress, is an annual award that supports up to three months of full-time residence at the Kluge Center. The winner of the 2020–21 fellowship is **Hannah Cutting-Jones**, who earned her PhD in history at the University of Auckland in 2018, with focuses on food history, Pacific Islands, environmental history, colonization, and culinary resilience.

During the fellowship, Cutting-Jones will examine the controversial and interdisciplinary history of protein. She hopes that her new project, “Protein Wars,” will provide new insights into the histories of science and industrialization, medicine, nutrition, gender, race, diet culture, globalization, and the environment in the United States. “The American obsession with protein has resulted in an increasingly fragile and destructive food system, one that needs to be reexamined and placed in historical context, particularly in light of the current pandemic,” she says. “I want to trace the evolving, compelling, contradictory, and persistent narratives surrounding the quest for protein in American history.” She hopes to use this fellowship to locate and examine relevant primary sources and begin work on a book-length manuscript.

The Fellowship in Aerospace History and the Fellowship in the History of Space Technology are funded by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); both include a stipend of \$21,500 supporting advanced research in aerospace history. The review committee, made up of representatives from the American Historical

Association, the Society for the History of Technology, and the History of Science Society, has selected **Taylor Rose** to receive the Fellowship in Aerospace History and **Jeffrey Mathias** to receive the Fellowship in the History of Space Technology.

The Fellowships in Aerospace History and the History of Space Technology are funded by NASA; both include a stipend of \$21,500 supporting advanced research in aerospace history.

Rose is pursuing his PhD in history at Yale University, where he focuses on US history, environmental history and humanities, Native American history and Indigenous studies, history of technology, history of science, and geography. His project, “Wasteland, Rangeland, Homeland,” will link aerospace history with the history of contested territory in the American West, especially the Nevada Test Site. With this project, he would like to interrogate the legal, political, and material infrastructure of real estate and restricted airspace that underlay domestic US military expansion in the mid 20th century. He tells *Perspectives* that three factors influenced policy makers’ decision to locate a test site in Nevada. First, it was near the “warm political and economic climate that surrounded the burgeoning aerospace industry of Southern California.” Second, the legally ambiguous status of Nevada’s former public domain land made it easy for Congress to quickly and efficiently designate the land for military use. Finally, he explains that the “desert environment mattered as well, but not always in the way that advocates expected when they proposed to site weapons-testing proving grounds in the Southwest.” The region’s landscape offered up ample natural runways, but the arid, windswept, dusty environment posed serious challenges to sensitive



Hannah Cutting-Jones



Taylor Rose



Jeffrey Mathias

machinery and a pilot's chance of survival in case of an airborne emergency.

Rose argues that, by situating the narrative of the Nevada Test Site in the region's longer political-economic, legal, and environmental history, "Wasteland, Rangeland, Homeland" will reorient our understanding of the origins of nuclear weapons testing. His primary goal for the fellowship is to spend time in the National Archives and Records Administration's College Park, Maryland, facility.

Jeffrey Mathias, the Fellow in the History of Space Technology, is a PhD candidate in science and technology studies at Cornell University. With the support of the AHA/NASA fellowship, Mathias plans to continue work on his doctoral dissertation, tentatively titled "Pathologies of Boredom: Isolation and the Cold War Human Sciences." This project turns to isolation as both a matter of Cold War concern and a scientific object for psychologists, psychiatrists, and physiologists between 1948 and 1975. At mid-century, military officials and scientists figured soldiers stationed in remote geographies—such as radar operators along the Arctic Distant Early Warning Line and astronauts inhabiting space cabins—as uniquely at risk, not only from these hazardous terrains but from the psychological effects of isolation. Isolation emerged as a matter of concern amid ideas about the tedium of technological warfare in these remote geographies and widespread unease over alleged communist practices of solitary confinement during the Korean War. Weaponized isolation was a particularly troubling possibility following the defection of captured American soldiers, nominally subjected to sophisticated techniques of indoctrination or brainwashing. Laboratory and field studies of isolation, sensory deprivation, and confinement were thus a

locus for anxieties about the reliability of the Cold War soldier and the modern subject more broadly.

During his fellowship, Mathias will complete a chapter of this project, focusing on studies of isolation and sensory deprivation conducted by aerospace physiologists and psychologists as part of the early stages of the American space program. Mathias will examine sources at NASA's headquarters, the National Archives, the Ames Research Center, and the Air Force Historical Archives at Maxwell Air Force Base.

Taking stock of the current salience of isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, Mathias notes how humbling and strange it is that what was previously an extraordinarily niche dissertation topic came to relate to an experience shared by so many. He hopes his manuscript will provide critical context for our contemporary moment by tracing a history of solitude in the context of American empire.

Congratulations to these new fellows! We are excited to follow their work and look forward to welcoming them to the townhouse when it is safe to do so.

Applications for the AHA's 2021–22 fellowships will open in October 2020. [P](#)

Gabriella Virginia Folsom is the communications and marketing assistant at the AHA. She tweets @gabby_folsom.

ACTIONS BY THE AHA COUNCIL

January 2020 to June 2020

Through email conversation from January 10, 2020, to May 30, 2020, and at meetings on June 1–5, 2020, the Council of the American Historical Association took the following actions:

- Reappointed Kenneth Ledford (Case Western Reserve Univ.) for a three-year term as AHA parliamentarian.
- Approved the *Statement Condemning the Use of Historical Sites in Warfare*.
- Sent a letter to Russell Vought, acting director of the Office of Management and Budget, and members of the Public Buildings Reform Board, expressing concern about the recommendation for the closure and sale of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) facility in Seattle.
- Sent a letter to David Ferriero, archivist of the United States, voicing concern about the NARA policy that directs all agencies to manage all permanent records electronically by December 2022 and arguing that hasty implementation of the policy, with a lack of dedicated funding, will impair NARA's mission and have dire consequences for researchers.
- Sent a letter to French President Emmanuel Macron, expressing concern that the change in policy to declassify documents at Vincennes and other repositories in France has rendered many documents inaccessible and encouraging the development of a clear, efficient, and effective procedure for declassification.
- Signed onto a letter to the Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure of the United States Courts proposing a revision to Rule 6(e) to specify that the courts can release grand jury records based on historical significance.
- Sent a letter to the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR) expressing concern over reports that EOIR had omitted close to one million records from its September 2019 anonymized data release.
- Approved joining the Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) and the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) in a lawsuit against NARA and US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), challenging NARA's decision to approve ICE's records disposition schedule for Detainee Records, which authorizes ICE to destroy records documenting mistreatment of immigrants detained in ICE custody.
- Signed onto a statement from the American Sociological Association regarding faculty review and reappointment processes during the COVID-19 crisis. The statement encourages institutions of higher education to consider appropriate temporary adjustments to their review and reappointment processes for tenured and contingent faculty, including adjusting expectations for faculty scholarship, limiting the use of student evaluations of teaching, and extending tenure timelines. The AHA also urged all higher education institutions that employ contract and/or part-time faculty to compensate fully for courses already contracted for summer and fall offerings.
- Sent a letter to Tristan Denley, executive vice chancellor and chief academic officer for the University System of Georgia and chair of the General Education Redesign Implementation Committee, opposing proposed changes to the general education curriculum. The letter asserts that the legislative requirement for instruction in the history and government of the United States and Georgia cannot be fulfilled by taking only one course, either in history or political science, and that proper instruction in history can be fulfilled only by trained historians.

- Approved the *Statement Regarding Historians and COVID-19*, endorsed by dozens of peer organizations emphasizing the importance of historical thinking in understanding the pandemic and urging all institutions that employ historians to be flexible and humane in considering the needs of their employees and constituencies.
- Approved signing onto a letter to congressional leaders in appreciation for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and encouraging the provision of substantial additional funding for higher education in future bills, with focus on those students and institutions hardest hit by the consequences of the pandemic.
- Approved the minutes of the January 2020 Council meetings.
- Approved the interim minutes of the Council from January through May 2020.
- Approved the following 2022 Program Committee appointments: Cemil Aydin (Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill), Joseph Bangura (Kalamazoo Coll.), Choi Chatterjee (California State Univ., Los Angeles), José Carlos de la Puente (Texas State Univ.), Gerard J. Fitzgerald (independent scholar), Beth Hyde (Kean Univ.), Jonathan Lee (San Antonio Coll.), Jenny Hale Pulsipher (Brigham Young Univ.), Heather Cox Richardson (Boston Coll.), Haimanti Roy (Univ. of Dayton), Kristin Tassin (Episcopal School of Acadiana), and Hugh Thomas (Univ. of Miami).
- Approved signing onto a potential amicus brief for *Ahmad v. University of Michigan* regarding upholding the standard archival practice of a period of closure for the papers of a private individual donated to public, university-based archives.
- Vetoed the “Resolution Condemning Affiliations between ICE and Higher Education,” which had passed at the Association’s January 2020 business meeting, on the grounds that the resolution called for actions that would violate the law.
- Approved a substitute “Resolution on Affiliations between ICE and Higher Education.”
- Approved the nominations for the 2020 Awards for Scholarly Distinction (names to be released at a later date).
- Approved the *Statement on the History of Racist Violence in the United States*.
- Approved updating Section 3.a of the *Annual Meeting Guidelines* to include “Affiliate sessions should reflect the diversity guidelines outlined in section 4.2.d and e.”
- Approved the FY21 operating and capital budgets on the basis that it would not be possible to hold an annual meeting in Seattle in January 2021.
- Appointed the following historians to the Board of Editors for the *American Historical Review* for three-year terms to begin August 2020: Abou Bamba, Gettysburg Coll. (Africa); Keisha Blain, Univ. of Pittsburgh (modern US); Ángela Vergara, California State Univ., Los Angeles (Caribbean/Latin America); and Merry Weisner-Hanks, Univ. of Wisconsin–Milwaukee (early modern Europe).
- Appointed the following historians as associate review editors for the *American Historical Review* for three-year terms to begin August 2020: Alison Beach, St. Andrews Univ. (medieval); Monica Black, Univ. of Tennessee (modern Europe, Nazism, Germany); Brandon Byrd, Vanderbilt Univ. (US since 1860, Haiti, African American); Adeeb Khalid, Carleton Coll. (Russia, Soviet, Central Asia, Islam); and Donna Patterson, Delaware State Univ. (Africa, medical).
- Approved changes to the AHA Bylaws 4(2)a to allow for two performance reviews during an *AHR* editor’s five-year term—one at 18 months and one at 36 months.
- Appointed Mark Bradley (Univ. of Chicago) as editor of the *American Historical Review*, to begin a five-year term in August 2021.
- Approved revisions to AHA Bylaws 12(4)a and 12(4)b, which indicate that resolutions for consideration at the AHA business meeting must be signed by at least two percent (2%) of the total Association membership as of the end of the previous fiscal year and should adhere to the Association’s *Guiding Principles on Taking a Public Stance*.
- Approved changes to Article VII, Sections 3 and 4 of the AHA Constitution relating to the business meeting, which include providing AHA Council the option to send any “measures adopted by the business meeting” to the “AHA membership for a referendum” (Section 3) and adding that Council may veto any measure adopted at the business meeting that it believes “does not adhere to the *Guiding Principles on Taking a Public Stance*.” In accordance with the AHA Constitution, the changes will require a full vote and approval of the AHA membership during its next election in June 2021 to take effect. **P**

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July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020

The Association relies on the generous contributions of members and other patrons to support its prizes, awards, and other programs and activities. The following list records—with our considerable gratitude—the many members who made significant gifts to the Association during the past fiscal year.

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2020 AHA ELECTION RESULTS

COMPILED BY LIZ TOWNSEND

Carin Berkowitz (New Jersey Council for the Humanities), chair of the Nominating Committee, announces the following results of the 2020 balloting for officers and committee members of the American Historical Association. The committee wishes to thank all candidates who stood for election; their willingness to serve is much appreciated.

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Jacqueline Jones, University of Texas at Austin

President-elect

James H. Sweet, University of Wisconsin–Madison

Vice President, Research Division

Ben Vinson III, Case Western Reserve University

Councilor, Professional Division

Simon Finger, College of New Jersey

Councilor, Research Division

Pernille Røge, University of Pittsburgh

Councilor, Teaching Division

Katharina Matro, Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart

Councilor, At Large

Sherri Sheu, University of Colorado, Boulder

Committee on Committees

Leo J. Garofalo, Connecticut College

Nominating Committee

Slot 1: Amy M. Froide, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Slot 2: Sharlene Sinegal-DeCuir, Xavier University of Louisiana


Slot 3: Beatrice Gurwitz, National Humanities Alliance

Liz Townsend is manager, data administration and integrity, at the AHA.

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Contributors

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John D. Buenker

1937–2020

Historian of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era

John D. Buenker, emeritus professor of history at the University of Wisconsin–Parkside, died peacefully at home on April 4, 2020, after a short battle with cancer.

John was born in Dubuque, Iowa, on August 11, 1937. He earned a bachelor's degree in history and political science at Loras College (1959) and his master's and PhD in history at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, where he studied with J. Joseph Huthmacher and emerged as a leading scholar of urban liberalism and a lifelong Hoyas fan. He taught at Eastern Illinois University (1965–1970), and then spent 33 years at the University of Wisconsin–Parkside, where he was named Wisconsin Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation's Center for the Advancement and Support of Higher Education in 1991.

Throughout his career John produced a steady stream of prizewinning scholarship and was widely renowned for his major contributions to the fields of immigration history and the long Gilded Age and Progressive Era. Highlights include his pathbreaking first monograph *Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), the co-authored volume *Progressivism* (Schenkman, 1977), and *The Progressive Era, 1893–1914*, published as volume four of *The History of Wisconsin* (Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 1998). In 2018, Routledge reissued his 1985 monograph *The Income Tax and the Progressive Era*, a testament to the enduring significance of his scholarly output. Moreover, John had a special talent for deploying his mastery of certain fields to create helpful reference works, including the *Encyclopedia of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* (2005). His research was supported by fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute for Research in the Humanities.

As part of his record of sustained excellence in teaching and scholarship, John mentored countless students and colleagues. A student from the 1970s recalled that John “cared about the average person and always made you feel like he

cared about you as a student.” An advisee from the 1990s noted that more than “a great professor, he was a great man” who “always had time to talk about history, or life.”

Long after retirement, he continued to encourage young scholars. In 2011, Robert Chiles reached out to John, who became a mentor—reading multiple dissertation and book drafts, providing sagacious counsel on academic life, and cultivating a warm and supportive friendship. Similarly, as Nancy Unger prepared her biography of Robert La Follette for a second edition, John used his encyclopedic knowledge of Wisconsin history to provide gentle corrections and suggest valuable additions. Indeed, John's works and mentorship shaped the thinking of an entire generation of scholars of Progressivism and of ethnic politics, and his influence on contemporary historical thinking remains strong.

John was supportive and encouraging, eager to collaborate, critique, and inspire. He also eagerly shared his love of sports. An avid fan of college basketball and major league baseball, John could be counted on to discuss the favorite teams of his wide circle of friends; following March Madness will never again be so spirited and so much fun. John's ability to talk with equal enthusiasm and authority about the intricacies of Progressive Era reforms and the prospects of the newest major league pitcher cemented many a personal and professional relationship.

John and his wife Beverly were married for nearly 27 years, and his love for Bev and their large blended family exceeded even his love of history and sports. Friends and colleagues were regaled with joyful accounts of the many achievements and activities of his loving wife, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. The warmth John expressed so profoundly in his love of family carried over into his professional life, propelling both a deep interest in the human side of history and a humane compassion for students and emerging scholars. His brilliant output and generous mentorship will ensure that his scholarly influence endures for generations.

Robert Chiles
University of Maryland

Nancy C. Unger
Santa Clara University

Photo courtesy Buenker family



Robert Forster

1926–2020

Historian of France;
AHA 50-Year Member

Robert Forster, professor emeritus of history at Johns Hopkins University, died on May 12, 2020, of congestive heart failure at age 93. Academics seldom are so universally admired as was Robert Forster. He was an intellectual guide, a mentor, an ideal colleague, and a loyal friend to his students as they finished their degrees and entered professional life.

Born in 1926, Bob was one of the “Greatest Generation” who served in World War II as a young man. Upon returning, he earned his BA from Swarthmore College in 1949 and then an MA in modern European history from Harvard University in 1951. During his dissertation research in Toulouse, he met his future wife, Elborg Hamacher, a sought-after translator and noted scholar. Married in 1955, they became the parents of two sons, Thomas and Marc (a professor of history at Connecticut College). After receiving his PhD from Hopkins in 1956, Bob taught at the University of Nebraska and Dartmouth College before returning to Hopkins in 1966 as professor of history until his retirement in 1996. Awarded many fellowships and honors over his career, he was made Doctor Honoris Causa of the University of Toulouse in 1985 and Chevalier de l’Ordre des Palmes Académiques in 1994.

Forster was a distinguished scholar of the Old Regime and the French Revolution. Influenced by the early emphasis on social history, more developed then in France than the United States, he adopted this approach in his research, including three elegant, deeply researched books: *The Nobility of Toulouse in the Eighteenth Century* (1960), *The House of Saulx-Tavanes* (1971), and *Merchants, Landlords, Magistrates* (1980), all published by Johns Hopkins University Press. Bob’s compelling works largely restructured a key cornerstone of French revolutionary historiography—that the nobility was enervated and the revolutionaries, motivated by the Enlightenment, could simply push aside a superannuated structure. Over several decades, Bob established beyond doubt that the nobles had been flexible and determined in their economic, political, and legal efforts to retain wealth

and power. While the revolutionaries undermined the legal advantages of the nobility and their wealth, many in this elite were able to maintain a high status well into the 19th century. Bob’s intense research in archives outside Paris, notably provincial archives in Toulouse, La Rochelle, and Burgundy, distinguished his work.

As French history shifted from the metropole to the wider Francophone world, Bob stayed abreast of new currents in the field. After studying the economic activities of a noble family, he began focusing on the French colonies and race. His final book, *Sugar and Slavery, Family and Race* (Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1996), co-edited with Elborg, examined the papers of a 19th-century slave owner in the French Antilles. Bob’s interest in the psychology of white supremacy, often masked by the familial language of “paternalism,” undergirded this work, as he and Elborg explored the violence that upheld the hierarchies of race and class in Creole society in their introduction to the planter’s diary and correspondence.

During his 30 years at Hopkins, Bob retained the respect and affection of his colleagues in the history department, forging an especially close friendship with fellow French historian and frequent collaborator Orest Ranum. His students will remember his gentle good humor, his generous spirit, his intellectual curiosity, and, above all, his *joie de vivre*. His rigor as a professor had a positive influence on all of his graduate students, and taught us what it meant to be a historian and teacher. While we mourn his loss, Robert Forster’s was the epitome of a life well lived.

Christine Adams
St. Mary’s College of Maryland

Jack R. Censer
George Mason University

Photo courtesy Marc Forster



John M. Murrin

1935–2020

Historian of Early America; AHA 50-Year Member

John M. Murrin, professor of history emeritus at Princeton University, died on May 2, 2020, after contracting the COVID-19 virus. Murrin received his PhD from Yale University in 1966 under the direction of Edmund S. Morgan. He taught at Washington University in St. Louis from 1963 to 1973 before moving to Princeton, where he remained until his retirement in 2003.

Murrin was an extraordinary scholar, teacher, mentor, and adviser whose enduring impact is most obvious in more than 50 published essays, a form that he mastered and to which he was devoted. Murrin's scholarship ranged widely across the Atlantic and Anglophone world from the 17th to 19th centuries. He is remembered for his wit, humor, generosity, kindness, and particularly for his enthusiasm about the truly diverse scholarship of the early Americas.

Murrin's lasting influence is clearest in his decades-long development of Anglicization, the concept that, particularly after about 1715, the British North American colonies became highly effectively integrated into the British Empire. As a result, they constructed a transatlantic and British imperial identity. Key aspects and practices of British society, politics, and culture were replicated in the northern colonies and imitated in the southern colonies. The post-1763 imperial crisis was, therefore, in Murrin's words, "countercyclical." It occurred because a deep Anglicization convinced many white male Anglophone property holders in the 13 colonies that they were fully British and entitled to all the liberties post-1688 subjecthood entailed. What was viewed as the British imperial state's violation of their British liberties eventually radicalized them. American colonists, then, did not declare independence because they had developed a distinct American identity that made British rule insupportable. Only Britain, not the colonists, John Murrin would explain to his undergraduates, saw something distinct called America.

Murrin explored Anglicization, political thought and ideology, and the development of colonial and revolutionary

society in several essays that are considered essential to the field. In 2018, Oxford University Press published 11 of his most crucial essays treating the American Revolution and the early Republic in *Rethinking America: From Empire to Republic*, which received several glowing reviews. *Rethinking America* set out Murrin's Anglicization thesis and, relatedly, his belief that the three major historiographical schools competing to explain the American Revolution—the Imperial, Progressive, and Whig schools—scholarship that often ignored each other, would benefit from respectful engagement and an effort at synthesis. Like many of his other essays, those collected in *Rethinking America* also demonstrated an eagerness to cross methodological and specialist boundaries, and showed that good political history also has to be good social, cultural, and economic history. They warned against a scholarly narrowness that divided North American and early United States history into three distinct areas of study—the colonial, revolutionary, and early Republic periods—whose specialists were increasingly not conversant with each other.

Murrin brought the same intellectual capaciousness to his teaching and advising. He directed over two dozen PhD dissertations treating wide-ranging topics such as rape in colonial America, Native American politics during the American revolutionary era, masculinity in the southeastern borderlands, and the Townshend Acts crisis in Massachusetts. His undergraduate courses on colonial America and the American Revolution often drew over 100 students each year due to his reputation as a spellbinding lecturer and devoted undergraduate teacher.

Murrin's mentoring was not limited to his students. He was devoted to the community of scholars of the Atlantic world and the early Americas. He served on the council of the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and was president of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic. But Murrin most treasured the Philadelphia Center, later renamed the McNeil Center for Early American Studies. He was a long-serving member of the McNeil Center's advisory council and a fixture at its Friday seminars. The McNeil Center annually awards the John Murrin Essay Prize to the best essay published in its journal *Early American Studies* to honor Murrin's scholarship and mastery of the essay form.

Andrew Shankman
Rutgers University

Photo courtesy of Princeton University



W. J. Rorabaugh

1945–2020

Historian of the United States; AHA Member

W. J. Rorabaugh, professor emeritus of American history at the University of Washington, died on March 19, 2020, from complications from non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Bill was a bright, engaging, and prolific historian of 19th- and 20th-century American political and social history.

Bill was born in 1945 to Matthew and Agnes Rorabaugh in Agnes's hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, a place he and his brother, Jim (born 1951), called home. His sister, Mary, was born in 1958, as Matthew's career with the US Geological Survey took the family to Florida, Missouri, Georgia, and Washington State. By the time Bill graduated from Stanford University in 1968, he was a committed West Coaster.

At the University of California, Berkeley, Bill studied under Charles Sellers. Drawn to the emergent field of social history, Bill wrote a dissertation about Jacksonian-era alcohol abuse and temperance reform. Academic jobs were scarce, and Bill gladly accepted a one-year sabbatical replacement slot at the University of Washington in 1977. UW hired him on the tenure track in 1978, and once ensconced in Smith Hall (alongside UW's beloved cherry-blossomed quadrangle), Bill stayed for 42 years, retiring in 2019.

His first book, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1979), was excerpted in the *New Republic* and created quite a stir. Bill calculated that Jacksonian Americans annually consumed distilled spirits at a rate of five gallons per capita. Readers were drawn to appendix six, a recipe for a madeira rum punch. Bill was tenured in 1982 and promoted to full professor in 1987. *The Craft Apprentice: From Franklin to the Machine Age in America* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1986) followed, and in 1993 Bill served as president of the Society of Historians of the Early American Republic.

By the late 1980s, however, Bill had switched fields. Moving more than a century forward, he became a respected and prolific historian of 1960s American politics and culture.

Berkeley at War: The 1960s (Oxford Univ. Press, 1989) was followed by *Kennedy and the Promise of the Sixties* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002), *The Real Making of the President: Kennedy, Nixon, and the 1960 Election* (Univ. Press of Kansas, 2009), and *American Hippies* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2015). Bill's last book, *Prohibition: A Concise History* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2018), displayed his in-depth knowledge of both the 19th and 20th centuries as well as his engaging storytelling style. His return to the early Republic—a biography of Alexander Hamilton—is an unfinished work. His *America's Promise: A Concise History of the United States* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2004, co-authored with Donald T. Critchlow and Paula C. Baker) was a model introductory textbook with a loyal following. He and Critchlow also wrote *Takeover: How the Left's Quest for Social Justice Corrupted Liberalism* (Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2013).

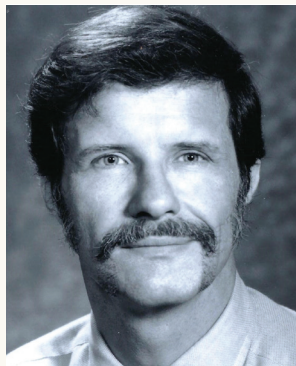
Bill was a popular colleague and teacher who could often be found chatting in Smith's hallways, dressed in his trademark professional attire, slacks and a cardigan sweater. He was a hardworking service scholar and committee member who helped found the UW branch campus system and served as editor of *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*. Thousands of students studied in his courses on Jacksonian America, alcohol and prohibition, and the 1960s; he regularly taught the US survey, senior seminars, and a 19th-century US graduate readings seminar. Bill supervised six doctoral dissertations and a score of MA theses.

Bill ate, slept, and drank history. Did he drink alcohol? Yes—but at a temperate rate of one pint of beer per sitting. He loved cold Coca Cola, but *never* Pepsi. Bill took a vacation each summer (often to Europe) and wrote in detail about his trip in his annual Christmas letter.

Bill is survived by his siblings and their 10 children in Mississippi, Georgia, and California. They were very attentive to Bill throughout his illness, and his nephew, William M. Rorabaugh, sat by his side during his final days. A lifelong bachelor, Bill leaves intellectual children—the many students drawn to his artful telling of American history.

Michael Allen
University of Washington Tacoma (emeritus)

Photo courtesy University of Washington, Seattle, History Department



Robert L. Zangrando

1932–2019

Historian of Civil Rights and Equality; AHA 50-Year Member

Robert L. Zangrando, professor emeritus of American history at the University of Akron, died February 22, 2019, in Hudson, Ohio, at age 86.

Bob was born in Albany, New York, in 1932. He graduated from Union College, *magna cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa. He earned his master's degree in 1960 and his PhD in 1963 from the University of Pennsylvania. He worked as a visiting lecturer at Penn and Drexel University, an assistant professor at Rutgers University–Camden, and a visiting professor at Skidmore College. He served as assistant executive secretary of the AHA (1965–69) and as editor at Yale University Press (1969–71), before joining the history department at the University of Akron in 1971, where he taught until his retirement in 1994. In his teaching, Bob prioritized the contributions made to American history by minority groups, African Americans, and women, and taught courses in women's studies. He also served as a member of the AHA's Professional Division (1982–85).

Bob was a tireless researcher and devoted teacher who infused his students with his own high standards of scholarship. His interests in American history centered on the experiences of African Americans and women in the 20th century. His dissertation examined anti-lynching legislation, and throughout his career he authored numerous articles and book chapters on the African American quest for civil rights and equality. His books include *Civil Rights and the Black American: A Documentary History* (Northwestern Univ. Press, 1970, co-edited with Albert P. Blaustein) and *The NAACP Crusade against Lynching, 1909–1950* (Temple Univ. Press, 1980). His interest in the NAACP's campaign to end lynching led him to explore the life and work of Walter F. White, executive secretary of the NAACP from 1929 to 1955, with a decades-long biography project. Meticulous in gathering and analyzing the evidence, Bob interviewed anyone who worked with White as well as the surviving members of his family. West Virginia University Press published the magisterial result, *Walter F. White: The*

NAACP's Ambassador for Racial Justice, just three months before his death.

Bob's belief in and support for social justice and racial and sexual equality permeated every aspect of his life. Over the course of his life, he marched in support of civil rights, the Equal Rights Amendment, women's reproductive rights, the United Farm Workers of America, and ending the Vietnam War. He taught at a Freedom School in 1964 during the Freedom Summer and participated in the 1970 general strike at Yale in support of workers. He also participated in the Ohio Arts Project that brought Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* to Cleveland in 1981. The Akron chapter of the National Organization for Women chose Bob as the first male recipient of its Feminist of the Year award. Chapter president Diane Dodge said that you didn't have to be a woman to be a feminist: "A feminist is someone who works for and believes in rights for women."

He is survived by his wife Lisa Pace; daughter Lisa, son-in-law Devon Van Vechten, and grandchildren Yvonne Graham and Diana Schultz; and son David Zangrando, daughter-in-law Wendy, and granddaughter Emma Zangrando; and former wife Joanna Schneider Zangrando.

Bob Zangrando was a wonderful friend with a joyful personality, always ready to help and encourage. I met him during my first week in graduate school, and we remained close friends for 59 years. Dedicated to his family and to scholarship, Bob was a rare man whom one meets once in a lifetime. He will be sadly missed.

Martin Chasin
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NYUAD Institute/Humanities Research Fellowships for the Study of the Arab World.

The NYU Abu Dhabi Research Institute invites scholars who wish to contribute to the vibrant research culture of NYUAD's Saadiyat campus to apply for a residential fellowship, starting September 2021. The Institute welcomes applications from scholars working in all areas of the humanities related to the study of the Arab world, its rich literature and history, its cultural and artistic heritage, and its manifold connections with other cultures. This includes, among others, Islamic intellectual history and culture, any areas of particular relevance to the MENA region, as well as projects thematically connected to existing research projects and initiatives at NYUAD's divisions of Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences (see <https://nyuad.nyu.edu/en/research.html>). Both distinguished scholars with an established reputation and promising scholars who are at the beginning of their career can apply for a research fellowship. The program awards one-year senior fellowships and one-/two-year postdoctoral fellowships. Each fellow receives a competitive stipend commensurate with experience, housing, health insurance, work/office space on campus, full access to NYUAD's library facilities (with close connections to NYU's main library in New York), research allowance, an opportunity to

host a small workshop funded by the Research Institute, and support for travel to and from Abu Dhabi. We expect successful candidates to commence their appointment on September 1, 2021, pending final approval. The fellowship program is hosted by the NYU Abu Dhabi Research Institute. For more information, please visit <https://nyuad.nyu.edu/en/research/centers-labs-and-projects/humanities-research-fellowship-program.html>. Applications are due October 1, 2020. For questions, please reach out to Alexandra Sandu, Assistant Program Director, alexandra.sandu@nyu.edu.

UNITED STATES



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WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

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20th-Century US and the World.

The History Department at Wesleyan University invites applications for a tenure-track assistant professorship in the US and the world, beginning July 1, 2021. We are interested in candidates whose research and teaching focuses broadly on the globalization of the United States from the emergence of the US as an imperial power in the late 19th century to the growth of the US-led multilateral system in the latter 20th. Topics of interest include (but are not limited to) US foreign relations; American commerce at home and abroad; transnational social, cultural, and intellectual movements; religious, military and/or security issues; and international development. The candidate will be fully housed in the History Department. Teaching responsibilities (2-2 teaching load) will

include the 20th-century US history survey and surveys in the person's areas of specialization as well as first-year and advanced seminars. Additional duties include advising and mentoring students, carrying on a program of research, and participating in faculty governance at the departmental and university level. Candidates must have a PhD in history or related field in hand by the time of appointment to be hired as an assistant professor; a successful candidate may be hired as an Instructor if the candidate does not have a PhD in hand at the time of appointment, but will complete the PhD in history or related field within one year of hire. To apply, visit <http://careers.wesleyan.edu/postings/7401>. A complete application includes a cover letter, CV, writing sample, statement of current research, and documentation of teaching experience, if applicable, including a teaching statement, course syllabi and student evaluations. In a cover letter, applicants should describe how they will embrace the university's commitment to fostering an inclusive community, as well as their experience working with individuals from historically marginalized or underserved groups. You will also be asked to provide the email addresses of three referees from whom we will obtain confidential letters of recommendation. Applications completed by November 20, 2020, will receive full consideration. Please contact Lorraine Flannigan, History Department administrative assistant, at lflannigan@wesleyan.edu or 860-685-2389 if you have questions about the application process. Wesleyan University, located in Middletown, Connecticut, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious practice or creed, age, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status,

ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, political belief, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, or non-position-related criminal record. We welcome applications from women and people from groups historically underrepresented in the academy. Inquiries regarding Title IX, Section 504, or any other non-discrimination policies should be directed to Vice President for Equity & Inclusion/Title IX Officer, 860-685-4771.

AD POLICY STATEMENT

Most job discrimination is illegal, and open hiring on the basis of merit depends on fair practice in recruitment, thereby ensuring that all professionally qualified persons may obtain appropriate opportunities. The AHA will not accept a job listing that (1) contains wording that either directly or indirectly links race, color, national origin, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, ideology, political affiliation, age, or disability to a specific job offer; or (2) contains wording requiring applicants to submit special materials for the sole purpose of identifying the applicant's race, color, national origin, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, ideology, political affiliation, veteran status, age, or disability.

The AHA does make an exception to these criteria in three unique cases: (1) open listings for minority vita banks that are clearly not linked with specific jobs, fields, or specializations; (2) ads that require religious identification or affiliation for consideration for the position, a preference that is allowed to religious institutions under federal law; and (3) fellowship advertisements.

The AHA retains the right to refuse or edit all discriminatory statements from copy submitted to the Association that is not consistent with these guidelines or with the principles of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The AHA accepts advertisements from academic institutions whose administrations are under censure by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), but requires that this fact be clearly stated. Refer to www.aaup.org/our-programs/academic-freedom/censure-list for more information.

For further details on best practices in hiring and academic employment, see the AHA's Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct, www.historians.org/standards; Guidelines for the Hiring Process, www.historians.org/hiring; and Policy on Advertisements, www.historians.org/adpolicy.

AMY STANLEY

THE JAPANESE BULLFROG



Once, on a miserable research trip, I encountered a Japanese bullfrog. I never saw it, but I recognized its deep, gulping croak. I'd heard it many times at our local nature museum, where my husband and I used to take my two-year-old son on winter Sundays. At one exhibit, you could press buttons to hear a variety of Midwestern frog croaks, and my son loved all of them except for the bullfrog, which made him cry. So I was sure there was a bullfrog hiding somewhere in the grass outside a tiny train station in the mountains of northeastern Japan.

I wasn't looking for a bullfrog. I was looking for a woman who had been born somewhere near that station in the early 19th century. There used to be an entire village there. But generations of young people had crossed the mountains to Tokyo, and now there was only a nature preserve. It was empty except for me, cicadas, and the noisy frog. I stood there, defeated, missing my son, who was asleep on the other side of the world. *At least these were her fields*, I thought, *and her horizon. Two hundred years ago, she heard a bullfrog singing.*

The next day, I told the story of my encounter to a Japanese historian. He laughed: "You met another American!" He explained that bullfrogs came to Japan with Commodore Matthew C. Perry's black ships in 1853. The woman I was seeking had never heard a bullfrog. They were members of an invasive species, as alien to her world as I was.

Later, I learned that the frogs didn't arrive with Perry. They were imported by the Japanese marine biologist Watase Shōzaburō, who brought about a dozen of them from New Orleans in 1918, thinking they might catch on as a cheap source of protein for a growing population. But bullfrogs never became a staple of the Japanese diet. Instead, they splashed into local waterways and made themselves at home, devastating native ecologies.

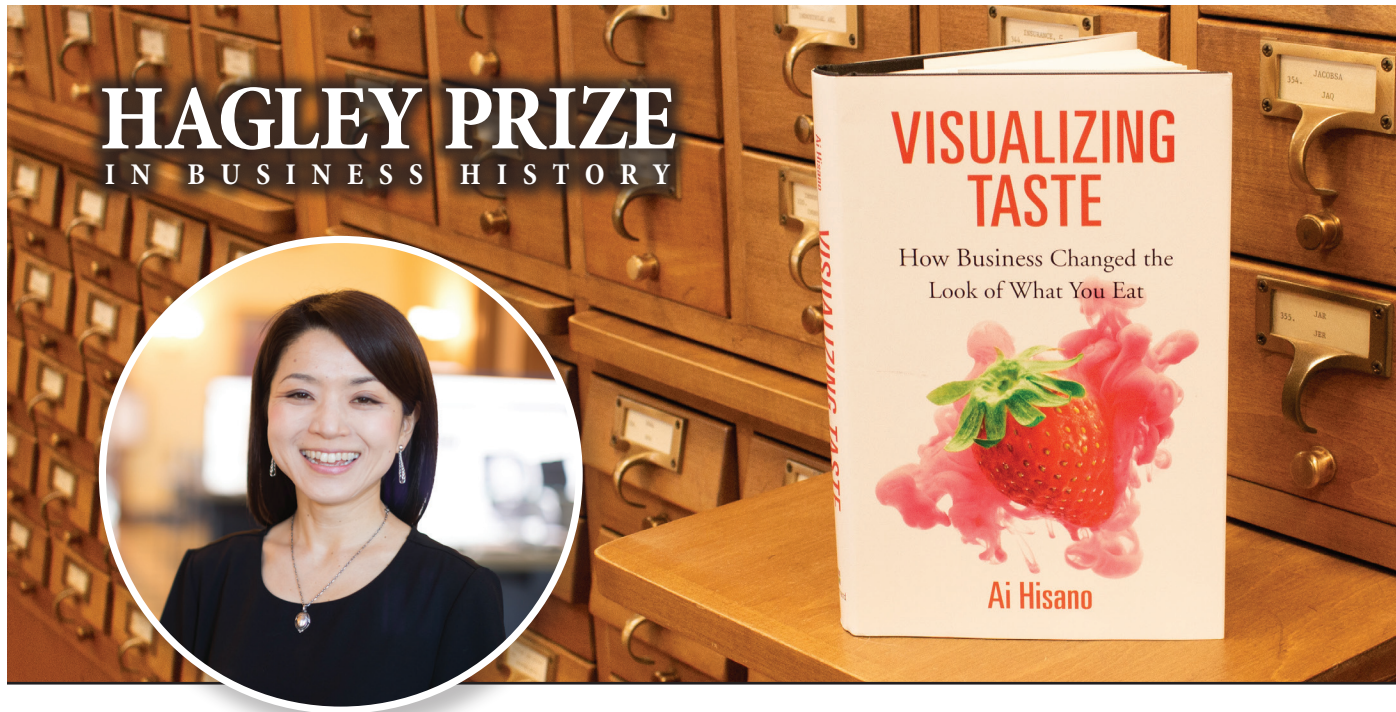
Today, if you search a Japanese library catalog for "bullfrog," you'll find books such as *Invasive Species: Now Even the Pond at the Old Imperial Palace Is Full of Bullfrogs!* and other alarming titles. Bullfrogs sit on the covers, looking fat, presumptuous, and very American. Actually, they look like Commodore Perry.

For years, I thought of that bullfrog and cringed. I felt like I had met a version of myself in the field that day: a loud, misplaced American, bellowing happily, totally oblivious. I was so easily deceived by my own self-centeredness, my assumption that my subjects lived in a world I would recognize. I tried too hard to will myself into the past, and I got it entirely wrong.

But more recently, I miss my froggy alter-ego. I, too, used to be an amphibian: a professor in a book-filled office and an exhausted mother in a faraway field. Now I can't travel back to either of those places, and without childcare, it seems impossible to be both a mother and a scholar. All I can do is croak my complaints, wondering if some other historian might hear a song she recognizes. **P**

Amy Stanley is professor of history at Northwestern University. She tweets @astanley711.

Photo: Derek Ramsey/Wikimedia Commons



Hagley Museum and Library and the Business History Conference are pleased to announce the 2020 winner of the Hagley Prize: Ai Hisano, *Visualizing Taste: How Business Changed the Look of What You Eat* (Harvard University Press). Hagley Museum and Library and the Business History Conference jointly offer the Hagley Prize awarded to the best book in Business History (broadly defined) and consists of a medallion and \$2,500. The prize was awarded at the Business History Conference annual meeting held in Charlotte, North Carolina, March 15, 2020.



The prize committee encourages the submission of books from all methodological perspectives. It is particularly interested in innovation studies that have the potential to expand the boundaries of the discipline. Scholars, publishers, and other interested parties may submit nominations. Eligible books can have either an American or an international focus. They must be written in English and be published during the two years (2019 or 2020 copyright) prior to the award.



Four copies of a book must accompany a nomination and be submitted to the prize coordinator, Carol Ressler Lockman, Hagley Museum and Library, PO Box 3630, 298 Buck Road, Wilmington DE 19807-0630, **The deadline for nominations is November 30, 2020.** The 2021 Hagley Prize will be presented at the annual meeting of the Business History Conference in Detroit, Michigan on March 14, 2021.



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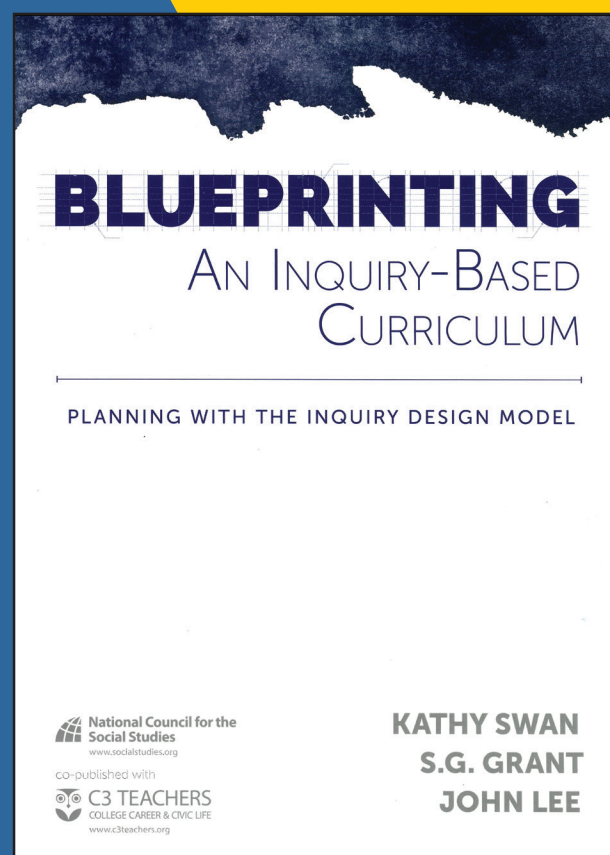
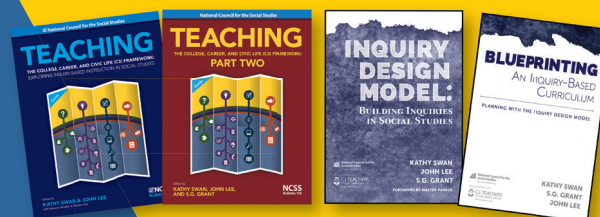
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