

*The newsmagazine of the American Historical Association*

# PERSPECTIVES ON HISTORY

Volume 61: 7  
October 2023





## Call for Proposals for the 138th Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association

**The AHA's annual meeting is the largest yearly gathering of historians in the United States.**

All historians are welcome and encouraged to submit proposals. The AHA also invites historically focused proposals from colleagues in related disciplines and from AHA affiliated societies. The Program Committee will consider all proposals that advance the study, teaching, and public presentation of history.

The Association seeks submissions on the histories of all places, periods, people, and topics; on the uses of diverse sources and methods, including digital history; and on theory and the uses of history itself in a wide variety of venues.

**We invite proposals for sessions in a variety of formats and encourage lively interaction among presenters and with the audience.**

### Session Proposals

Sessions last for 90 minutes. Most sessions will be limited to four speakers plus a chair. The Program Committee will accept proposals for complete sessions only. We encourage organizers to build sessions that bring together diverse perspectives.

### Poster Proposals

The meeting will feature a poster session to allow historians to share their research through visual materials. Proposals for single, individual presentations may be submitted as posters.

.....

The Program Committee welcomes proposals from all historians, whatever their institutional affiliation or status, and historians working outside the United States. With the exception of foreign scholars and those from other disciplines, all persons appearing on the program must be members of the AHA, although membership is not required to submit a proposal. All participants must register for the meeting when registration opens. The Association aspires to represent the full diversity of its membership at the annual meeting.

**Electronic submission only, by midnight PST on February 15, 2024**

Before applying, please review the annual meeting guidelines and more information at [historians.org/proposals](https://historians.org/proposals).

**Questions about policies, modes of presentation, and the electronic submission process?**

Contact [annualmeeting@historians.org](mailto:annualmeeting@historians.org).

**Questions about the content of proposals?**

Contact Program Committee chair **Tamika Nunley, Cornell University** ([tnunley@cornell.edu](mailto:tnunley@cornell.edu)) and co-chair **Gabriel Paquette, University of Maine** ([gabriel.paquette@maine.edu](mailto:gabriel.paquette@maine.edu)).



# FEATURES

## CITIES, CULTURE, AND CONFLAGRATIONS ..... 15

*Learning Urban History to Protect Tangible and Intangible Heritage*

IAN MORLEY

## IMPROVING DECLASSIFICATION..... 18

*Applying Machine Learning to Diplomatic Cable Review*

JEFFERY A. CHARLSTON



## ON THE COVER

A spark is a beginning, a moment of heat more likely to vanish than turn into a conflagration. It can be an idea, a problem, a moment, a person, a movement, a bomb, or, on occasion, an actual fire. But historians know that any spark they find is itself also a middle and an end.

*Photo: David Zhang/Flickr/CC BY-SA 2.0. Image cropped.*

## 3 | FROM THE EDITOR

My Libraries

L. RENATO GRIGOLI

## 5 | FROM THE PRESIDENT

On Ideological Litmus Tests

EDWARD MUIR

## 8 | NEWS

Not Endorsed by Your Teacher

LAURA ANSLEY

## 11 | PERSPECTIVES ON CULTURE

When the Big Screen Isn't Big Enough

ALEXANDRA F. LEVY

## 21 | AHA ANNUAL MEETING

From Downtown to the Mission in Three Minutes

LINDSEY PASSENGER WIECK

## 27 | AHA ACTIVITIES

Sovereignty and Satellites

REBECCA L. WEST

Regional Conferences

LAURA ANSLEY

Nominations Invited for AHA Offices, Terms Beginning January 2025

LIZ TOWNSEND

## 33 | IN MEMORIAM

## 38 | LONG OVERDUE

## 39 | AHA CAREER CENTER

## 44 | EVERYTHING HAS A HISTORY

The Ross House Slave Quarters

GABRIELLE MCCOY



*From September 2023 to May 2024, Perspectives will feature a thread on urbanism and rurality. Look for this icon to find articles in the thread.*



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FPO





L. RENATO GRIGOLI

## MY LIBRARIES

### *Finding a Third Place*

Do you have a third place? Coined by urban sociologist Ray Oldenburg in his 1989 book, *The Great Good Place*, a third place is one where people can regularly relax, talk, and socialize outside the “first place” (home) and “second place” (work). The great example of the third place is the European city plaza, surrounded by cafés and filled with friends talking. In the United States and Canada, third places include malls, barbershops, and places of worship, but they are increasingly endangered. The suburban sprawl that defines much of North American life makes it difficult to design spaces that “don’t suck” to be in. One of the few third places that has survived in the suburban ecosystem, though it is increasingly under budgetary and ideological threat, is the public library. As Ursula K. Le Guin pointed out in a 1997 talk celebrating the renovation of a Portland, Oregon, local library, “A library is a focal point, a sacred place to a community; and its sacredness is its accessibility, its publicness. It’s everybody’s place.”

To plot one’s life by third places like libraries, as Le Guin proceeded to do, is a curious exercise. My own would begin not at Massachusetts General Hospital but in a new multistory brick library across the street from city hall in Newton, Massachusetts. I remember it vividly: the sound of my shoes echoing too loudly on the floor of the main lobby, the color of the wood of the checkout desk, the straight route I took to the children’s and young adult sections. That library was my first foray into history too—I’m fairly sure I read every book it had on the Second World War before I turned 14. Finding Asterix and Tintin in a milk crate in the corner began my interest in graphic novels. And the library was simply a place I wanted to be, curled up in a chair by a window with a new world in my hands.

My local public library was an adventure; my middle school library was a refuge. I wasn’t one of the popular kids, to put it mildly, so the library became one of the few places I could relax. I spent my time learning about politics (via a magazine of political cartoons) and browsing the shelves. I even got a small shred of social cred among my peers by discovering an illustrated history book with some rather risqué

pictures that had somehow made it into the collection. In contrast, the memories I have of the W. E. B. Du Bois Library at the University of Massachusetts Amherst are less fond—a hazard of working the security shift from midnight to 8:00 a.m. Insomnia has little to recommend it; that this occurred at the nadir of my mental and emotional health (as well as my GPA) does not help matters. But for all that, it was certainly a library.

My local public library was an  
adventure; my middle school  
library was a refuge.

My first encounter with Harvard University’s Widener Library was intimidating, to say the least. It was not the most welcoming space, third or otherwise. Besides the institution’s prestige, there was all this marble, security guards searching your bags, and the weird central shrine to the library’s namesake (he drowned with the *Titanic*). It didn’t help that I had weaseled my way through its hallowed doors as an Extension School student rather than a “proper” student of the College. Imposter syndrome is easy to come by in such a place, though it did fade with time. I worked the institutional bureaucracy to get my own carrel and access to the medieval studies reading room, places that became locations for timely naps as I balanced evening studies with morning shifts at the local Trader Joe’s. It was certainly better to endure a bit of pomp and circumstance than to try to study at Lamont, the neighboring undergraduate-focused library, the memory of which is fixed in my mind as the pure scent of stress—body odor, adrenaline, flop sweat, and Red Bull.

To be perfectly honest, I didn’t know how good I had it. I had no other real point of reference. I entered academia taking for granted the ability to summon the most obscure volumes on a whim; occasionally, they arrived with their pages uncut. Once when browsing the shelves, I even found a copy of the



*Satyricon* from 1704, which I dutifully turned over to the front desk for conservation. Any scholarly database I needed was at my fingertips, and there was no need to plan ahead for a seminar reading list—any book I needed would be at hand, usually in several copies.

When I wasn't at Widener, I spent as much time as I could next door in Houghton, the rare books library. My first loves as a medievalist are Latin philology and paleography, both of which Houghton enabled me to pursue freely. Here, too, I didn't understand how lucky I was—who has easy and regular access to a couple dozen 12th-century manuscripts, at least on this side of the Atlantic? The librarian for the medieval collection, Bill Stoneman, took me under his wing first as a student and then as an assistant, a position that allowed me to walk into the restricted stacks and browse. Bill was the one who convinced me to work on the South of France. It wasn't that hard, really. I originally wanted to study northern England, but when I told this to Bill, who was himself a scholar of Old English, he stared me down and said, "Leland, if I were to do it all over again, I would study some place with *good* food."

## I have not yet found my next library.

Fair point, Bill. Mediterranean France and Iberia it was (and is).

Arriving in Providence, Rhode Island, for my PhD, I encountered an entirely different kind of library. Brown University's Rockefeller Library was, more than any other academic library I have spent time in, a true third place. There was a café and mini-mart in the front lobby, and part of the collection had been moved off-site to make room for study spaces. After my first year, they shipped off most of the reference collection to make room for a fancy new keycard-access-only, donor-endowed graduate student study area. It was a very nice, quiet, comfortable place to work, with a fantastic view of most of the city. But I would have preferred the reference collection.

Over the nearly two years I've worked at the AHA, I've settled into life in Washington, DC, but I have not yet found my next library. I, like most of the other staff at the Association, no longer have a university affiliation that might grant me borrowing privileges or access to databases. And I, like other AHA staff, continue to be a practicing historian. Although I'm proud of my own collection, my partner reminds me after every irrationally exuberant adventure at a conference book exhibit that I can't just buy everything I need for my

scholarship. And so I need to find a new library, a new home away from home—a new third place.

Finding something that works for me has been a slow process. The nearby public libraries in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties are wonderful spaces to be in. This is unsurprising, since, as they are often attached to a community center (and sometimes even a pool), they were deliberately designed to be third places. A colleague and I sometimes meet up to co-work from one with an excellent Ethiopian coffee shop. From an academic's standpoint, however, their collections are thin. Access to Perlego's online library of books and tools, a new AHA member benefit, has provided some relief. And of course I work a mere two blocks from the Library of Congress, a collection that far exceeds even Widener's (though accessing it requires a bit of planning), and the Folger Shakespeare Library, which will reopen after renovations next year.

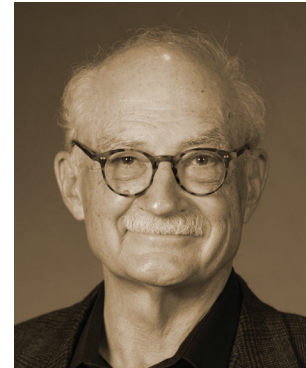
We all need a focal point, a third place, a public space outside home and work where we can relax, a place sacred to the communities of which we wish to be a part. I'm looking for mine. I hope you find yours. **P**

*L. Renato Grigoli is the editor of Perspectives on History.*

EDWARD MUIR

## ON IDEOLOGICAL LITMUS TESTS

*Historians and the Current Threats to Academic Freedom*



At a special session of the Academic Senate at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1949, a faculty member who had previously shunned university politics rose to speak. It was the Year of the Oath, the beginnings of Cold War anticommunism, a time when the University of California Board of Regents required all university employees to pledge their loyalty to the US and California Constitutions and to deny membership in, or belief in, any organization that advocated overthrowing the US government. The oath's obvious purpose was to uncover communist associations. According to an eyewitness, "Perhaps none made a more profound impression upon those who experienced it than the speech of a once German scholar. . . . He told of the imposition of oaths in the early days of Hitler's power. His theme was always: 'This is the way it begins. The first oath is so gentle that one can scarcely notice anything at which to take exception. The next oath is stronger!' The time to resist, he declared, was at the beginning: the oath to refuse to take was the first oath."

The speaker in question was the great medievalist historian Ernst Kantorowicz, who said in that meeting, "It is a typical expedient of demagogues to bring the most loyal citizens, and only the loyal ones, into a conflict of conscience branding nonconformists as un-Athenian, un-English, un-German." True to the ideals he espoused in his speech, Kantorowicz refused to take the regents' loyalty oath. Berkeley fired him.

Kantorowicz, of course, was no communist. In fact, he was a traditional conservative who had shot at communists during the 1919 revolution in Munich. He had embraced German nationalism, but as a Jew, he did not endorse the New Reich and referred to Nazi anti-intellectuals as "vomit." His staunch conservatism did little to protect him. Despite his service with the Volkswehr in Munich, anti-Jewish legislation forced him out of his academic position at Frankfurt and into exile to Berkeley. Then, in 1949, Berkeley exiled him again.

When Kantorowicz defended his refusal to submit to the loyalty oath, he relied not on the liberal right to freedom of speech or even academic freedom but rather on his status as a professor, which he understood in medieval terms. Only the professor, he argued, along with the priest and the judge, may wear the robe, which sets them apart as people whose only loyalty must be to the truth. Demanding an oath to the state was impossible because, by virtue of their professions, they had already taken an implicit oath to the truth as determined by the standards of their professions.

Kantorowicz's elitism seems antiquated today. Although I cannot imagine using his medievalist habit of mind to defend teachers victimized by political purges, he did raise a question that is still germane. How should professionals defend themselves against transparent political attacks that might lead to the termination of their jobs? In expressing their opinions, especially if made in the classroom, are they exercising their rights to free speech and academic freedom, or are they drawing conclusions based on their expertise? For historians, the line between their rights as citizens and their obligations as professionals can be easy to blur, and those who harbor animosity toward educated elites often do not recognize the difference between ideological and professional opinions.

The goal is that, through debate  
and the search for new evidence,  
a better understanding of the  
past will come out.

Similar to other professionals, such as epidemiologists and climatologists, who have faced untutored and often vicious attacks in past decades, historians do not merely express their opinions when they "profess." They profess their best expert judgment. Their judgments might be wrong, but an attribute of being a professional is that other professionals with similar command of evidence can and will dispute them.



All that should matter is the evidence and what it means. The goal is that, through debate and the search for new evidence, a better understanding of the past will come out.

Teachers must model that process for students through discussion, which promotes independent, reflective, and critical thinking. That has been the most effective pedagogical technique since Socrates asked hard questions of the youth of Athens. It is how students learn, because understanding comes not from imbibing an ideology but from engaging in rational discourse based on evidence. History is about what actually happened in the past, not what should have happened or should have been thought. Much of history is ugly, violent, divisive, and offensive to current sensibilities, and if history teachers are doing their duty, the subject matter *should* make students feel uncomfortable. What is remarkable about our current public discourse is how often these basic principles of pedagogy are challenged.

Much of history is ugly, violent, divisive, and offensive to current sensibilities.

When he refused the regents' oath, Kantorowicz had already acquired a position at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, which diminishes the force of his protest. So his story must be cold comfort to the victims of the current rage for harassing or firing teachers for failing to conform to an ideological litmus test. But Kantorowicz's point about professionals still has merit. Many teachers today may not yet face loyalty oaths, but there are other ways to control thought. At New College of Florida, two untenured visiting professors wrote an opinion piece in that notoriously left-wing publication *Teen Vogue* that criticized the ideological cement poured over the campus by the politically one-sided Board of Trustees. One of the trustees, Christopher Rufo, tweeted that the two are "pure left-wing Mad Libs." Rufo declared, "New College will no longer be a jobs program for middling, left-wing intellectuals" and even took pleasure in the two professors' vulnerability: "Luckily, both are visiting professors." For undeclared reasons, one of the authors of the *Teen Vogue* article, who happened to be the only professor of US history at New College, did not have his contract renewed. It is hard not to smell political bias in Rufo, a trustee who has been entrusted to protect the interests of all the citizens of Florida, not just those who have his same extremist views.

One of the several documents that guides the new assault on history education is *American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model*

*K-12 Social Studies Standards*, which has been endorsed by Christopher Rufo as a member of its American Birthright Coalition and one of the initial signatories of the Civics Alliance. The Civics Alliance gives its mission as "preserving and improving America's civics education and preventing the subordination of civics education to political recruitment tools." That sounds nice until you read the 16-page introduction, which is a transparent entreaty for "political recruitment" to the radical right. The introduction presents a classic straw man argument about history in the schools without citing any evidence about what is actually being taught and what is wrong with it. The American Birthright project attempts a top-down eradication that ignores administrators and teachers who actually know something about how students learn. The misguided section on pedagogy constitutes a screed against a tradition in pedagogical theory that includes the greatest American philosopher of education, John Dewey, who wanted education to be an exercise in democracy by creating an environment in which students can take part in and own their own learning. American Birthright advocates not rational inquiry but a return to the antiquated memorization of "an extensive catalog of historical facts, including dates, places, people, and laws." Take, for instance, the way these model standards incorporate a carefully selected set of primary documents. Students memorize passages and learn to recite how these sources embody eternal transhistorical truths. They are never asked or encouraged to be critical, to analyze, or to consider other points of view. The resentment infusing the prose in this document will only please the converted and do nothing to help parents understand better the social studies education of their children.

As a professor, I must, by definition, profess my understanding of the meaning of historical evidence. My credo: I believe in history. I believe in the evidence of history. I believe in the ethics of history. To believe in history means that historical study must serve an ethical purpose, but there is no catechism of historical belief, only scholarly practices that attempt to discern the meaning of the past in all its complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainty. Life offers not the certainty of grace or mathematical precision but rather the responsibility to make decisions based on partial or conflicting evidence. Honest history, in short, teaches students how to live. The proposed alternative would condemn millions of young students to the soul-killing drudgery of rote memorization and deprive them of the opportunity to live a rich intellectual life full of ideas. To do so would be not just an assault on history but an assault on our youth. That would be a lasting tragedy — one that a well-educated conservative, such as Kantorowicz, must lament. **P**

*Edward Muir is president of the AHA.*

# HAGLEY PRIZE

## IN BUSINESS HISTORY



Hagley Museum and Library and the Business History Conference are pleased to announce the 2023 co-winners of the Hagley Prize: Hannah Farber, *Underwriters of the United States: How Insurance Shaped the American Founding*, University of North Carolina Press, and Alejandro J. Gómez Del Moral, *Buying Into Change: Mass Consumption, Dictatorship, and Democratization in Franco's Spain, 1939-1982*, University of Nebraska 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 an award of \$2,500. The prize was awarded at the Business History Conference annual meeting held in Detroit, Michigan, March 16-18, 2023.

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 (2022 or 2023 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, 2023. The 2024 Hagley Prize will be presented at the annual meeting of the Business History Conference to be held in Providence, Rhode Island, March 14-16, 2024.



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LAURA ANSLEY

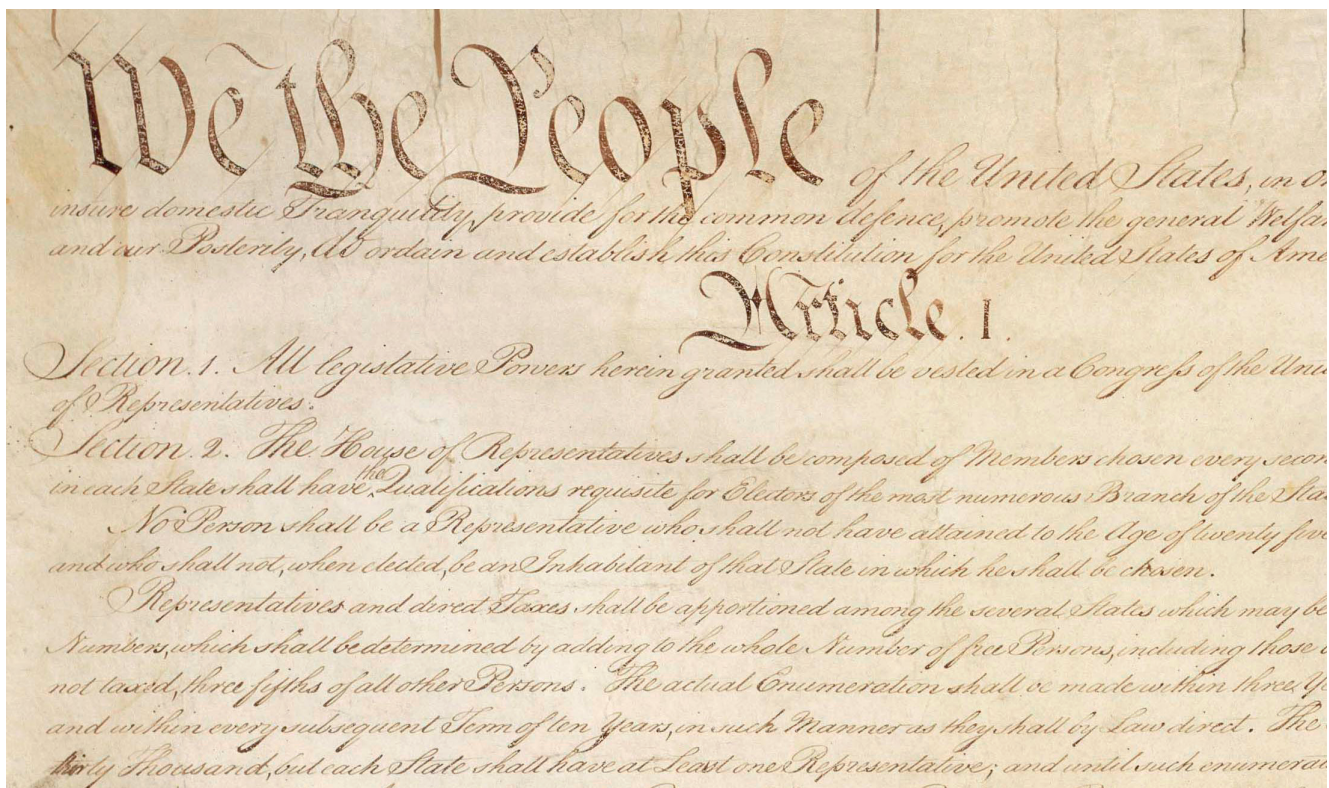
# NOT ENDORSED BY YOUR TEACHER

*Turning a Satirical Eye on US History*

**If you've done archival research, there are inevitably documents you just couldn't find. Perhaps they weren't saved. Perhaps they were destroyed, whether purposely or accidentally. Or perhaps they never existed—you simply wish they did, so you could answer that question you've been asking for years. Historians are accustomed to this problem, but a satirist might ask, "Why not write them yourself?"**

In her new book, humorist and *Washington Post* columnist Alexandra Petri did just that. In *Alexandra Petri's US History: Important American Documents (I Made Up)*, you'll find fictional oral histories of the Constitutional Convention, *Moby-Dick*, and the musical *Oklahoma!*'s exclamation point; advice for posing for your Civil War photograph; the *Real Housewives of the Space Program*; and excerpts from Richard Nixon's White House tapes (but just the parts where

he's yelling at his dog, Checkers). Described as "a history for people disappointed that the only president whose weird sex letters we have is Warren G. Harding," the satirical book leans into the absurd, the goofy, and the downright weird, making for a text that students should *not* study when preparing for their AP US history exams. (And as is noted prominently on its cover, this book is not endorsed by the College Board.)



You won't find any of Alexandra Petri's US history documents in the National Archives.  
National Archives and Records Administration. Image cropped.

Petri told *Perspectives*, “I have been joking when I sign copies of the book that ‘I hear you love history, so I made you some more.’” A lifelong history buff, Petri traces her interest in the American past to a book of “weird presidential facts that I now am not sure are true. From it I learned things like ‘Rutherford B. Hayes’s wife was a teetotaler nicknamed Lemonade Lucy,’ ‘Chester A. Arthur loved to stay up late at night,’ and ‘James Garfield could write a sentence in Greek with one hand and in Latin with the other.’ Are any of these things accurate? More information requested from those in the know!” Her mother was a huge fan of George Washington, with his image decorating their home on plates, fans, pillows, and Christmas tree ornaments. Childhood trips to Civil War battlefields, the homes of American authors, and the Benjamin Harrison Presidential Site piqued Petri’s curiosity further. At the latter, “the tour we went on the first time kept denying things in a very suspicious way. ‘He didn’t take a bribe from this man! He didn’t have an affair with his wife’s niece!’ You don’t need to go out of your way to tell me that he didn’t have an affair with his wife’s niece! Now I have questions! So I thought that was extremely funny, and I loved that sort of oblique way in, where you figure out the story by painting very carefully around the story.”

Petri became interested in American literature early in her life as well. “I was one of those nerds who would read the classics for fun,” she said, “because they all have naughty bits if you’re willing to put in the time with the footnotes. Everyone sees you reading Herman Melville’s letters, and they think, ‘How erudite!’ But you’re actually trawling through them because somebody left a cane in his bed and you want to know whose cane it was! You’re just there for the gossip!” And at the end of the day, aren’t all of us there for the gossip?



Many of the documents she’s created lean into that angle. In “Excerpt from *Modern Etiquette* (1793),” readers will find a Mad Libs–style guide for writing a letter with blanks labeled “noun, most intimate part of yourself” and “past-tense verb, another way of saying ‘throbbed,’” which pokes fun at how often historic sources that some historians have read as platonic come across as quite passionate to a modern reader. Others look at famous events or figures from opposing sides, like “A Spider Objects to Jonathan Edwards” or “The Group Telegram Following the ‘Cross of Gold’ Speech” (“Okay, I’m just going to say it STOP Did anybody else think that was a little weird? STOP”). And then there are the pieces that lean into the totally absurd. What if Louisa May Alcott’s novel *Little Women* was actually *Big Women*, and the March sisters were 60 feet tall? What if Franklin Delano Roosevelt addressed the nation with “The Only Thing We Have to Fear Is Fear Itself—and the Thing That Ate Herbert Hoover”? What if *Sesame Street* had a “Very Special D-Day Episode”?

As Petri said, “I love a messy primary source document!” Like a historian, she

is attuned to the gaps and absences that exist in the documentary record. “I’m obsessed with all the letters we should have but don’t. I love when you can almost catch sight of something that might or might not have happened, and you don’t know.” This project gave her an opportunity to think about those missing pieces, the letters that intentionally were not preserved, and the rough drafts that were polished up into something different.

Like a historian,  
Petri is attuned to the  
gaps and absences  
that exist in the  
documentary record.

Knowledgeable readers will mostly recognize the big names, events, and literature Petri satirizes. When asked about how she chose what “greatest hits of American history and literature” to work with, she replied, “I think it’s less Actual Greatest Hits and more Things We Keep Being Told Are Greatest Hits.” She looked for the chance to read about the things that seemed like a mere mention or footnote in textbooks, “the books you may have heard of but not necessarily read,” like Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle* or Tom Taylor’s *Our American Cousin* (the play performed at Ford’s Theatre the night Abraham Lincoln was assassinated). Some of them were personal: “Sometimes it would be a case of ‘I’ve been mad at Nathaniel Hawthorne since 2004, and I would like to deposit this grudge-work that has been curdling within me for decades.’” Others were an exercise in tackling the big myths—the founding events, the presidents, the politics, wars, and literature that shaped the United States (or so we’ve been told). That necessarily meant spending a lot of time on white, upper-class men rather than telling a



more diverse story and drawing on the experiences of women, people of color, the working classes, and more.


This focus on the classics of history and literature positions *Alexandra Petri's US History* right in the center of current debates over what is important in our national story. In the introduction, she writes that the book is addressing "our great national anger toward history," and that "sometimes it seems that being mad about the past is the only thing we can agree on." She told *Perspectives*, "As long as there has been history, people have been mad about it. It's a slippery thing: it objectively happened, but the way it exists after it's over is so strange and quicksilver and hard to grasp." After a battle, for example, you have the place it occurred, the documents about the events like diaries, maps, and casualty lists, and "everyone involved has a different theory about what went wrong, why the

people who won, won, why the people who lost, lost." That "slipperiness," as Petri called it, leads to "some really 1984 ideas." "If all we have that proves that X did Z is this picture, we can just get rid of this picture, and presto, he never did it! But he did do it." History isn't changed by destroying evidence or not learning the messy parts of it.

History isn't changed  
by destroying  
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parts of it.

The conflicts today over the teaching and learning of US history obliquely influenced Petri as she worked on the book. She sees those who read what Petri called "the genre of History Channel Dad Books of History as You Remember

It Being" as looking for a specific story that focuses on the people they already know and the events they're already familiar with, with no changes. For these Americans, Petri says, "History is Mount Rushmore and Jon McNaughton paintings and a Longfellow poem about Betsy Ross. It's a commemorative plate with the presidents on it." So "my response as a satirist is often 'Here is what you said you wanted!' and see if they actually like it. This book is sort of a monkey's paw version of the history I think they're asking we learn instead."

Although historians won't be assigning this book in their US history courses, Petri's documents might make you think a bit differently about those sources we all think we know so well. At the very least, readers will come away laughing. 

*Laura Ansley is senior managing editor at the AHA.*

The American Historical Association proudly announces

## The James G. Stofer Fund for Community College and Public High School Teachers

Established in 2022, the **James G. Stofer Fund for Community College and Public High School Teachers** provides grants to support the participation of community college and public high school teachers in AHA activities and programs. Community college and public high school faculty applicants, who are members of the Association, will be considered for the **Stofer Annual Meeting Travel Grants**, regardless of participation in the program.

The application deadline is November 15. Successful applicants will be awarded travel subsidies of up to \$400 each.

*Only community college or public high school faculty who are members of the AHA are eligible to apply for the Stofer Travel Grants.*

The fund is named in honor of James G. Stofer, who dropped out of a Brooklyn public high school to join the Navy. He entered active duty on December 12, 1940, serving as a Radioman First Class on the USS Portland. While on the "Sweet Pea," he edited the newspaper and served as the ship's historian. He credited his high school teachers for his ability to write and think historically. He was a veteran of the Battles of Coral Sea, Midway, and the Guadalcanal Campaign. When Stofer was honorably discharged from the Navy in 1946, he attended community college at what is now SUNY Plattsburgh, and he finished his education at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

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ALEXANDRA F. LEVY

## WHEN THE BIG SCREEN ISN'T BIG ENOUGH

*Oppenheimer and Voices of the Manhattan Project*

**M**y fellow historians of World War II likely couldn't escape *Oppenheimer* this summer. Released on July 21, the film vastly outperformed box office expectations and has generated early Oscar buzz. Whether it's the fascinating story, the star-studded cast, Christopher Nolan's screenplay and direction, or the *Barbenheimer* phenomenon, J. Robert

**Oppenheimer's story seems to have struck a chord with the public.**

*Oppenheimer* follows the life of the titular physicist and director of Project Y, the laboratory at Los Alamos, New Mexico, that designed and built the world's first nuclear weapons for the Manhattan Project during World War II. The film follows Oppenheimer's life, from his years as a clumsy graduate student in England

through the fateful hearing that stripped away his security clearance. Oppenheimer, played by Cillian Murphy, is portrayed in his full, complicated glory: a scientist who learns that true power can be wielded away from the spotlight; an idealist who flirts with communism; a family man who does not always put family first.

As of September 14, Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin's *American Prometheus: The*



As this billboard in Hanford, Washington, shows, Manhattan Project participants were prohibited from speaking about their work—making oral histories collected in later decades even more valuable.

US Department of Energy/public domain



*Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer*—the scholarly biography on which the film is based—had spent 11 weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list. A magisterial book that won the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for Biography, *American Prometheus* was based on decades of Sherwin’s historical research. He first began recording interviews with Manhattan Project veterans in the 1970s and 1980s. He kept copies of many of his interviews, and in 2016, he generously donated his collection to the Atomic Heritage Foundation (AHF), where I worked at the time.

The “Voices of the Manhattan Project” website has 600 interviews, all fully transcribed.

A major part of our work at AHF was digitizing, transcribing, and publishing interviews with Manhattan Project veterans and family members recorded by scholars and journalists, in addition to traveling around the country recording interviews with veterans and nuclear experts ourselves. The “Voices of the Manhattan Project” website has 600 interviews, all fully transcribed, and most with the video or audio recordings available to watch or listen. AHF compiled a truly unique collection spanning the Manhattan Project and its legacy, with interviews conducted between the 1960s and 2019. I spent many hours listening to hundreds of these interviews, proofing the transcripts before publishing them online.

With this background, I found watching *Oppenheimer* to be a surreal experience—a relatable feeling, I’m sure, to other historians whose research subjects have been adapted for film or

television. These historical figures, whose voices I had gotten to know intimately over the seven years I spent working on AHF’s vast interview collection, appeared before me on the big screen portrayed by famous actors. As the film unfolded before me, I thought of the interview subjects I had listened to and whose stories are shown in the film (some more accurately than others). Haakon Chevalier described for Sherwin the fateful conversation that contributed to Oppenheimer’s eventual downfall. Oppenheimer told journalist Stephane Groueff in 1965, “I was more worried about the campaign in Africa and the campaign in Russia when I went to New Mexico than I was about the Germans making a bomb. I thought they might very well be winning the war.” General Leslie R. Groves, the director of the Manhattan Project, shared with Groueff, “I never had any trouble sleeping. I even went to sleep with the most critical time from my standpoint, which was waiting for news from Hiroshima.” When journalist S. L. Sanger asked Edward Teller whether he had any regrets, Teller spit back, “Will you please excuse me, but this is one of the most idiotic questions. . . . If you had the choice that something simply was in the long term unavoidable should be first done by the United States or by the Nazis or by the Soviets or by someone else, would you have regrets to make sure that we did it first?”

As its title implies, *Oppenheimer* is a biopic, a three-hour depiction of Oppenheimer’s experiences before, during, and after World War II. Sherwin reflected in 2017, “I don’t think Robert Oppenheimer ever quite was able to sort out the experience and the responsibility for Hiroshima,” and Oppenheimer’s coterminous pride as the “father of the atomic bomb” and shame of having “blood on my hands” centers the film. Yet with the film so tightly focused on a single character,

others inevitably receive short shrift or treatments that barely touch on their complicated personalities. Kitty Oppenheimer, Robert’s wife, is mostly shown on-screen as a tearful alcoholic. But “we read things differently over time,” her granddaughter Dorothy Vanderford told Bird in 2015. She emphasized the difficulties of being an intelligent woman with a forceful disposition in the mid-20th century: “It was a generation when women weren’t necessarily outspoken and colorful. It was probably offensive to somebody who wasn’t an innate feminist then.” J. Ernest Wilkins, one of the African American scientists who worked at the Chicago Met Lab, appears only briefly in the film. According to his friend Ronald Mickens, Wilkins refused to leave Chicago to work on the project in Tennessee because Oak Ridge was a segregated town: “He would not go to any place that would put restrictions on where he lived, who he lived with, and the kinds of amenities that he had grown accustomed to in places like Chicago. . . . If you look at most of the other Black scientists of that time, almost all of them were in northern cities.” I was pleased, however, to see chemist Lilli Hornig in the film, who was indeed reassigned from working with plutonium because of concerns over women suffering “reproductive damage.” In a 2011 interview, she recalled, “I tried delicately to point out that [the men] might be more susceptible than I was; that didn’t go over well.” I also had hoped that the film would emphasize the urgency the scientists—many of them refugees from Europe—had felt in the race for the bomb against the Nazis, and the devastating impacts the atomic bombs had on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But with such an emphasis on Oppenheimer’s story, the film mostly left those narratives out.

Unsurprisingly, this narrow focus has drawn criticism. There are countless

people and stories that the film does not dramatize, as over 600,000 people worked on the Manhattan Project, in locations ranging from Tinian Island in the Pacific to Washington, DC, to Europe. Those stories can be heard in the interviews with people from the communities surrounding the sites, the workers who did not know they were contributing to a new kind of bomb, and the family members who accompanied their spouses or parents to a secret city. The project built sites in Oak Ridge, where the uranium enrichment plants were constructed, and Hanford, Washington, where the world's first full-scale nuclear reactor operated. Diverse communities both were uprooted by and worked on the project, including the Wanapum in Washington and the Pueblo in New Mexico. Downwinders recount how their communities were affected by living near the Trinity Site (where the first nuclear test occurred), Hanford, and other sites that were exposed to radioactive contamination and whose residents' health was negatively impacted by the Manhattan Project and its legacy.

These are among the pieces of the story that I hope film viewers will seek out after leaving the theater. I want people to watch Frances Quintana recall losing her family's farm to the Los Alamos laboratory, and Veronica Taylor describe what the Nez Perce and other local Native American communities lost when the Manhattan Project took over the Hanford area. They should listen to Floy Agnes Lee, a Santa Clara Pueblo woman, relate the racism she experienced at the Los Alamos laboratory and her journey to earning a PhD, and Trisha Pritikin discuss the Hanford downwinders and the impact on her own health from living near this site.

The immense human toll of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is also an essential part of this history. I

hope people seek out the stories of the *hibakusha* (those who survived the bombings) and learn about the decades-long suffering they have experienced. I hope they will watch Masao Tomonaga, the honorary director of the Japanese Red Cross Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Hospital and a *hibakusha*, describe in graphic detail the horrors of the Nagasaki bombing, and Tomihisa Taue, the current mayor of Nagasaki, declare, "I think that it is important to pass on the history, not from the Japanese perspective or from the United States perspective, but as the whole human beings' perspective. And I think that is the important legacy that we need to pass on."

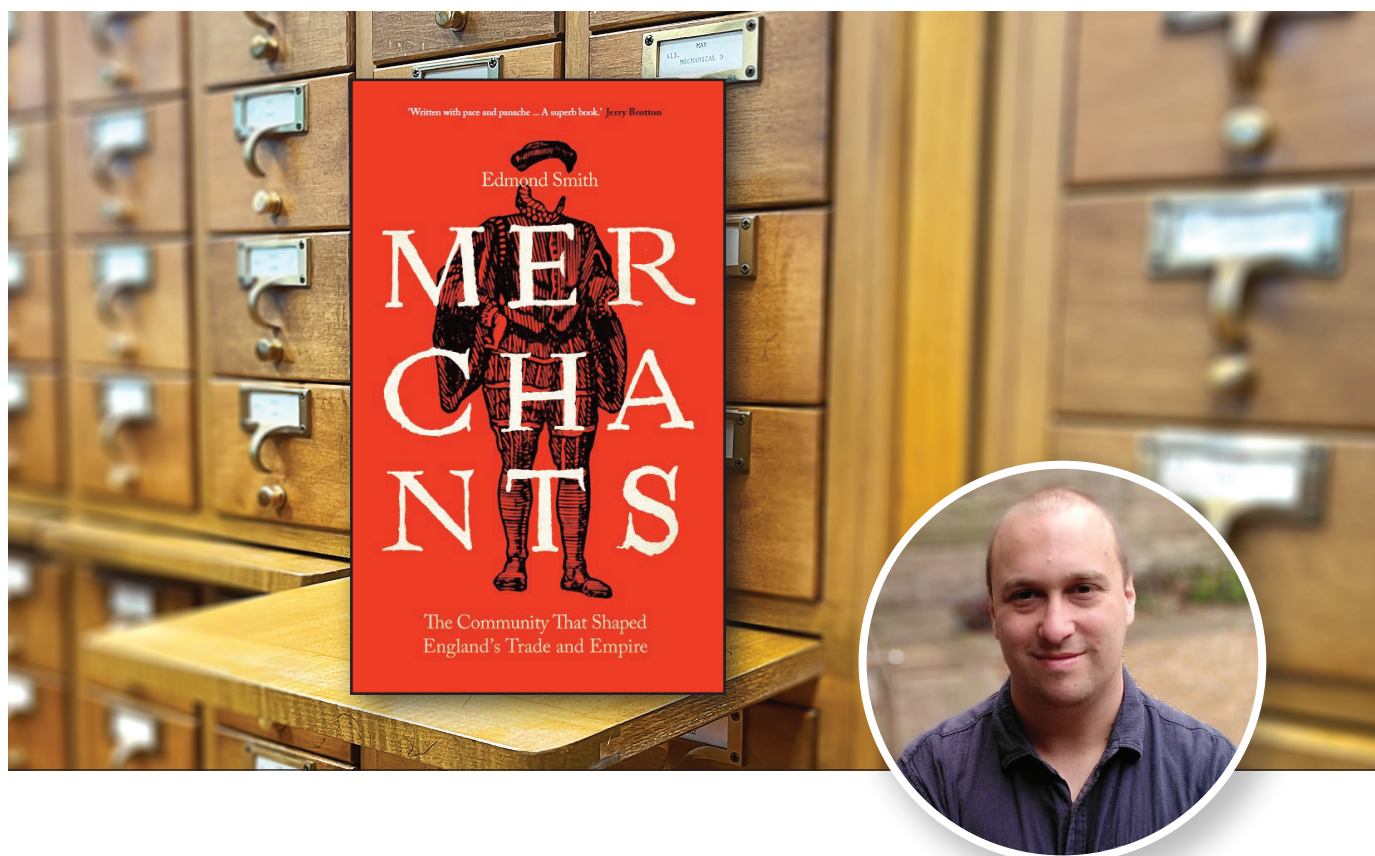
Diverse communities both were uprooted by and worked on the project, including the Wanapum in Washington, the Pueblo in New Mexico, and the downwinders.

The specter of nuclear annihilation is woven throughout the film, and Oppenheimer's feuds with Lewis Strauss, Edward Teller, and other proponents of developing the hydrogen bomb are front and center in Nolan's telling. Ethical questions about the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons abound in Manhattan Project oral histories. In reflecting on their wartime work, many veterans defended the atomic bombings of Japan as necessary for ending the war. Leona Marshall Libby, a physicist who worked at Chicago and Hanford, stated, "I have no regrets. . . .

When you're in a war to the death, I don't think you stand around and say, 'Is it right?'" But others offered more ambiguous reflections. In a conversation with historian Richard Rhodes in 2002, Los Alamos physicist Ted Taylor discussed his transformation into a nuclear abolitionist: "It's a strictly simple, basic problem of morality. To be prepared and supportive of, under any circumstances, killing millions of people who are absolutely innocent of any wrongdoing is wrong. It's evil. It's the work of the devil. We must stop acting as though there are just reasons under which we might be able to do that."

Mayor Taue's lesson—that we must share this collective history—should be taken to heart. Understanding the Manhattan Project and its legacy demands listening to the voices and perspectives of hundreds of thousands of people. Oppenheimer's is but one chapter in the story of the atomic age. Hopefully, the interest sparked by *Oppenheimer* will kindle further interest in the rest of these human stories. **P**

*Alexandra F. Levy is communications manager at the AHA. She worked at the Atomic Heritage Foundation from 2012 to 2019. Find her on X (formerly Twitter) @AlexandraFL21.*



## The Ralph Gomory Prize

The 2023 Ralph Gomory Prize of the Business History Conference was awarded to Edmond Smith, *Merchants: The Community That Shaped England's Trade and Empire, 1550-1650*, Yale University Press, at the Business History Conference annual meeting held in Detroit, Michigan, March 16-18, 2023.

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 (2022 or 2023 copyright) prior to the award. The 2024 Prize will be presented at the annual meeting of the Business History Conference to be held in Providence, Rhode Island, March 14-16, 2024.

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](mailto:clockman@hagley.org).

**The deadline for submission is November 30, 2023.**

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



[www.thebhc.org](http://www.thebhc.org)





IAN MORLEY

# CITIES, CULTURE, AND CONFLAGRATIONS

*Learning Urban History to Protect Tangible and Intangible Heritage*



The history of cities is often a history of fire. In May 2023, flames gutted the historic Manila Post Office.  
*Manila Public Information Office/public domain*

**FIRE RAGES ACROSS** the global history of cities. From first-century Rome, to fifth-century Constantinople, 12th-century Hangzhou, mid-1400s Amsterdam, 1660s London, 1870s Chicago, and 1920s Tokyo, many of the world's most economically, politically, and culturally significant cities have experienced major fires at one time or another.

Within the setting of the Philippines' American colonial past (1898–1946), one neighborhood in the capital city of Manila experienced numerous ruinous blazes that burned large areas of land. For instance, in April 1937, about 1,000 acres of homes were destroyed, and in May 1941, 20,000 people lost their homes. The fires were so frequent in the city's district of Tondo that in the early 1940s a Filipino journalist described it as “a hussy who is incapable of learning her lesson.”

In recent years, blazes in Manila have not only continued to ravage untold numbers of residential properties; they have also affected heritage buildings. In May 2018, early 1900s edifices known as the Land Management Bureau Office and Juan Luna Building—the latter used by the National Archives of the Philippines to house documents—were damaged by fire. In February 2019, a blaze that raged for more than 10 hours caused extensive damage to the Bureau of Customs Building. Designed by the Filipino architect Antonio Toledo, the elegant late 1930s neoclassical edifice has been described as “arguably as beautiful as the Manila Post Office.” The Manila Post Office, a grand classical structure erected downtown in proximity to the south bank of the Pasig River, is widely considered the jewel in the local architectural heritage crown. In May of this year, a fire gutted that building too.

The Manila Post Office is widely considered the jewel in the local architectural heritage crown.

Constructed during the late 1920s to a design composed by the Filipino architects Juan Arellano and Tomás Mapúa, the Manila Central Post Office Building had become more than an inner-city landmark. Thanks to scholars and heritage advocates studying the evolution of Manila's built fabric, the Post Office Building has come to represent a high point of the modern Filipino architectural narrative. And since the building's architects were educated in North America, it has been viewed by heritage proponents as representative of the collaborative effort made by the American colonial state and Filipinos employed in the Bureau of Public Works to transform Manila into the “Paris of the East.”

The urban form of Manila, a metropolis of about 13.5 million people today, has evolved in such a manner that it is now defined by run-down properties, ugly high-rise office buildings, slums, and a lack of green open space. As such, to many Filipinos, Manila's demographic explosion during the late 20th and early 21st centuries has led the Paris of the East to transform itself into paradise lost. Countless old buildings have, in the name of modernity and progress, fallen foul of the wrecking ball. As a result, evidence of Manila's former splendor has become increasingly scarce. The burning of the Post Office Building has come to epitomize cultural loss, just as with recent fires that severely damaged the Monastère du Bon-Pasteur in Montreal, Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, and the National Museum of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro, all of which triggered shock and upset that resonated far beyond the city limits.

Catastrophes have shaped the history of many cities, and infernos in particular have elicited a range of governmental responses and policy prescriptions in order to lessen the future risk of conflagration. In Manila, scholars such as Greg Bankoff have documented the frequency of catastrophic events in the city's colonial history and recorded the state's response to such misfortunes. But it is important for historians in particular to acknowledge the trauma that calamities generate among members of the public for two reasons.

First, the destruction of important structures provokes deep public interest in both the management and the preservation of old buildings. As the fire at Manila's Central Post Office Building, which had been protected as “important cultural property” since the passage of Republic Act No. 10066 in 2009, demonstrates, Philippine laws to preserve historic structures have done little to stop edifices being razed or to compel their reconstruction after a fire. There is substantial popular speculation that the Philippine Postal Corporation will sell the burned structure to a private property developer so that it can be renewed into something else (e.g., a hotel). The general public has shown a great deal of concern as to whether the will exists to rebuild Arellano and Mapúa's building in its original form.

Second, public authorities in the Philippines are usually very quick to downplay the fires that are repeatedly occurring in heritage buildings. Typically, they are labeled by local governments as “accidents.” However, for many heritage advocates, the term *accident* implies an inside job intended to legitimize a property owner's claim that the previously run-down structure must now be demolished and replaced by a more profitable condominium. Hence, even though the presence of law provides for the protection of built heritage *and* contributes





**fire**

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Manila Tribune, August 19, 1938

to the nation's goal of achieving target 11.4 of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, occurrences of fire in Manila expose just how vulnerable the governmental strategy of attaining an inclusive, safe, and resilient form of urban development is.

When fire strikes nationally important edifices, not only are distinct features within the cityscape lost, but a part of the country's history literally and symbolically disappears. Consequently, expanding knowledge of the history of fire in Manila and elsewhere will do more than help explain how and why disastrous events have transpired. New inquiries expose the human decisions that have affected the built environment's appearance and morphology up to the present day. They reveal whether places such as Manila contradict the concept of

a fire gap—the notion that large conflagrations decline in occurrence as a city expands in demographic size.

When one considers any history of fire, numerous environmental and human factors must be taken into account. These include building materials; the height, volume, and density of buildings; susceptibility to natural disasters such as earthquakes; the character of the local climate; fire prevention ordinances; and local firefighting techniques. Cities, after all, each have their own fire regime. Therefore, as the general public in Manila grows increasingly concerned about the destruction of built heritage, the history of fire can help form new strategies that will help to better protect the city's historic structures. Likewise, citizens can realize that occurrences of fire have been central to the global evolution of city governments and different types of agencies that lobby for social and environmental reform. Fire, historically, has led to the development of new ideas and policies to better manage cities and, so, ensure the maintenance of edifices identified as being of significance.

Historians have much to learn about how those in Tondo have normalized inferno as part of their regular routine.

Ultimately, urban fire history in a city such as Manila deserves much greater attention. Without our studying how the nature of urban fire has changed through time, its relationship to human behavior and governmental decision-making will remain weak. Those residing in locales such as the Tondo, where today more than 650,000 people are crammed into just eight and a half square kilometers of land, will continue to live with the reality that life-threatening outbreaks of fire are, quite simply, routine. Historians have much to learn about how those in Tondo have, given past and present-day occurrences of fire, normalized inferno as part of their regular routine. When we recognize and learn from *this* intangible heritage, it will be possible to culturally neutralize other urban dwellers from any process in which the hitherto unusual and dangerous (to both one's health and one's sense of being of a nation) should, in the future, be normal. **P**

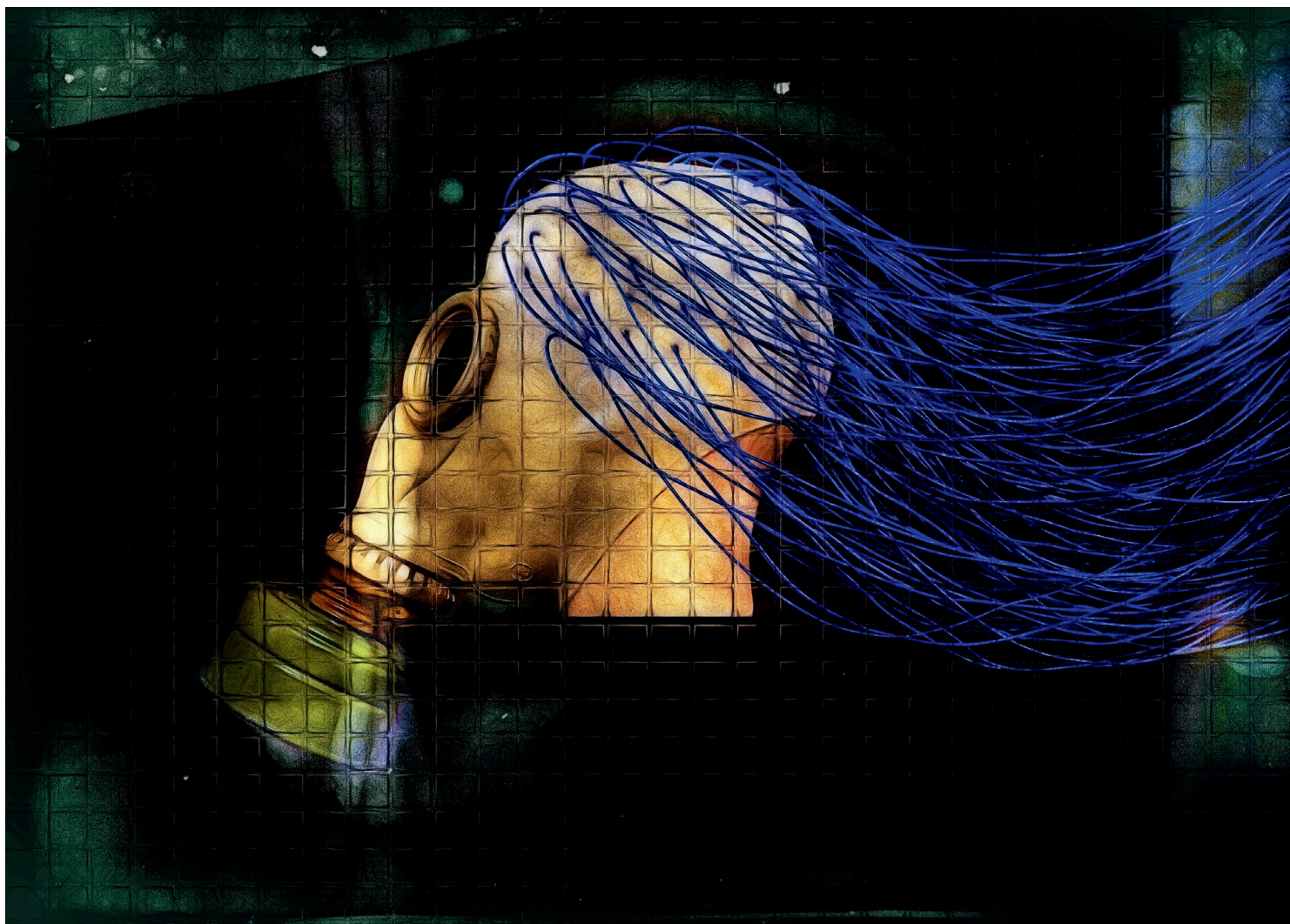
*Ian Morley is associate professor of history at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and vice president of the International Planning History Society.*



JEFFERY A. CHARLSTON

# IMPROVING DECLASSIFICATION

*Applying Machine Learning to Diplomatic Cable Review*



The Department of State has pushed to address the coming tsunami of digital records it needs to evaluate for declassification.  
*Crusty Da Clown/Flickr/Public Domain*

**U**S FEDERAL AGENCIES must evaluate classified records for continuing risk to national security before they can be made available at the National Archives. The rapid proliferation of electronic records is outpacing human capacity in the declassification programs. The the resulting challenge, what has been described as a “digital tsunami,” will directly affect historical researchers’ access to primary sources.

Currently, the US Department of State’s declassification reviewers can process a maximum of eight million paper and electronic pages, or just over one terabyte of data (approximately six and a half million pages), annually. The Clinton Presidential Library includes roughly 4 terabytes of digital records, many requiring declassification review by the Department of State. The George W. Bush Library holds 80 terabytes, and the Obama Presidential Library holds 250 terabytes. That pattern of rapid growth is reflected across the executive branch’s various collections of classified records.

Human labor alone cannot be expanded to address this challenge. The approaching wave of digital records threatens to overwhelm declassification programs and thus public access to declassified records. The Public Interest Declassification Board, the Information Security Oversight Office, the Department of State’s Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation (a.k.a. the Historical Advisory Committee, or HAC, which includes an AHA representative), and others have drawn attention to this potential barrier to historical research and government accountability. The Department of State regularly updates the HAC on its efforts to improve the efficiency of declassification review. Those updates have described waiving authority to review certain types of information prior to public release; adopting risk-based methods that more than doubled the productivity of paper records review, including a declassification review module in the department’s state-of-the-art tool for managing digital records; and developing complex Boolean logic searches within that tool to simplify human analysis.

Such incremental gains could not scale up to address the approaching challenge. But they did establish a risk-tolerant, pro-technology culture for something that might. In March 2023, the department began combining human expertise with the power of machine learning for the declassification review of its 1998 diplomatic cable collection. That first use of machine learning in US declassification programs is consistent with Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken’s commitment to modernizing diplomacy and accepting intelligent risks.

Section 3.3 of Executive Order 13526 requires federal agencies to review their permanent classified records for possible exemption from automatic declassification after 25 years.

The Systematic Review Program (SRP), within the Office of Information Programs and Services, conducts that review for the Department of State. SRP review efforts annually include over 100,000 diplomatic cables – and by 2030, it must exceed 650,000 cables annually.

Those diplomatic cables will be the first element of the digital tsunami to strike SRP. They document important developments in international relations, placing them among the most requested records. Their format and underlying metadata have remained relatively consistent over the years, in contrast to far less structured and therefore more challenging email and its attachments. As born-digital records, diplomatic cables do not require the expensive and problematic scanning of paper records. And the department has access to years of previously reviewed cables for use in training machine learning software. All of which makes the classified cable collection ideal as a proof of concept for machine-assisted declassification review.

## Digital records threaten to overwhelm public access to declassified records.

The Machine Learning Declassification Pilot (MLDP) began in October 2022 as a joint effort by the Center for Analytics (CfA), responsible for the department’s data management and analysis capabilities; the Bureau of Information Resource Management (IRM), responsible for computer systems and software; and SRP personnel. MLDP would initially address only diplomatic cables, not the more complex challenges of other record formats. Results, positive or negative, would inform eventual efforts to address those records as part of a calculated crawl-walk-run strategy. The pilot evaluated the application of discriminative machine learning to declassification review. Unlike generative machine learning, which can actively predict missing data, discriminative machine learning categorizes available data. In this case, CfA data scientists sought to categorize cables as those containing no information of continuing concern to the department, those with information the department must protect, and those the software could not accurately categorize. They did this by training the machine on results from human review of the 1995 and 1996 diplomatic cables completed in 2020 and 2021. The algorithm does not actually understand the information it is categorizing. Once CfA adjusted software to mimic human review results from 1995–96, the successfully trained algorithm was tested against 2022’s human review of cables from 1997.

Those test results were available in mid-January 2023. The size and reliability of the sample dataset and the ability of the

adjusted algorithm to mimic human review were the critical factors. Both proved more than adequate, and the project, no longer a pilot, was redesignated the Machine Learning Declassification Program. The CfA, IRM, and SRP personnel are now using the machine-assisted review procedures developed in the pilot phase to complete this year's declassification analysis of diplomatic cables.

From the beginning, MLDP recognized the limitations inherent in machine learning. Historians understand that records must be considered in both their original and current contexts. Both the 1998 cables' historical context and the present or foreseeable national security concerns of 2023 are different from what the model had been trained to evaluate previously. The program had to be able to adapt to such changes. Testing on the 1997 cables confirmed its ability to partially replicate a specialized and continuously evolving type of historical analysis when guided by human experts. Inclusion of human expertise is the key aspect of the department's machine-assisted declassification review methodology. Humans teach the machine, use it to provide initial recommendations within a specified level of certainty, and confirm the results. This is and will remain machine-assisted review, with human experts exercising final judgment.

In March 2023, SRP manually reviewed a sample of classified cables from 1998, the initial phase of this new methodology. CfA experts used the results of that human review to retrain the computer algorithm, adjusting it for changing 2023 sensitivities and topics emerging in 1998. They next used the retrained algorithm to assess all classified diplomatic cables from 1998. Inclusion of the initial sample set, with its known accurate results, provided an easy check on the software's assessment after it replicated a year's labor for the SRP team in just 20 minutes of computing time. The adjusted algorithm confidently identified 72,891 of the 121,536 total cables from 1998 as not requiring any Department of State exemptions from declassification. Software also identified 1,427 cables requiring continued classification. Human reviewers are now confirming those results, much as they would otherwise conduct quality control for each other. The software simply multiplies the results of initial human review, reducing labor without any lost quality and leaving humans in control of the process. In testing against the 1997 cables, the software made correct declassification decisions 99.29 percent of the time, laudable accuracy for anyone. By design, it proved to be over-protective in continuing classification at only 81.43 percent correct. This conservatism and related procedures ensure that human reviewers both validate all decisions to delay public access and see all material that approaches the threshold for such a delay. This process provides a critical safety check

against mistaken release of information damaging national security and ensures maximum transparency in the final product. As the nature of each mistaken exemption is identified, CfA scientists can evaluate possible improvements, seeking to both maximize the software's accuracy over time and improve human performance. Yes, artificial intelligence is drawing attention to human inconsistencies and errors.

MLDP software was unable to reach a decision on 47,218 cables from 1998 given its current settings and capabilities. Assessment of similar uncertainties in the 1997 cables showed them to be reasonable in that context—ambiguous content where even human experts must consider nuances, may reach conflicting results, or might otherwise require additional information. The presence of another agency's classified information also confused the algorithm. SRP has long used Boolean searches to help humans manually locate such concerns, which must be referred to the appropriate agency for a decision. As it continues to mature and other agencies are consulted, the MLDP will further increase the efficiency of government-wide review by making such referrals more accurate.

## The software simply multiplies the results of initial human review.

MLDP has already reduced State Department labor involved in declassifying diplomatic cables by over 60 percent, even when data scientists' time is included. Those cost reductions, and thus the department's ability to review cables within current budget constraints, continue to mount rapidly less than a year after the pilot project's start. Given the need to review nearly six times more cables by 2030, this is welcome news for researchers seeking information and other federal agencies confronting the rapid growth of digital records.

This initial application of machine learning capitalized on an ideal records collection and the Department of State's established willingness to accept reasonable risk, and even to surrender some direct human oversight, in the declassification review process. The approach it validated is scalable and can be incrementally applied to more challenging types of records, with implications for other agency declassification programs. As MLDP successfully multiplies the results of skilled human labor in declassifying diplomatic cables, CfA continues to work on further enhancements and applications, including the Freedom of Information Act. The new capability is a beacon of hope in the shadow of the digital tsunami. **P**

*Jeffery A. Charlston is chief of the Systematic Review Program Division at the US Department of State.*





LINDSEY PASSENGER WIECK

## FROM DOWNTOWN TO THE MISSION IN THREE MINUTES

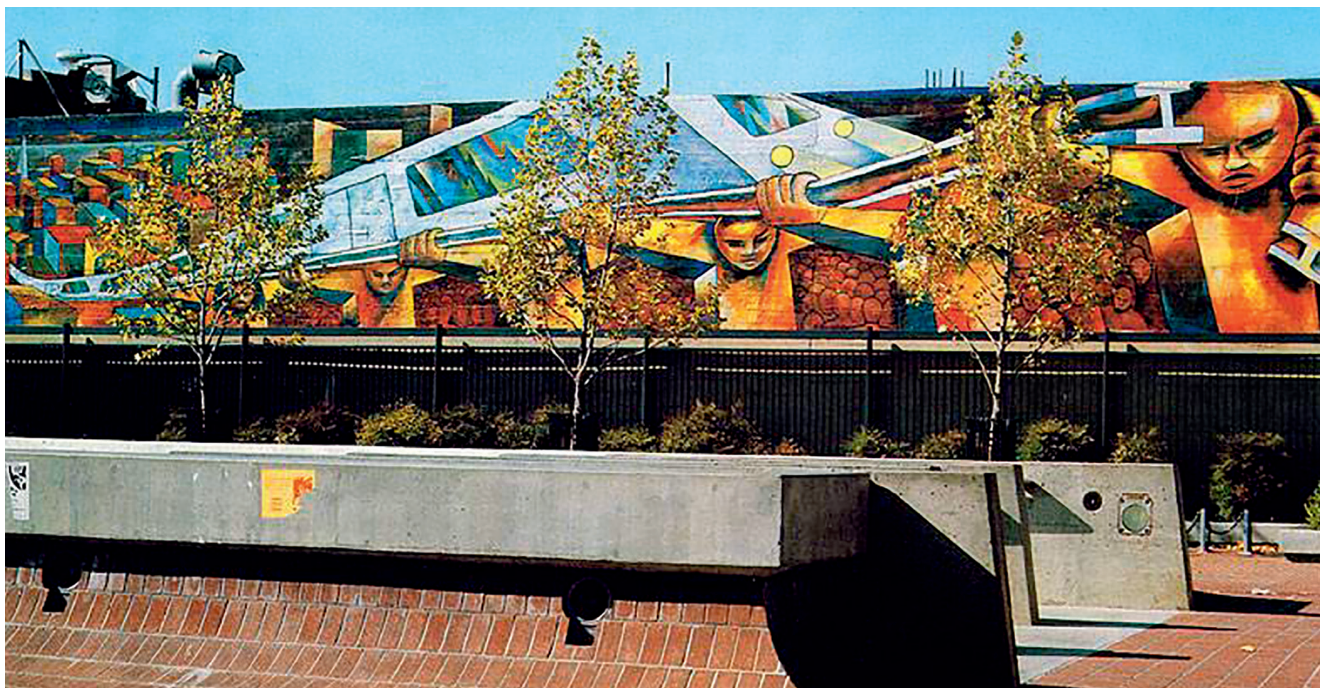
### *Latino Activism around BART*

Attendees at the 2024 AHA annual meeting in San Francisco will undoubtedly encounter the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) subway system. If they take a ride to the Mission District, they will find art commenting on BART right outside the station. In 1975, artist Michael Rios, assisted by Anthony Machado and Richard Montez, painted a 100-foot-long mural overlooking the 24th Street Mission District BART plaza. The piece depicts human figures holding up BART's beams and its trains on their backs. Impossible to miss as you come up the escalator or stairs from the station below, the mural is both public art and a criticism of the space it overlooks.

Rios's mural is just one representation of how Mission residents, primarily made up of working-class people of color, carried the burden of BART's construction and the inevitable

changes to the region that came in its wake. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Mission was on its way to becoming a majority Latino neighborhood, building on its long reputation as a working-class space with factory jobs and affordable apartments. The arrival of two BART stations on Mission Street at 16th and 24th Streets linked the neighborhood directly to downtown, which the Mission's working class argued would put their lives and livelihoods at risk. Rios's art attests to local concerns about the social and economic consequences that could come with public transit by depicting BART being built on the backs of the people.

A regional subway system was first proposed in the Bay Area following World War II and found support from regional power players, including both municipalities and large



A 1975 mural criticizes the BART system right next to a BART plaza.

Tim Drescher/FoundSF/CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

corporations. Construction for the 34 stations that spanned from San Francisco to Oakland and the East Bay began in 1964, with stations opening from 1972 to 1974.

San Francisco was not alone in this urban project. Across the United States, a postwar boom in automobile ownership led to congestion on the roads as suburban residents drove to work in cities. Many localities focused investment in roads and highways to accommodate these trends, while neglecting to make a matching investment in public transit systems.

The Bay Area, however, responded differently. BART promoters reacted to increased auto congestion by promising that transit riders would zoom past cars on the highways in comfort and style. The system drove growth throughout the region, linking suburban residents throughout the East Bay to white-collar jobs in San Francisco's downtown and along the train route. BART promised to streamline transportation while facilitating the region's explosive growth.

### Residents critiqued how plazas interrupted pedestrian flows and commodified Latinidad.

While BART promoters focused on connecting the region, Mission residents expressed a range of concerns. They registered complaints about BART's physical appearance, both for how its infrastructure would disrupt the local landscape and because the art commissioned for its Mission stations was not from local artists but from outsiders. (Rios painted his mural on a building adjacent to the BART plaza that is not controlled by the transit system.) In addition, residents critiqued how station plazas interrupted pedestrian flows and commodified the Mission's Latinidad. One early plan for the 16th Street station included kitschy taco and piñata stands alongside towering commercial and residential buildings. A 1970 article in the local newspaper *Basta Ya!* expressed frustration with this commodification intended for outsiders: "BART will bring tourists from downtown to 16th and Mission in three minutes. Our homes will become hotel rooms and restaurants and serape stores, and Topless Taco Clubs that do not serve Mexicans."

Residents also expressed concern about BART's potential to fuel economic growth targeted at middle- and upper-class people from outside the neighborhood—what we would now call gentrification. As the *Basta Ya!* article continued, tourists would be joined by "the higher income single people and childless couples that will find the Mission more desirable to live in because BART will take them to work quickly," while

pushing out lower-income residents of color. BART's arrival could increase the value of land around the stations. Higher property values would fuel speculators to sweep up this land and lead developers to build small flats targeted at white-collar workers (all of which did happen in the following decades).

With this potential development, residents argued that BART would fill the neighborhood with unwanted newcomers, including developers, real estate agents, large corporations, suburban commuters, and young middle-class singles and childless couples. As *El Tecolote*, a Mission-based bilingual community newspaper, made clear, "For the suburbanite, BART means convenience. But, for the Mission, it means high-rise construction, higher rents, and job losses." Many Latinos feared that this influx of outsiders would transform their neighborhood and destroy the place they called home.

These discussions put residents in direct opposition to BART's narratives about the transit system. In neighborhoods like the Mission that would be bisected by BART, residents worried about the transit system's intrusion into their neighborhoods and residents' safety *outside* BART's stations. In contrast, BART planners focused on moving people safely *through* urban spaces, promising that its stations and tunnels would safely move riders through neighborhoods commonly thought of as "unsafe"—including the Mission. BART assistant general manager L. A. Kimball explained in 1968, "We want our passengers to feel as safe and comfortable as they do in their own automobiles." Such a statement revealed the ideal passenger BART's leadership imagined—one who owns a car and chooses to ride public transit.

While celebrating the safety and comfort of its cars, BART extended promises of a comfortable, streamlined experience to its stations. A 1968 BART promotional video encouraged riders to "stop at a magazine stand, buy tickets from the automatic vending machine, enjoy the clean, spacious architect-designed station" on their way to the train. BART planners envisioned passengers moving through these stations—browsing newsstands, grabbing a coffee, or relaxing while waiting for BART to arrive—while seamlessly connecting their homes and offices.

In some cases, commuters could even get to work without ever walking on city streets. For example, the Standard Oil and Wells Fargo buildings offered pedestrian passageways that connected to BART stations, ensuring that workers could move from train to workplace without bumping into street vendors, unhoused persons, or others who might inconvenience their commute. Isolating riders as if they were in a sort of pneumatic tube, BART offered a sterilized and reliable path from suburbs to city.



Engineers reassured riders, especially suburbanites who may have felt uncomfortable riding the BART through certain neighborhoods, that they designed BART stations for riders' protection. As Kimball detailed, "Our architects are eliminating the dead spots in stations and concourses — alcoves, recesses, protrusions that would cast shadows and other places that would let a person hide." In addition, they ensured that "illumination is bright — office bright — throughout the stations" and that restrooms would be kept locked. BART hired security officers and eliminated jurisdictional boundaries in order to police the system through the four counties and 13 cities it crossed. These efforts to design for social safety also worked to reassure suburban riders of their personal safety.

### BART could change safety and well-being outside the tunnels.

While BART's planners and promoters prioritized rider comfort and the creation of a more unified regional economy, residents in neighborhoods like the Mission District publicly criticized the impact of BART on their safety and well-being outside the tunnels. Mission residents expressed these concerns through journalism and direct action alongside organizations like the Mission Coalition Organization, which united many local organizations between 1967 and 1973. Residents continually advocated for local input in planning processes to create BART plazas that fit within the Mission environment, minimizing disruption to residents as well as high-rise development.

Mission residents protested BART's grand opening celebrations at the 16th and 24th Street stations, as well as along the parade route in between. Alongside Mayor Joseph Alioto, stagecoaches sponsored by Wells Fargo, and police atop horses, photos from that day show protestors carrying signs emblazoned with slogans like "Bay Area Rapid Tragedy."

While residents' activism did not stop BART, their efforts lessened the impact of urban development on the Mission. Their advocacy rolled back plans for high rises around the BART plazas that would have been filled with shops, apartments, and offices. Although BART enabled new development by connecting the neighborhood more directly with the urban core, this development was more contained than elsewhere in the city; neighborhoods like the Fillmore District and SoMa (South of Market) in the 1970s saw widespread demolition.

This isn't a uniquely San Francisco story. Across the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, cities tackled urban redevelopment by removing "slums" and "ghettos" and pushing

factories and heavy industry to the outskirts, replacing these with highways, high-end housing, skyscrapers, and a tourist infrastructure. These efforts displaced residents and jobs while driving up the cost of housing and small business operations. Many of these urban redevelopment efforts launched processes of gentrification over the subsequent decades, where wealthier residents moved into formerly working-class areas, causing displacement and eviction of the former residents. Marginalized communities had varying levels of success in reducing the impact of these policies on their neighborhoods.

The Mission did not escape this period untouched. As waves of increasingly wealthy newcomers arrived in the 1970s through the 1990s, housing costs kept rising and small businesses faced growing challenges. Latinos, along with other marginalized groups in the Mission, echoed earlier concerns about the impacts of development on their safety and livelihoods.

In the 2000s and 2010s, the rise of Silicon Valley companies led to new concerns linked to transit. Tech corporations began providing private bus services throughout the region to carry employees from home to work. Echoing BART's earlier attention to rider safety and comfort, many of these buses picked up riders at corners near their homes and provided amenities such as Wi-Fi and snacks. Stamen Design, a Mission-based design firm, sought to map these bus routes with tools including observation, bike messengers, and Foursquare posts. The resulting visualization echoed the aesthetics of the official BART subway map. As Stamen collected this data, Mission activists documented the impact of these buses on the rising rent costs and displacement in the Mission. Once again, infrastructure that pledged safe and efficient transportation for workers resulted in the displacement and harm perpetuated on marginalized communities in these spaces.

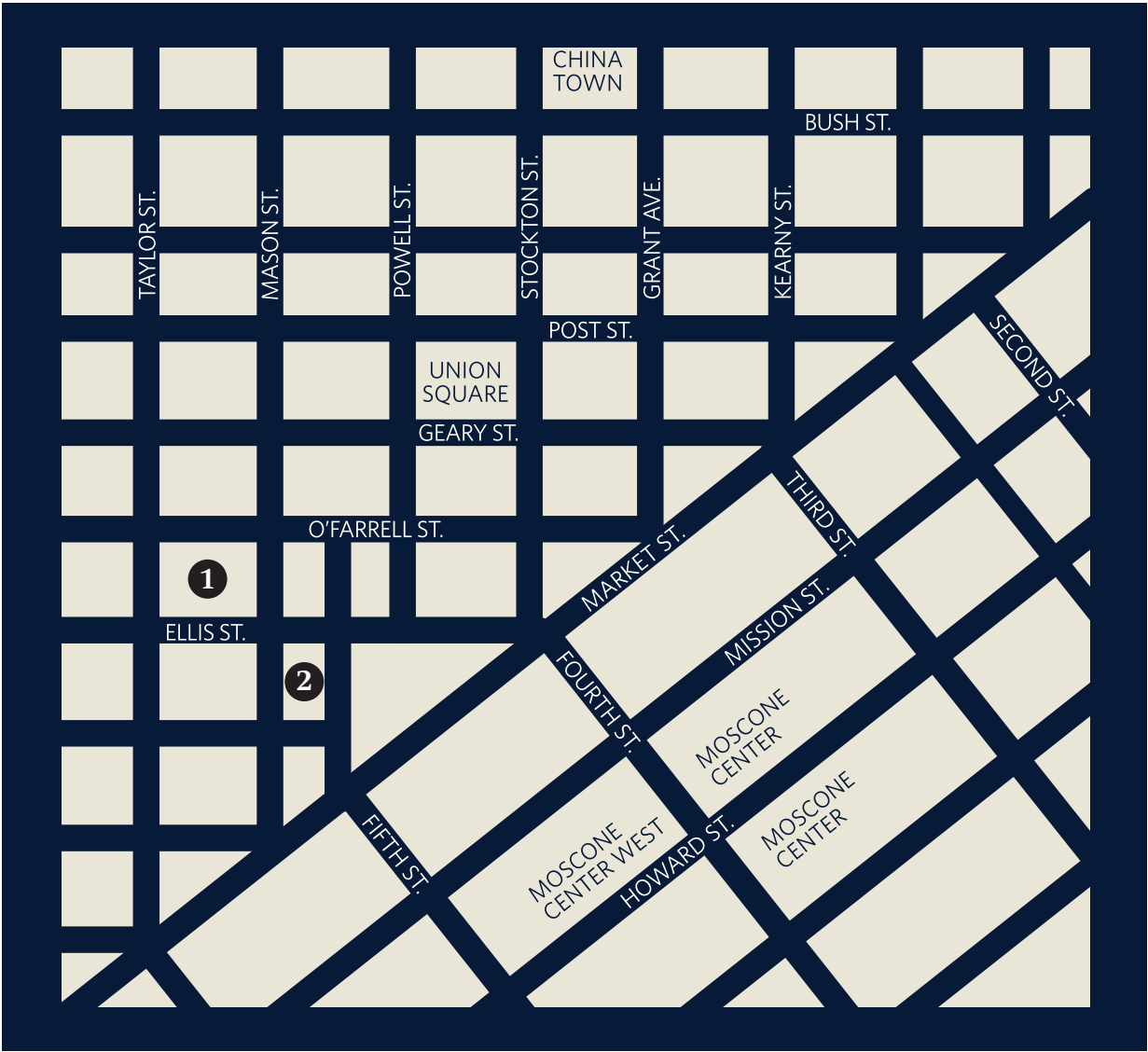
Nearly 50 years after its creation, Rios's plaza-sized protest image painted in the heart of this contested space provides a reminder of these Mission critiques of the city's development practices that prioritized profits over people. The mural's 2023 restoration shows the continued importance of this critical commentary in a neighborhood that has faced gentrification for half of a century. Through the creation of a Calle 24 Latino Cultural District; the continuation of Latino community organizations like *El Tecolote* and its parent organization, *Acción Latina*; and a vibrant mural arts scene, the Mission's Latino residents continue to advocate for prioritizing people in the neighborhood. **P**

*Lindsey Passenger Wieck is an associate professor of history and graduate director of public history at St. Mary's University. Find her on X (formerly Twitter) @LWieck.*



Hotel and Rate Information				
	SINGLE	DOUBLE	TRIPLE	QUADRUPLE
<b>1</b> Hilton San Francisco Union Square (hdqrs.) 333 O'Farrell St.	\$179	\$179	\$199	\$219
<b>2</b> Hilton Parc 55 San Francisco 55 Cyril Magnin St.	\$179	\$179	\$199	\$219

Rates are subject to hotel occupancy tax and will be honored three days before and three days after the official meeting dates of January 4–7 based on availability. Information on booking a room at the discounted rate is available at [historians.org/hotels](https://historians.org/hotels).



### Dates and Deadlines

<b>NOVEMBER 1</b>	Program mailed to members.
<b>DECEMBER 13</b>	Last day to make hotel reservations through the housing service. Subsequent reservations taken on a space-available basis at the convention rate.
<b>DECEMBER 15</b>	Last day for preregistration pricing.
<b>DECEMBER 15</b>	Deadline to submit registration refund requests.
<b>JANUARY 4, 2024</b>	Annual meeting opens at 11:00 a.m. at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square and Hilton Parc 55 San Francisco. Exhibit Hall opens January 5, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in Grand Ballroom A&B at the Hilton Union Square.

### Meeting Registration

Take advantage of reduced rates by preregistering for the conference. Make sure your membership is up to date so you can enjoy member pricing at each level. Register online at [historians.org/myaha](https://historians.org/myaha).

	MEMBER		NONMEMBER	
	PREREGISTRATION	AFTER DEC. 15	PREREGISTRATION	AFTER DEC. 15
Attendee	\$200	\$240	\$325	\$391
Speaker	\$200	\$240	\$200	\$240
Student	\$92	\$110	\$140	\$169
Un-/Underemployed	\$49	\$61	\$153	\$183
Retired	\$95	\$116	\$163	\$197
K–12 Teacher	\$71	\$86	\$137	\$164
Bring your Graduate/ Undergraduate/K–12 student discount	<b>For members only.</b> Add students to your registration for only \$15 each (\$30 on-site). Bring as many high school, undergraduate, and graduate students as you want for only \$15 each!			

Advance registration must be completed by midnight ET on December 15, 2023. Thereafter, on-site rates will apply. Everyone attending the meeting is expected to register. Admission to the Exhibit Hall requires a registration badge. **Special note for speakers: All US-based historians presenting on AHA sessions must be AHA members, and all participants must register.**

### ASL Interpretation at the 2024 Annual Meeting

The AHA offers complimentary sign interpreting service upon request to our attendees. Please notify the AHA of the sessions you plan to attend and register for the meeting by November 1, 2023. This service is also available upon request for the presidential address and business meeting. Requests should be submitted to [annualmeeting@historians.org](mailto:annualmeeting@historians.org) by November 1, 2023.

# AHA ANNUAL MEETING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



The AHA offers several grants to help members attend the annual meeting:

**TRAVEL GRANTS** are available for graduate students, un/underemployed historians, and community college and public high school teachers.

**CHILD CARE GRANTS** are available for history graduate students, early career historians, and contingent faculty.

Apply by **November 15** for the  
2024 annual meeting in San Francisco!

**MORE INFO** at [historians.org/amfunding](https://historians.org/amfunding)



AMERICAN  
HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION



## Insurance Coverage Benefits for AHA Members

The AHA has partnered with LIG Solutions to offer AHA members health care coverage options, including major medical, vision, dental plans, disability, life, short-term health plans, and more.

**More information at [historians.org/myaha](https://historians.org/myaha).**



REBECCA L. WEST

## SOVEREIGNTY AND SATELLITES

*Meet the AHA's 2023–24 NASA Fellows*

The AHA welcomes the 2023–24 recipients of the Fellowship in Aerospace History and the Fellowship in the History of Space Technology. These annual fellowships support early career scholars doing full-time research in aerospace history and are funded by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Their review committees include representatives from the AHA, the Society for the History of Technology, and the History of Science Society. For 2023–24, **Andrew Ross** has been awarded the Fellowship in Aerospace History and **Haris Durrani** has been awarded the Fellowship in the History of Space Technology.

Ross, a PhD candidate at Georgetown University, will be working on his dissertation, “Ranges of Empire: US Missile Ranges, Planetary Infrastructure Building, and Global Militarism, 1945–1965.” The project examines the three primary US missile ranges as “areas of contested sovereignty between multiple, overlapping actors including but not limited to the United States federal government, US local governments, the British Empire, communities of the West Indies, Native nations, and Pacific archipelagos.”

Central to Ross’s dissertation is the question of how practices of sovereignty evolve in and adapt to a world of missile and satellite technologies. Initially intending to tell a story of “contested sovereignties within nuclear proving grounds,” he shifted focus as his research revealed close links between nuclear testing and missile testing. “Political issues related to militarized landscapes, nuclear warfare preparation, land dispossession, and state secrecy and surveillance were themes that have received solid research in nuclear test sites, but far less on missile ranges,” Ross said. “In my mind, nuclear and missile testing infrastructures were not only complementary to one another—they were two halves on the same coin.” Inspired by scholarship that conceptualizes sovereignty beyond traditional views of borders to include airspace, water rights, sacred sites, biodiversity, and bodily autonomy, Ross found that this expanded understanding of sovereignty is largely absent in the literature of US foreign policy after 1945. His

dissertation engages with the ongoing discussion about the nature of sovereignty among historians of foreign relations. “I am following a trend here in scrutinizing ‘sovereignty’ that I think is really exciting for the field and is producing work which will continue to reshape how we view US state power and how it has operated historically,” he said.

Ross hopes that his project will illustrate to historians of foreign relations “how rich and vital aerospace history is to their work.” He has begun his fellowship by conducting research at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, and plans to visit other collections local to Washington, DC, including the Library of Congress, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Air and Space Museum, and the NASA History Office. He is most excited, however, about his planned trips to the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico and the Western Range at the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa in Honolulu.

I am following a trend here in  
scrutinizing “sovereignty.”

Durrani is a PhD candidate at Princeton University and will use his fellowship to work on his dissertation, “A Satellite for All: Law, Technology, and Empire in the Global Cold War, 1959–1968.” The project offers a legal history of the first synchronous communications satellite, *Syncom 2*, a joint project between NASA and Hughes Aircraft Company that was launched in 1963. “Achieving synchronous orbit was a monumental technical feat with significant political, military, and economic implications, particularly for US extraterritorial power during decolonization and the global Cold War. As a result, the satellite drew conflicts over a dizzying array of legal instruments,” Durrani explained. His study of these conflicts provides insight into broader changes to property, jurisdiction, and sovereignty in the mid-20th century.



Andrew Ross



Haris Durrani

“The satellite chose me,” Durrani said of his dissertation topic. As an undergraduate engineering student working at Boeing’s satellite facility in El Segundo, California, he took classes in postcolonial studies and legal history and became interested in the legal and political aspects of his work. While attending the University of Cambridge for a master’s degree in philosophy and then law school at Columbia University, he continually encountered *Syncom 2* as he researched the historical connections among law, spaceflight, and decolonization. He came to see the satellite as “a kind of inception point for larger debates about the laws governing US empire and its technologies.” It also appeared often in his reading on the intellectual history of US property theory. “I’d never meant to write a microhistory of a single satellite. But everywhere I looked, I saw *Syncom 2*,” he said. “I became so obsessed with it that I even created, from scratch, a LEGO model. This also helped me visualize what the patent files and technical documents could not.” He even realized that the Boeing facility he had worked in as an engineering student was an institutional legacy of the one that had developed the *Syncom* satellites. “Every morning and evening on my way into and out of work, I had walked past a model of *Syncom 2* proudly displayed in the facility’s antechamber.”

His dissertation was also partially inspired by an article he wrote for *Cosmic Fragments: Dislocation and Discontent in the Global Space Age* (Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, 2024), edited by Asif Siddiqi, and the work of other scholars who are thinking about the relationship between spaceflight and decolonization during the Global Cold War. “Some officials and engineers from developing nations, such as Cuba, saw synchronous satellites as projects of a continuing US empire,” Durrani said. “What is interesting is many Americans viewed the satellites the same way—they just didn’t see it as a bad thing. This is the chief interest of the dissertation: How was

US global power changing, if at all, and how did people invent histories of empire along the way?”

Durrani feels that a history of *Syncom 2* will be an important contribution to the relatively sparse work on early communications satellites. More broadly, though, he wants to integrate law into the history of spaceflight. Patents and contracts were integral to the development, operation, and commercialization of satellites, he says, and nonbinding international regulations, smaller bilateral agreements, and private law are where “the rubber really hits the road” in the intersection of law and technology.

Everywhere I looked,  
I saw *Syncom 2*.

Durrani plans to spend his fellowship traveling to the National Archives, the Smithsonian archives, and the Library of Congress in the Washington, DC, area; the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library Archive in Boston; Stanford University and the Huntington Library in California; Princeton’s Mudd Library and the AT&T archives in New Jersey; and Cuba, where he is looking forward to researching the Cuban perspective of the international debates over US attempts to allocate radio frequencies for synchronous satellites.

Congratulations to our new fellows! We are excited to see the work they do. Applications for the AHA’s 2024–25 NASA fellowships will open in October 2023. **P**

Rebecca L. West is the operations and communications assistant at the AHA. Find her on X (formerly Twitter) @rebeckawest.

LAURA ANSLEY

## REGIONAL CONFERENCES

### *Behind the Scenes at the AHA*

You're probably familiar with the AHA annual meeting, held each January. But you may not know that the AHA is hosting two regional conferences on introductory history courses this October, at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and at Salt Lake Community College, South City Campus, in Salt Lake City, Utah. But why Texas and Utah?

The AHA has been hosting regional conferences on teaching history for nearly a decade as part of the Tuning the History Discipline and History Gateways initiatives. The first took place in 2014 at St. Francis College in Brooklyn, New York, where the organizers hoped for 30 to 40 attendees. Over 130 historians registered, and other conferences soon followed in Florida, California, and Texas, spearheaded by local faculty members intimately familiar with the needs of their fellow teachers and willing to help with organizing sessions and logistics. Today, AHA staff including senior program analyst Julia Brookins, program assistant Rachel Wheatley, and manager of teaching and learning Brendan Gillis continue to work with local faculty to organize such conferences.

First organized in 2015, the Texas Conference on Introductory History Courses is now an annual event for two-year, four-year, and secondary school dual-enrollment faculty in the state. Now in its ninth year, the conference was first conceptualized by AHA Council member Trinidad Gonzales (South Texas Coll.) with the aim of fostering a community of practice across Texas. At Texas public institutions, all associate's degree graduates are required to take at least three credits in US history, while bachelor's recipients must take six credits; institutions also share a course numbering system and common student learning outcomes for history courses. As Brookins told *Perspectives*, these degree requirements mean that "there are just more people teaching college-level history in Texas." With this event, the AHA is able to support productive conversations about shared opportunities and challenges, while faculty who attend stay informed about state policy structures in a relatively low-stakes environment. Course-specific discussions on US, African American, and Mexican

American intro history courses allow attendees to learn from one another. This year's conference will feature discussions on incorporating gender and sexuality topics into intro courses, along with policy discussions and a session with the Oral History Association.

The Utah Conference on Introductory History Courses, delayed since 2020 because of the pandemic, is helmed by Daniel J. McInerney and Norm Jones, both emeritus faculty at Utah State University. Like Texas, Utah has unique curricular requirements for students at public colleges and universities, including a course on American institutions, and historians there benefit from intercampus discussions of such system-wide courses. Utah's institutions of higher education thus have an existing culture of collaboration and communication, and the AHA hopes the 2023 conference theme of "Building a Stronger K-16 Bridge" will serve to bolster these relationships. As Gillis told *Perspectives*, "We all have a lot to learn from each other, as we work to boost student engagement, overcome achievement gaps, and ponder issues like the significance of artificial intelligence. These questions helped shape our thinking about how to frame the Utah Conference."

One of the AHA's goals is to make gatherings of teachers as accessible as possible. Regional conferences are key to fulfilling this objective, since not all educators can afford to travel to the AHA annual meeting each year. As Brookins explained, "A history conference by and for history faculty in those states allows them to access each other as a resource, in a way that would not be financially feasible for many." Registration for the Texas and Utah conferences is free, thanks to the generosity of host institutions and sponsors.

Wondering when the AHA will come to your state? Reach out to our staff. We would love to collaborate with you to help bring productive conversations like these to a campus near you. **P**

*Laura Ansley is senior managing editor at the AHA.*



# NOMINATIONS INVITED FOR AHA OFFICES, TERMS BEGINNING JANUARY 2025

Under the AHA Constitution and Bylaws (Article VIII, Section 1; Article IX; and Bylaws 11 and 12), the executive director invites all members of the Association to submit, on or before January 7, 2024, recommendations for the following offices:

## President-elect

**Vice President, Teaching Division** (member of the Council, chair of the Division)

**Councilor, Professional Division**, one position (Council – governance of the organization; Division – responsible for overseeing matters concerning working conditions and practices of historians, primarily by articulating ethical standards and best practices in the historical discipline)

**Councilor, Research Division**, one position (Council – governance of the organization; Division – responsible for promoting historical scholarship, encouraging the collection and preservation of historical documents and artifacts, ensuring equal access to information, and fostering the dissemination of information about historical records and research)

**Councilor, Teaching Division**, one position (Council – governance of the organization; Division – responsible for the Council’s work relating to history education, including efforts to promote and improve teaching and learning of history at all levels of education)

**Committee on Committees**, two positions (nominations for large number of Association committees, including book awards and prizes; member begins serving immediately after election)

**Nominating Committee**, three positions (nominations for all elective posts)

Members of the Council and elective committees *as of January 7, 2024*, are listed below. Positions being replaced in the June 1–July 15, 2024, elections are in **bold**.

Unless otherwise indicated, terms expire in January of the listed year.

## Presidents

**2025 Edward W. Muir Jr.**, Northwestern Univ. (medieval and early modern Europe, religion, urban, legal and criminal)

2026 Thavolia Glymph, Duke Univ. (slavery, emancipation, plantation societies and economies, gender, women)

2027 Ben Vinson III, Howard Univ. (African diaspora, colonial Mexico)

## Professional Division

**2025 Laura Hostetler, councilor**, Univ. of Illinois at Chicago (Qing empire, Sino-European relations, early modern world, cartography, humanities education)

2026 Anne Hyde, vice president, Univ. of Oklahoma (19th-century North American West, Indigenous America, race)

2026 Tony Frazier, councilor, North Carolina Central Univ. (social and legal history of blacks in 18th-century in Great Britain, Atlantic slavery and emancipation, African American)

2027 Kristin O’Brassill-Kulfan, councilor, Rutgers Univ. (19th-century US, social, public)

## Research Division

**2025 Sandra Greene, councilor**, Cornell Univ. (slavery, biography, Ghana)

2026 Erin Greenwald, councilor, Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities (French Atlantic world, colonial Louisiana)

2027 William G. Thomas III, vice president, Univ. of Nebraska, Lincoln (American legal, digital scholarship)

2027 Jana Lipman, councilor, Tulane Univ. (20th-century US, US foreign relations, US immigration, labor)

## Teaching Division

2025 Kathleen Hilliard, vice president, Iowa State Univ. (informal economies, slavery and emancipation, US South)

2025 Karen Marrero, councilor, Wayne State Univ. (early North America and Indigenous, transnational and borderlands)

2026 Charles Zappia, councilor, San Diego Mesa Coll. (corporatization of higher education, community college historians, transformation of work and the American labor movement)

2027 Jennifer Baniewicz, councilor, Amos Alonzo Stagg High School (US, AP US, AP European, Western civilization)

## At Large

2027 Pragya Kaul, Univ. of Michigan (Europe, global and world, Asia)

## Committee on Committees

7/2024 Julie Hardwick, Univ. of Texas at Austin (early modern Europe, social/legal/gender)

7/2024 Franziska Seraphim, Boston Coll. (modern Japan, global and comparative, historical memory, social politics)

7/2025 Rashauna Johnson, Univ. of Chicago (Atlantic slavery and emancipation, 19th-century African diaspora, US South, urban and regional)

7/2026 Julio Capó Jr., Florida International Univ. (20th-century queer Miami, transnational Caribbean-US sexuality)

## Nominating Committee

2025 Lisa Leff, US Holocaust Memorial Museum and American Univ. (Jews of modern France)

2025 Melissa N. Stuckey, Elizabeth City State Univ. (African American migration to Oklahoma, African American history, Black freedom struggles)

2025 Philip Thai, Northeastern Univ. (modern China, legal, economic, diplomatic)

2026 Carlos Kevin Blanton, Texas A&M Univ. (Chicana/o history, education, civil rights, Texas)

2026 Bianca Murillo, California State Univ., Dominguez Hills (modern Africa, global capitalism/economies/markets, race and gender studies)

2026 Kaya Şahin, Indiana Univ. (early modern Ottoman Empire, history writing, governance, religious/confessional identity, ceremonies and rituals)

2027 Amanda Moniz, Smithsonian's National Museum of American History (early America, humanitarianism)

2027 Matthew Restall, Penn State Univ. (colonial Latin America, Maya history)

2027 Anthony Steinhoff, Univ. du Québec à Montréal (modern Germany/France, modern European religion, Wagner/operatic culture in German-speaking Europe, urban)

Suggestions should be submitted by email to [committees@historians.org](mailto:committees@historians.org). Please specify the academic or other position and the field of the individual, and include a brief statement of their qualifications for the position. Refer to the *Statement on Diversity in AHA Nominations and Appointments* ([historians.org/ahadiversity](https://historians.org/ahadiversity)), which was drafted in the hope that it will encourage members to suggest more individuals from diverse backgrounds for both appointments and nominations. All suggestions received will be forwarded to the Nominating Committee for consideration at its meeting in February 2024.

## Schedule for Nominations and Elections of AHA Officers

January 7, 2024	Deadline to make suggestions to executive director.
February 2024	Nominating Committee meets to determine slate.
March–April 2024	Slate published in <i>Perspectives on History</i> and <i>Perspectives Daily</i> .
June 1, 2024	Link to ballot emailed to AHA members.
July 15, 2024	Final deadline to record votes.
August–September 2024	Results announced in <i>Perspectives on History</i> and <i>Perspectives Daily</i> . Committee on Committees elected member begins term of office immediately.
January 5, 2025	Results announced at business meeting during 138th annual meeting in New York City.
January 6, 2025	Individuals begin terms of office. <a href="#">P</a>

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



## RAY BILLINGTON VISITING PROFESSORSHIP IN UNITED STATES HISTORY/the AMERICAS

### History Department

We are seeking a distinguished historian of the United States/the Americas who will split the 2024-2025 academic year between Occidental College and the Huntington Library. Scholars working in comparative and transnational frameworks are welcome to apply. The position includes office space at both the Huntington and Occidental, a stipend of between \$100,000-\$120,000 (depending on rank), and other generous benefits.

In addition to researching the Huntington's collections, the Billington Professor teaches one intermediate or advanced class per semester in the Occidental History Department, ideally courses that complement existing course offerings.

Associate and Full Professors from any college or university (excepting those in the greater Los Angeles area) are invited to apply.

Applicants should submit a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, research proposal for the Huntington, course proposals for Occidental courses, evaluations of undergraduate teaching, and three letters of recommendation by email to Alannah Isherwood, Swan Hall Coordinator at [aisherwood@oxy.edu](mailto:aisherwood@oxy.edu), "Attention: Billington" in subject heading. All materials are due by Thursday November 9, 2023.

For more information please visit: <https://www.oxy.edu/working-oxy>





## Augustus Leon (Lee) Beier IV

1941–2023

Historian of Early  
Modern Britain

Augustus Leon (Lee) Beier IV, a key figure in British social history, died after a long illness on February 25, 2023, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. A large personality, full of ideas and enthusiasms, Lee is missed by friends and colleagues whose thinking he energized and whose lives he brightened.

Born in Rice Lake, Wisconsin, on October 2, 1941, Lee grew up in Madison and graduated from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1963. Inspired by undergraduate teachers, especially George Mosse, Lee determined to pursue European history. A post-BA Fulbright Fellowship enabled him to spend 1963–64 in Nancy, France, where he gathered research for a potential PhD thesis. While he was in New York City, Lee’s research from Nancy was stolen from his car trunk. This mishap redirected his life, personally and intellectually.

In 1964, Lee entered the PhD program at Princeton University and soon after returned to France. When attempts to resurrect his Nancy research bogged down, Lee asked Lawrence Stone, Princeton’s social historian of Britain and a professor he admired, if he could work with him instead. With Stone’s encouragement, Lee moved across the English Channel to research a dissertation on poverty and poor relief in early modern Warwickshire. He arrived amid Britain’s massive 1960s expansion of higher education. In 1966, he published an impressive first article in *Past and Present*, then a major forum for the new work in social history. Shortly thereafter, another influential English early modernist, Austin Woolrych, recruited Lee—whose dissertation was several years from completion—to help launch the history program at the newly founded University of Lancaster.

Lee remained at Lancaster from 1967 to 1990. He built a reputation as an authority on early modern British society and on poverty in history more broadly. He expanded his dissertation into the widely lauded *Masterless Men: The Vagrancy Problem in England 1560–1640* (Methuen, 1985). This research helped establish concepts and methods for re-creating the lives of the transient poor, which Lee demonstrated to be a

significant portion of English society in the era. The influence of Lee’s work came in part from the adept way he wove together the social history impulse toward categorization and measurement with thoughtful discussions of social attitudes and policies adopted to deal with the poor at various levels of English government.

Over the following decades, Lee published numerous articles and chapters on evolving British discussions about poverty and social marginalization. He wove this work into a final book, *Social Thought in England, 1480–1730: From Body Social to Worldly Wealth* (Routledge, 2016), published as his health began to fade. In this, he traced English discourse about social hierarchy from its medieval roots in estates dominated by customs into a more market-based era, organized by the dynamics of power and wealth. Beyond these accomplishments, Lee co-edited several widely read essay collections, including *London, 1500–1700: The Making of the Metropolis* (Longman, 1986), edited with Roger Finlay. This volume prefigured a quarter century of scholarship about the city, while inspiring urban historians on both sides of the Atlantic with its range of approaches to urban social history.

In 1990, Lee returned to the United States to chair the history department at Illinois State University. After his service as chair ended, Lee put much effort into curricular matters at both the undergraduate and graduate levels until his retirement in 2009. Having reconnected with his Wisconsin roots, he moved to Round Lake in Chippewa County, where he had a bright, up-to-date house that he labeled a “cabin.” Lee’s penchant for vintage motorcycles and cars, rock ‘n’ roll, long evenings, and animated conversation precluded a serene retreat.

Lee is survived by his four sons, Joe, Jesse, Jake, and Zach; their spouses and partners; and five grandchildren. He remained close with his former wife, historian Lucinda Myles McCray, who helped look after him as his health declined. A celebration of his life took place in June.

Alan Lessoff  
Illinois State University

Michael Moore  
Appalachian State University

Photo courtesy Beier family



## Katherine Fischer Drew

1923–2023

Historian of Medieval Europe; AHA 50-Year Member

Katherine Fischer Drew, the Lynette S. Autrey Professor Emerita of History at Rice University, passed away on March 19, 2023, five months before her 100th birthday.

Katherine was born on September 24, 1923, in Houston, Texas. The daughter of a local baker, Katherine was a high-achieving student who began undergraduate study at Rice University when she was 16 years old, focusing on European medieval history. In 1945, she earned her MA at Rice with a translation of the Burgundian Legal Code. Her introductory text described how Roman law, which reflected a long tradition of centralized authority, legal professionals, and urban life, intersected with the unwritten common law in areas characterized by kinship-based governance and agricultural production. This interest in social and political transitions of early medieval Europe remained a passion in her doctoral dissertation, which she completed at Cornell University in 1950, and throughout her career. She produced scholarly translations of the Lombard and Salian Franks' Laws, as well as other essays shedding light on shifting patterns of ownership, inheritance, and punishment collected in her volume *Law and Society in Early Medieval Europe* (Variorum, 1988).

To make sense of the law, Katherine made use of insights from sociology, archaeology, and economics. As she noted in her work, legal codes tended to focus on key rules that were under discussion and required clarification, rather than on matters that were obvious. Precise penalties for crimes (such as touching an unmarried woman below or above the elbow or throwing unclean water at a wedding) required precise payments, which suggested that in these cases crime was about damage to a person rather than to an abstract notion of state or society. She drew on specific civil or criminal rules to infer differences of status and familial organization. These details allowed her to paint a picture of transitions from rule by custom in Germanic law to a more Roman notion of the formal state, a notion that lay the groundwork for the High Middle Ages. She continued working and publishing into her 80s. Her final book was *Magna Carta* (Greenwood Press, 2004),

a compilation of documents on the origin and development of the Magna Carta—or rather what she called the myth of the Magna Carta, a document delineating rights that King John had no intention of honoring, for it became a symbol of English rights only after centuries of struggle. She was selected as a Guggenheim Fellow in 1959; a Fulbright Fellow in 1965; a senior fellow of the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1975; and fellow of the Medieval Academy of America in 1979, an organization she served as president in 1985–86. She also served on the AHA Council from 1982–85.

At Rice University, Katherine was the first woman to join the faculty full-time (in 1950) and the first woman to receive tenure. It is no exaggeration to say that she helped transform Rice from a technical institute into a modern liberal arts university. Arriving at Rice to join a department of only four professors, she served as chair of the combined Department of History and Political Science from 1970–80. That was a period of tremendous growth, including the formation of a separate political science department. By the time she stepped down, the history department consisted of around 15 tenure-track professors. During her time at Rice, she often served as an all-purpose problem solver in multiple administrative roles at the university, including acting dean of the humanities and social sciences.

After her retirement in 1996, she continued her scholarly work and remained active in the department and beyond. When I became department chair in 2003, she and I talked at length about how the department, school, and university worked and about the eccentricities of *homo academicus*; she never failed to teach me key lessons while at the same time making me laugh. Her commitment to both the university and its students was as sharp and focused as her wit. One of her lasting legacies is a major endowment in her name to fund undergraduate research and teaching. For more than 80 years, Katherine remained focused on Rice as an institution. Rice would not be the same place without her.

Peter C. Caldwell  
Rice University

Photo: Rice University/CC BY 3.0



## Janelle Greenberg

1938–2023

Historian of Early  
Modern Britain

Janelle Greenberg, professor emerita of British history at the University of Pittsburgh, passed away on June 6, 2023, at her home in Hollywood, Florida. She died peacefully, with her husband of 62 years, Martin Greenberg, and their son Steven by her side. Both survive her, along with daughter Rebecca; son Joshua; and three grandchildren, Arella, Ezra, and Pearl.

Born in Muskogee, Oklahoma, on April 3, 1938, Janelle attended Stillwater High School and the University of Houston, where she met both Martin and her lifelong mentor, Corinne Comstock Weston. After Janelle completed her BA and MA at Houston, she and Martin moved to the University of Michigan, where she earned her PhD in 1970.

By the time Janelle received her doctorate, she and Martin had relocated to Pittsburgh and had begun raising a family. Balancing the competing demands of career and child-rearing, she accepted a position at the University of Pittsburgh first as a part-time instructor and then, in 1979, as a half-time assistant professor. In 1989, Janelle was promoted to associate professor with tenure, the first instance in the department's history of a part-time faculty member being promoted to a tenured full-time position. In 2001, Janelle became the department's second female full professor, after her colleague Evelyn Rawski.

Janelle specialized in legal and constitutional history. Her articles appeared in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, *English Historical Review*, *History of Political Thought*, *Cardozo Law Review*, and other venues. In 1981, she published a monograph, co-authored with Weston, titled *Subjects and Sovereigns: The Grand Controversy over Legal Sovereignty in Stuart England* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1981). Her magnum opus was *The Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution: St. Edward's "Laws" in Early Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001). Based on 30 years of research at the British Library and other repositories, the book uncovered an "invented tradition" of civil and political rights supposedly based in the laws of the last Anglo-Saxon king, Edward the Confessor. The book traced the invention of

those laws to the 1200s–1300s, and their subsequent elaboration and invocation in the political pamphlets and debates of the 1500s–1600s. Reviews by distinguished scholars including J. G. A. Pocock and Johann Sommerville recognized the book as a pathbreaking contribution to British political and constitutional history.

Janelle was a gifted stylist and explicator, explaining in clear and engaging prose the legal principles and political issues at play and why they mattered. She brought that same approach to her teaching, turning the most abstruse legal and constitutional debates into dramatic analytical narratives. This won her the Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award in 1989, sky-high teaching evaluations, and crowds of students who followed her from class to class. Each year at the department's reception for graduating seniors and their families, Janelle was a constant center of gravity, surrounded by a crush of grateful students and their parents.

Janelle was as popular with faculty colleagues, departmental staff, and university administrators as she was with her students. Though at heart a rather private person, she loved good food, good wine, and good friends. Her sense of humor veered wildly from the whip-smart to the slapstick, placing any gathering at which she was present at serious risk of dissolving into raucous hilarity. Playing first base, she was a linchpin of the departmental softball team, the History Reds, and contributed mightily to our championship season in 1984. Truly she was a woman for all seasons, now deeply and sorely missed.

George Reid Andrews  
University of Pittsburgh

*Photo courtesy University of Pittsburgh*





## Suellen M. Hoy

1942–2023

Public Historian

Historian Suellen M. Hoy died on May 4, 2023, in Seattle, Washington. During her career, she moved seamlessly from political to public to social histories. Among her many achievements, Suellen was a founder of the National Council on Public History (NCPH), the first to teach women's history at the University of Notre Dame, and an award-winning historian of women religious and labor.

Born on August 14, 1942, in Chicago, she earned her BA from Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana. Following seven years as a member of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, Suellen received her MA and PhD from Indiana University. While in Bloomington, she was the first woman to serve as a graduate assistant at the *Journal of American History*. Her dissertation, completed in 1975, was on Samuel M. Ralston, an anti-Catholic politician of the Progressive Era who served Indiana as governor and US senator.

After teaching at the State University of New York, Plattsburgh, Suellen went to the American Public Works Association in Chicago in 1975 as the first director of the Public Works Historical Society and co-authored, with Michael C. Robinson, *History of Public Works in the United States, 1776–1976* (American Public Works Association, 1976). It was during this period that Suellen helped to co-found the NCPH in 1980 and served on its first board of directors. She also co-chaired the 1982 NCPH conference.

Between 1981 to 1987, Suellen was deputy director of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History. William Price, who invited Suellen to work as his deputy, recalls, "She moved south from her beloved Chicago seeking a change and new responsibilities. In a matter of several months, she had revitalized our Federation of NC Historical Societies, guided preparation of a finding aid for records relating to women in our State Archives, and set up an in-house lecture series."

In 1988, Suellen became a visiting associate professor at Notre Dame, where she turned from public to social history.

Following a year in Ireland, Suellen co-edited with Margaret MacCurtain the diaries of two Dominican nuns who emigrated in 1889: *From Dublin to New Orleans: The Journey of Nora and Alice* (Attic Press, 1994). She next published *Chasing Dirt: The American Pursuit of Cleanliness* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1995), in which Suellen showed her "very dry wit and impeccable scholarship," according to Ruth Schwartz Cowan.

After that, Suellen focused on women religious, deepening our understanding of their historical significance, particularly in Catholic cities like Chicago. Over the course of a decade, she published articles on women religious from the earliest schools and hospitals to their support of civil rights, gathered together as *Good Hearts: Catholic Sisters in Chicago's Past* (Univ. of Illinois Press, 2006).

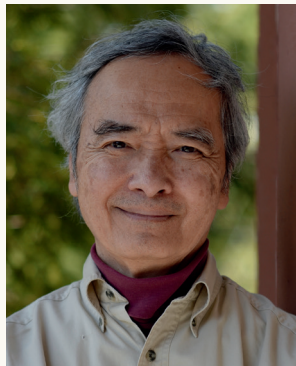
Suellen then turned her attention to Progressive women reformers. In *Ellen Gates Starr, Her Later Years* (Chicago History Museum, 2010), she focused on the Hull House co-founder's ongoing work with labor causes and her conversion to Catholicism. Suellen continued to study Chicago women activists in "Chicago Working Women's Struggle for a Shorter Day, 1908–1911" (*Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, 2014), which won the journal's Harry E. Pratt Award, and two essays in *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*: "The Irish Girls' Rising: Building the Women's Labor Movement in Progressive-Era Chicago" (2012) and "Sidelined: The Chicago Women's Trade Union League in the Interwar Years" (2018).

Suellen received numerous fellowships and prizes, including two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities (1979, 1992), a British Academy Fellowship (1988), a Spencer Foundation Fellowship (1997), the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Conference on the History of Women Religious (2007), and the NCPH Founders Award (2018).

In 1986, Suellen married fellow historian Walter Nugent. Until Walter's death in 2021, the couple lived in Indiana, Illinois, and finally Washington. Suellen was an inspiration to other scholars. Timothy B. Neary remembers her as an informal mentor who "never failed to support and challenge me in becoming a better historian and a better person." Suellen loved discovering a new word, watching a well-crafted movie, and hearing well-told stories. She is deeply missed for her generosity and insightful wit, especially by her colleagues and friends in Chicago.

Ann Durkin Keating  
North Central College

Photo courtesy Notre Dame Archives



## Ngo Vinh Long

1944–2022

Antiwar Historian

Ngo Vinh Long, internationally renowned antiwar historian, was born on April 10, 1944, in the southern province of Vinh Long in Vietnam and died in Bangor, Maine, on October 12, 2022. He joined the Department of History at the University of Maine in Orono in 1985, where he served as a professor of history until his death.

Long arrived in the United States in the early 1960s as a high school exchange student in Missouri. He then attended Harvard University, where he earned his bachelor's and doctoral degrees. While at Harvard, Long was often regarded as the most prominent antiwar Vietnamese in the United States, and his writings were a major source of information and analysis. He was often a featured speaker at teach-ins, rallies, and protests alongside Howard Zinn, Noam Chomsky, and other intellectual leaders of the antiwar movement.

While a graduate student, Long authored the groundbreaking book *Before the Revolution: The Vietnamese Peasants under the French* (MIT Press, 1973; 2nd ed., Columbia Univ. Press, 1991), providing an understanding of economic, political, cultural, and ideological dimensions of French colonialism. He next published *Vietnamese Women in Society and Revolution: The French Colonial Period* (Vietnam Resource Center, 1974), on how Vietnamese women related to French colonialism and revolutionary struggles. He later co-edited, with me, *Coming to Terms: Indochina, the United States, and the War* (Westview Press, 1991), in which Long wrote the lead chapter on Vietnam.

Long's contributions extend beyond his publications. He organized and spoke at many of the earliest, largest, and most significant antiwar rallies at Harvard, in Washington, DC, and throughout the United States. He was a founder of the Vietnam Resource Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts; founder and main writer for the weekly newsletter *Thoi Bao Ga*; a founder of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars and its journal, the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*; and a founder of the Vietnam Studies Group. He was also the first activist to provide evidence of birth deformities linked to the US military's use of Agent Orange.

A key academic debate has been about activism versus professionalism. An activist intellectual and intellectual activist, Long rejected this rigid dichotomy. He felt that his activism broadened and deepened his approach to and understanding of history, and his understanding as an engaged intellectual historian informed, broadened, and deepened his antiwar, peace, and justice work.

Appreciated for his endless puns and welcoming friendly spirit and as a very knowledgeable and courageous activist scholar, Long had no illusions about the consequences for his personal life, security, and career. He shared that he had become the target of hatred and attacks, including a gasoline bomb thrown at him after a Harvard talk in 1981. "From 1975 to 1995, my life was hell," he said multiple times.

At UMaine, Long taught a wide range of history courses covering all of Asia. He was greatly admired and fondly regarded by colleagues and students. He remained the engaged intellectual, serving as a Fulbright Senior Scholar in Vietnam in 2000–01, organizing numerous summer conferences for Vietnamese and other scholars, and generously giving his time and knowledge in supporting historians and other scholars. After the Vietnam War ended, he continued to write articles and to provide interviews and resource material for the *New York Times*, the BBC, *Le Monde*, and other influential media.

As a historian, Long embraced an open-ended multidimensional approach, sought principled compromises, and adjusted to contextual changes, while attempting to maintain his revolutionary vision of mutual understanding, reconciliation, peace, and justice. He worked for a vision of a democratic socialist Vietnam that would be diverse, inclusive, panhumanist, and radically egalitarian. Such a Vietnam would be non-violent and organically harmonious, overcome divisive conflicts, and promote freedom and social justice. Long envisioned his historical work as essential for a future in which Vietnam, the United States, and the world committed to meeting the needs of all, especially the most oppressed with the least freedom.

Throughout his life, Ngo Vinh Long exemplified the indispensable contributions of a progressive historian. While his greatest accomplishment was helping to end the Vietnam War, his goal was to pave the way for new and hopeful beginnings and for a much better future.

Douglas Allen  
University of Maine, Orono (emeritus)

Photo courtesy Ngo Vinh Nhan



## Anna Julia Cooper

1858–1964

Educator, Author,  
and Historian

One of the most prominent intellectuals and courageous educators of her time, Anna Julia Cooper was an outspoken advocate for racial and gender equality. Most well known for *A Voice from the South by a Black Woman of the South* (1892), in which she theorized intersecting forms of oppression and advocated for a broad and inclusive approach to liberation and human rights, Cooper was also likely the first Black woman from the United States to earn a PhD with a dissertation in history. Now recognized as a foremother of Black feminist thought and intersectionality and a forerunner in the fight for Black education, Cooper was forced by prejudice to take a circuitous route to secure education for herself and others.

Born into slavery in Raleigh, North Carolina, on August 10, 1858, Anna Julia Haywood Cooper was the youngest of three children born to Hannah Stanley Haywood and presumably her enslaver, George Washington Haywood. In 1867, Cooper entered the first class of Raleigh's St. Augustine's Normal and Collegiate Institute, where she went on to be a teacher. From there, she launched her first protests for equal rights, including calling for state support for Black education. She was married to George A. C. Cooper from 1877 until his death in 1879. Cooper then attended Oberlin College, where she earned BA (1884) and MA (1888) degrees in mathematics.

From the mid-1880s through the turn of the 20th century, as white politicians and publics abandoned Reconstruction reforms, Cooper published widely and delivered speeches across the nation and the world, arguing against the revisionist histories of Reconstruction taking shape and advocating for Black rights and equality. In 1887, she moved to Washington, DC, where she helped found institutions including the Colored Women's League, the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, and the Colored Settlement House. In 1896, she worked with other prominent women to found the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, uniting hundreds of local and state groups and moving Black women unapologetically to the forefront of their own national organizing efforts.

In 1901, she was appointed principal of the prestigious Washington Colored High School, known as M Street and later Dunbar High School, where she headed a rigorous classical and liberal arts program and succeeded in sending Black students to elite colleges and universities. Her success, however, brought her face-to-face with bitter local, regional, and national politics, and in 1906, her "courageous revolt" against a "lower colored curriculum" led to her removal as principal, though she would later return to the teaching staff.

Immediately after her removal, Cooper initiated efforts to pursue a PhD, but she was repeatedly thwarted, delayed, and rerouted by limited opportunities, lack of support and resources, and requirements unforgiving for a single Black woman raising five adopted children. In 1914, Cooper enrolled at Columbia University and completed a scholarly translation of *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* as her doctoral thesis. Unable to meet the program's residency requirements, however, Cooper would not earn her PhD until 1925, from the University of Paris, Sorbonne, only the fourth African American woman to earn a PhD and the first to do so with a historical study. Her dissertation, *L'Attitude de la France à l'égard de l'esclavage pendant la Révolution*, is a deeply archival historical study situating the French Revolution in the context of the transatlantic slave trade and reconstructing the history and dialectical relationships between the French and Haitian Revolutions.

Cooper taught at Dunbar High School until her age-mandated retirement in 1930. After her retirement, she continued to write, edit, and teach, contributing at least 28 articles to local newspapers and privately printing a two-volume collection of writing by and about fellow educator and activist Charlotte Forten Grimké. In 1930, she became president of Frelinghuysen University, a group of community schools that served the working Black adults of Washington, DC. Throughout her life, she remained steadfast in her faith in education as a vehicle for individual and social transformation and unmoved in her critique of systems of oppression and domination that diminished the freedom and life chances of African Americans generally and Black women specifically.

Cooper died on February 27, 1964, at her home in the LeDroit Park neighborhood of Washington, DC. She was 105 years old. Fellow Dunbar graduate Mary Gibson Hundley remembered Cooper as "a woman of rare courage and conviction."

Shirley Moody-Turner  
Penn State University

Photo: Scurlock Studio Records, Archives Center,  
National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.



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## YORK UNIVERSITY

Toronto, ON

**Modern Spain.** The Department of History, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies at York University invites highly qualified applicants for an assistant or associate professor position for the Mackenzie-Papineau Memorial Professorship in Modern Spanish History. This is an endowed tenure-track appointment to the professorial stream to commence 1 July 2024. Funding for this position comes from the Mackenzie-Papineau Memorial Fund, named after a battalion of Canadian soldiers on the Republican side during the Spanish Civil War. York has long offered scholarship and instruction on the Spanish Civil War, which included exploring the role the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion played in the war. This endowment will also support scholarship, research, and teaching in modern Spanish history. Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. All York University positions are subject to budgetary approval. York is an AA employer and strongly values diversity, including gender and sexual diversity, in its community. Details of the AA Program, which applies to women, members of racialized groups, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and those who identify as 2SLGBTQ+, can be found here or by contacting Christal Chapman, EDI Program Manager ([chapman7@yorku.ca](mailto:chapman7@yorku.ca)).

[yorku.ca](https://yorku.ca); 416-736-5713). York welcomes and employs scholars from all over the world. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadian citizens, permanent residents and Indigenous peoples of Canada will be given priority. York has a policy on Accommodation in Employment for Persons with Disabilities and is committed to working towards a barrier-free workplace and expanding the accessibility of the workplace to persons with disabilities. Applicants who require accommodation are invited to contact Stephen Brooke, Chair of History Department, [chairhis@yorku.ca](mailto:chairhis@yorku.ca). Due date for completed applications: 15 October 2023. Required materials: current CV; cover letter; a statement of research and teaching interests; and three confidential letters of reference. Provide required information regarding your Canadian work status and optional self-identification for Affirmative Action purposes as part of the online application. Please direct questions about the application to Stephen Brooke, Chair of History Department, [chairhis@yorku.ca](mailto:chairhis@yorku.ca). Submit materials at <https://apply.laps.yorku.ca>. PhD in History or a related discipline by 1 July 2024 is required. Scholarship: a coherent and well-articulated program of research and specialization in modern Spanish history; a record or evident promise of generating innovative, substantive, rigorous, and as appropriate, externally funded research and/or research creation; and a record or evident promise of making influential contributions and demonstrating excellence in the field demonstrated by, for example, a strong record of publications (or forthcoming

publications) evidenced in monographs with major presses or articles in significant journals in the field; presentations at major conferences; public history or community work; awards and accolades; a record of external funding from major funding bodies; and strong recommendations from referees of high standing. York particularly values scholarship that emphasizes new themes and methodologies in modern Spanish history and that will provide or lead to national and international research leadership. Teaching: a record or evident promise of excellence in teaching and dedication to students as demonstrated through a statement of teaching interests; a record of teaching accomplishments and pedagogical innovations including in high priority areas such as experiential education and technology enhanced learning; and strong letters of reference; suitability for prompt appointment to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, given that the position will involve graduate teaching and supervision; the successful candidate will be expected to teach a course on the Spanish Civil War and contribute to the teaching of modern European history at all levels.

## UNITED STATES



## UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles, CA

**19th-Century United States.** The UCLA Department of History invites

applications for a tenure-track position at the rank of assistant professor in nineteenth-century United States history. The deadline for submitting applications and required documents is November 1, 2023. Applications will be reviewed immediately thereafter. All candidates must have completed their PhD in history or related field by June 30, 2024. The department welcomes candidates whose experience in teaching, research or community service has prepared them to contribute to our commitment to diversity and excellence. All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply online at <https://recruit.apo.ucla.edu/JPF08677> to upload their information for this position. This position is subject to final administrative approval. Documents should include a letter of application; CV; a statement of teaching; a statement of research; the authorization to release information form; and three letters of recommendation. A statement addressing the applicant's past and/or potential contributions to equity, diversity, and inclusion is also required. Please visit the UCLA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion website for Sample Guidance for Candidates on the Statement of Contributions to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: <https://equity.ucla.edu/faculty-search-process-original/resources-on-contributions-to-equity-diversity-and-inclusion-edil/>. The posted UC salary scales set the minimum pay determined by rank and/or step at appointment. The on-scale salary range for this position is between \$74,600–97,200. However, off-scale salaries and other components of pay, i.e., a salary that is higher than the published

## 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](http://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](http://www.historians.org/standards); Guidelines for the Hiring Process, [www.historians.org/hiring](http://www.historians.org/hiring); and Policy on Advertisements, [www.historians.org/adpolicy](http://www.historians.org/adpolicy).

system-wide salary at the designated rank and step, are offered when necessary to meet competitive conditions. The University of California is an AA/EOE. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age or protected veteran status.

**Chinese History.** The UCLA Department of History invites applications for a tenure-track position at the rank of assistant professor in late imperial Chinese history (Song to Qing). The department welcomes applications considering any theme or methodological approach. The deadline for submitting applications and required documents is November 1, 2023. Applications will be reviewed immediately thereafter. All candidates must have completed their PhD in history or related field by June 30, 2024. The department welcomes candidates whose experience in teaching, research, or community service has prepared them to contribute to our commitment to diversity and excellence. All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply online at <https://recruit.apo.ucla.edu/JPF08515> to upload their information for this position. This position is subject to final administrative approval. Documents should include a letter of application, CV, a statement of teaching, a statement of research, the authorization to release information form, and three letters of recommendation. A statement addressing the applicant's past and/or potential contributions to equity, diversity, and inclusion is also required. Please visit the UCLA Equity, Diversity and Inclusion website for Sample Guidance for Candidates on the Statement of Contributions to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: <https://equity.ucla.edu/faculty-search-process-original/resources-on-contributions-to-equity-diversity-and-inclusion-edil/>. The posted UC salary scales set the on-scale salary range for this position between \$74,100–92,200+, determined by rank and/or step at appointment. “Off-scale salaries” and other components of pay are offered as needed to meet competitive conditions. The University of California is an AA/EOE. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, or protected veteran status.



## UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

College Park, MD

**History of African Americans in the Era of Emancipation and Reconstruction.** The Department of History at the University of Maryland, College Park, invites applications for a tenure-track assistant professor position focused on African Americans in the Era of Emancipation and Reconstruction. The successful candidate will be prepared to teach undergraduate and graduate courses in this field of specialization and to share in teaching the introductory-level African American history surveys (pre-1865 and/or post-1865). Applicants should have a broad knowledge of African American history and a demonstrated commitment to scholarly research on African Americans in the Era of Emancipation and Reconstruction. Applicants must have their doctoral degree in hand prior to appointment (August 1, 2024). Applications should be submitted online at <https://ejobs.umd.edu/postings/110114> and include a 3-4 page letter of application (describing scholarly research agenda and teaching philosophy and experience, including experience in mentoring undergraduate and/or graduate students); a CV; a writing sample (one article or book/dissertation chapter); and contact information for three recommenders who will be asked to submit their references online. The University of Maryland, College Park, has articulated a commitment to “diversity, equity and inclusion as morally right and educationally sound.” As throughout academia, working toward meaningful diversity and inclusion is an ongoing project. We seek candidates whose research, teaching, and service have prepared them to contribute to the History Department's efforts in these areas. Applicants are asked to address in their letter of application their past or potential contributions in teaching, mentoring, research, or service toward building an equitable scholarly environment and increasing access or participation of individuals from historically underrepresented groups. For best consideration, please ensure that all application materials are uploaded by November 3, 2023. Inquiries may be sent to the chair of the search committee, Professor Elsa Barkley Brown, at [barkleyb@umd.edu](mailto:barkleyb@umd.edu).

Applications must be submitted online. The University of Maryland, College Park, actively subscribes to a policy of equal employment opportunity, and will not discriminate against any employee or applicant because of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin, marital status, genetic information, political affiliation, and gender identity or expression. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply. This search is contingent upon the availability of funds.



## SUKUMAR P. DESAI

Boston, MA

**Research Associate.** A small team of a physician and an historian seek to collaborate with an additional historian on researching and writing articles for publication in scholarly journals dedicated to history of medicine/science. This is a remote, paid, freelance position appropriate for academically trained historians, including independent scholars, with a strong publication record. Graduate students without a publication history who can provide writing samples of publishable-quality work will also be considered. Strong candidates will have a demonstrated ability to complete work remotely with little direct supervision and a desire to work collaboratively on research and writing. Interested candidates should provide a CV and cover letter, including ideas for research topics to [mvigilfowler@gmail.com](mailto:mvigilfowler@gmail.com).



## UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, TWIN CITIES

Minneapolis, MN

**Immigration History.** The Department of History at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, invites applications for the Rudolph J. Vecoli Chair in Immigration History. The appointment will be a full-time, 12-month appointment at the rank of either associate professor with tenure or professor with tenure (advanced assistant professors meeting requirements for tenure at the University of Minnesota will also be considered). The appointment will begin as early as August 26, 2024. Rank will depend upon

qualifications and experience and be consistent with college and university policy. Responsibilities include half-time service and teaching in history (a total of two courses over two semesters, at the undergraduate and graduate level) and providing primary vision and leadership as Director of the Immigration History Research Center (IHRC), an endowed, interdisciplinary unit in the College of Liberal Arts. We seek candidates with teaching experience and research expertise in US immigration history in any period from the 19th century through the 21st century and demonstrated intellectual breadth in thinking globally about migration flows and patterns. We are especially interested in public-facing scholars who engage questions of racial justice, who connect historical patterns and practices with contemporary debates about immigration, asylum, and refugees, and climate related migration, and whose research has the potential to enter into conversation with other fields of history that are represented in the department, including legal and labor history, histories of race, gender, and sexuality, indigeneity, colonialism, empire, and historical memory. Candidates whose work is interdisciplinary are also strongly encouraged to apply, especially scholars who can engage with our programs in Heritage Studies and Public History and/or Human Rights. The responsibilities of the director of the IHRC include providing intellectual and programmatic leadership to IHRC activities, supervising staff, engaging in community outreach, and fundraising. With these responsibilities in mind, candidates should be committed to community-engaged scholarship and partnership; building upon recent IHRC initiatives; advocacy and response to and the fostering of public dialogue related to immigration and refugees; and working with the IHRC Archives and immigrant and refugee communities to create, preserve, and share their history. The Department of History has a strong commitment to diversity. We encourage scholars from underrepresented groups to apply. We welcome experience working with diverse students, in multicultural environments, and interest in developing curricula and public outreach to diverse populations. The University of Minnesota is a research university serving undergraduate and graduate students and is the only PhD granting institution in the state. Its main campus is in the large, metropolitan area of the Twin

Cities, Minneapolis and St. Paul. The Department of History is in the College of Liberal Arts. The University of Minnesota, Twin Cities is located on Dakota land. The Department of History and the IHRC acknowledge that the migration of immigrants and refugees to the US has been part of US settler-colonial practices that displaced and dispossessed Indigenous peoples, and that immigration study and advocacy must acknowledge this and support American Indian Nations and peoples. The Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) and its partner the IHRC Archives are devoted to preserving and understanding immigrant and refugee life. Founded in 1965, they are the oldest and largest interdisciplinary research center and archives in North America. The IHRC promotes interdisciplinary research on migration, race, and ethnicity in the United States and globally, advances public dialogue about immigration and refugees, connects US immigration history research to contemporary immigrant and refugee communities and questions, and develops archives documenting immigrant and refugee experiences. The Department of History is recognized as a prominent community of scholars both nationally and internationally. Our award-winning faculty are widely acknowledged for their scholarship in a broad range of fields, for their commitment to undergraduate and graduate teaching, and for their commitment to interdisciplinarity and public engagement. The departmental culture is open, generous, and supportive. It is a workshop rich culture with long-running workshops including in American Indian and indigenous studies; comparative history of women, gender, and sexuality; the comparative early modern Atlantic world; legal history; and the graduate workshop in modern history. Faculty scholarship and creative activities range broadly from traditional monographs and original works of synthesis to websites, performances, photo exhibits, congressional testimony, amicus briefs, and expert testimony in court cases. The department has a long and distinguished history of training graduate students who hold teaching appointments at universities and colleges across the United States and around the world, as well as in a broad range of other appointments including in museums, NGOs, historical societies, and as grant writers, historical consultants, and researchers. For more information about the History

Department and the IHRC, please refer to the History website (<http://www.cla.umn.edu/history>) and the website for the IHRC (<http://www.ihrc.umn.edu>). Questions may be directed to [histsrch@umn.edu](mailto:histsrch@umn.edu). Applications must be submitted online at the Application Page at <https://hr.myu.umn.edu/jobs/ext/356783>. The posting number is 356783. The following materials must be attached to your online application: letter of application, CV; a one-page statement describing your vision for the Vecoli Chair and director of the IHRC that also briefly addresses your administrative experience; and representative body of writing samples. We will seek letters of recommendation for those advancing to interviews. Other additional materials may be requested from candidates at a later date. The priority deadline for application materials is October 16, 2023. This position will remain open until filled. A PhD or foreign equivalent in history or a related field with a focus on history is required. Candidates must show evidence of excellence in teaching, a record of distinguished scholarly publication, and administrative experience. The University of Minnesota shall provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.



#### MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Mississippi State, MS

**20th-Century US International Affairs.** The Mississippi State University Department of History invites applications for a tenure-track appointment with an area of specialization in history of international affairs in the 20th century, beginning August 16, 2024. Teaching responsibilities are two courses per semester. Offerings include a turn in the US History survey and undergraduate and graduate courses in the area of expertise. Of particular importance is demonstrated ability to contribute to the graduate specialty in War, Peace and International Affairs. See <https://www.history.msstate.edu/news/when-three-four/> for further details. The Department of History at Mississippi

State University is the editorial home of *War in History*, *Environmental History*, *Early American History*, and the *History of Science Society Publications*. All applicants must apply online at <http://explore.msujobs.msstate.edu> and attach a cover letter, current CV, and teaching statement. To guarantee consideration, applications must be received by November 20, 2023. Please include email address to facilitate contact. MSU is an EOE, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, ethnicity, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, disability status, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. We always welcome nominations and applications from women, members of any minority group, and others who share our passion for building a diverse community that reflects the diversity in our student population. Website: <http://history.msstate.edu>. A PhD in the history of 20th century US International Relations at the time of appointment is required. Evidence of successful teaching and publications are preferred.



#### WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST LOUIS

St. Louis, MO

**History of Science.** The History Department at Washington University in St. Louis invites applications for a tenure-track assistant professor in the history of science starting in the fall of 2024. A PhD in hand by August 1, 2024, and evidence of scholarly potential are required. Area and chronological expertise are open. The successful candidate will teach an introductory course in the history of science, prepare classes in their area of specialization, be active in research and publication, perform university service, and contribute to a growing community of faculty interested in Science and Technology Studies and related areas. Apply at <https://apply.interfolio.com/128463>. Washington University is an AA/EOE. Diversity and inclusion are core values at Washington University, and we seek to create inclusive classrooms and environments in which a diverse array of students can learn and thrive. Each year Washington University publishes a Safety and

Security brochure that details what to do and whom to contact in an emergency. This report also publishes the federally required annual security and fire safety reports, containing campus crime and fire statistics as well as key university policies and procedures. You may access the Safety and Security brochure at <https://police.wustl.edu/clery-reports-logs/>.



#### APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Boone, NC

**American Environmental History.** Appalachian State University invites applications for a tenure-track assistant professorship in American environmental history, beginning August 2024. Ability to teach courses in area of specialization, as well as American history surveys and courses on US National Parks, required. PhD in history or a related field, teaching experience, and evidence of scholarly potential expected. In addition to instructional duties, faculty members are expected to maintain an active program of scholarship, participate in service activities, and support Appalachian State University's Strategic Priorities. Candidates who are ABD will be considered, but the position requires completion of all doctoral requirements by August 2024. Appalachian State University, in North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains, prepares students to lead purposeful lives as global citizens who understand and engage their responsibilities in creating a sustainable future for all. The transformational Appalachian experience promotes a spirit of inclusion that brings people together in inspiring ways to acquire and create knowledge, to grow holistically, to act with passion and determination, and embrace diversity and difference. As one of 17 campuses in the University of North Carolina system, Appalachian enrolls about 20,000 students, has a low student-to-faculty ratio, and offers more than 150 undergraduate and graduate majors. Appalachian State University is an AA/EOE. For a complete application, please apply and submit all required documents electronically through Appalachian State University's Job Board at <https://appstate.peopleadmin.com/postings/41534>.



The initial review of complete applications will begin on November 1, 2023, and continue until the position is filled.



## NEW JERSEY

### PRINCETON UNIVERSITY Princeton, NJ

**Soviet and Post-Soviet Union.** The Department of History at Princeton University invites applications from scholars who specialize in the history of the Soviet Union and/or the post-Soviet successor states. The candidate should be prepared to offer an undergraduate lecture course on Soviet and post-Soviet history, as well as upper-level undergraduate courses and graduate courses on the specialized aspects of the history of the USSR and the successor states. Review of files will begin October 15, 2023, and continue until the position is filled. Applicants should provide a cover letter, CV, a research statement outlining the dissertation or book as well as other relevant projects, and a copy of either the dissertation or another substantive writing sample. At least three referees should be entered into the online system, which will automatically generate requests for their letters. For candidates who do not yet have a PhD, the recommendation of the principal advisor must include precise information on the present status of the dissertation and the likelihood of completion by summer 2024. We seek faculty members who will create a climate that embraces excellence and diversity, with a strong commitment to teaching and mentoring that will enhance the work of the department and attract and retain a diverse student body. Applicants are welcome to include a brief description of how they would contribute to this goal in their cover letter. This position is subject to the university's background check policy. Princeton University is an EOE and complies with applicable equal employment and affirmative action regulations. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. Apply online at <https://www.princeton.edu/academic/positions/position/31443>.



## NEW YORK

### CORNELL UNIVERSITY Ithaca, NY

**Pre-1850 History of Science.** The Department of History at Cornell University seeks applicants for a tenure-track assistant professorship in the history of science, technology, and/or medicine before 1850, region open, to begin (July 1, 2024). We welcome applicants from all areas, including historians of natural philosophy, and those with a non-Western, Western, comparative, international, or global focus. We ask applicants for all faculty positions to share their experiences and/or approaches (past, current, or future) to fostering learning, research service, and/or outreach in a diverse community. Applicants may choose to submit a stand-alone statement or embed the information in other parts of their application materials. Applicants must apply electronically by submitting the following materials to <https://academicjobs.org/ajo/jobs/25479> not later than December 1, 2023: Cover letter describing research, teaching, and mentoring experiences and interests; current CV; writing sample (1); letters of recommendation (3).



## PENNSYLVANIA

### LEHIGH UNIVERSITY Bethlehem, PA

**Environmental History.** The Department of History and the Environmental Studies Program at Lehigh University invite applications for a tenure-track faculty position as assistant professor of history with a specialization in environmental history, effective August 15, 2024. Candidates must have an earned PhD in history or a related field by the date of employment. The geographical, thematic, and temporal focus is open. The successful candidate will be expected to teach a 2:2-equivalent load at all levels of the History Department's graduate and undergraduate curricula, as well as at all levels of the Environmental Studies Program's curriculum. This individual will help strengthen the department's and program's profiles in research, scholarship, and graduate studies, while furthering the department's and program's tradition of excellence in

both undergraduate teaching and service to the university and the profession. We welcome candidates whose work includes a transnational or global dimension, who demonstrate innovative methodologies of historical research, and who think in an integrated way about environmental history and its place across disciplinary boundaries. The Department of History features a distinctive graduate program focused on transnational history that offers both the MA and PhD degrees. Our faculty pursue interdisciplinary scholarship, and we welcome scholars with international backgrounds. The successful candidate in this search will also have the opportunity to participate in the College of Arts and Sciences' interdisciplinary programs and research centers—specifically the Environmental Studies Program, as well as Global Studies; Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Latin American and Latino Studies; Asian Studies; and Africana Studies. Founded in 1865, Lehigh University has combined outstanding academic and learning opportunities with leadership in fostering innovative research. Recognized among the nation's highly ranked research universities, Lehigh offers a rigorous academic community for nearly 7,000 students. Lehigh University has some 5,000 undergraduates, 2,000 graduate students, and about 550 full-time faculty members. Lehigh University is located in Bethlehem, PA, a vibrant and historic area. Over 820,000 people live in the Lehigh Valley, which is in close proximity to New York City and Philadelphia. To apply, please submit a cover letter, CV, an article- or chapter-length piece of scholarship, and contact information for three references by November 1, 2023, to <https://academicjobsonline.org/ajo/jobs/25461>. At a later stage of the search, selected candidates will be asked to submit letters of recommendation, further evidence of scholarship, a teaching portfolio, a research statement, and a statement of contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Review of applications will begin on November 1, 2023, and continue until the position is filled. The Department plans to hold semifinalist interviews via Zoom in early January and on-campus visits for finalists in late January and early February. Questions about the position should be directed to the search committee chair, Professor Nitzan Lebovic ([Nil210@lehigh.edu](mailto:nil210@lehigh.edu)). Lehigh University is an AA/EOE and does not discriminate on

the basis of age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital or familial status, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. We are committed to increasing the diversity of the campus community. Lehigh University is committed to a culturally and intellectually diverse academic community and is especially interested in candidates who can contribute, through their research, teaching and service, to this mission.

**History of Public Health and Medicine.** The Department of History and the Health, Medicine and Society Program at Lehigh University invite applications for a tenure-track faculty position as assistant professor of history with a specialization in the history of public health and medicine, effective August 15, 2024. Candidates must have an earned PhD in history or a directly related field by the date of employment. The geographical, thematic, and temporal focus is open. The successful candidate will be expected to teach a 2:2-equivalent load of courses at all levels of the History Department's graduate and undergraduate curricula, as well as at all levels of the Health, Medicine, and Society Program's undergraduate curriculum. We welcome candidates whose work includes a transnational or global dimension, who demonstrate innovative methodologies of historical research, and who think in an integrated way about the history of science, technology and medicine and their place across disciplinary boundaries. The successful candidate will help strengthen the department's and program's profiles in research, scholarship, and graduate studies, while furthering the department's and program's traditions of excellence in both undergraduate teaching and service to the University and the profession. The Department of History features a distinctive graduate program focused on transnational history that offers both the MA and PhD degrees. Our faculty pursue interdisciplinary scholarship, and we welcome scholars with international backgrounds. The successful candidate in this search will have the opportunity to participate in other of the College of Arts and Sciences' interdisciplinary programs and research centers besides the Health, Medicine, and Society Program, programs such as Global Studies; Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Latin American and Latino

Studies; Asian Studies; Africana Studies; and Environmental Studies and programs in the College of Health. Founded in 1865, Lehigh University has combined outstanding academic and learning opportunities with leadership in fostering innovative research. Recognized among the nation's highly ranked research universities, Lehigh offers a rigorous academic community for nearly 7,000 students. Lehigh University has some 5,000 undergraduates, 2,000 graduate students, and about 550 full-time faculty members. To apply, please submit a cover letter, CV, an article- or chapter-length piece of scholarship, and contact information for three references by October 1, 2023, to <https://academicjobsonline.org/ajojobs/25460>. At a later stage of the search, selected candidates will be asked to submit letters of recommendation, further evidence of scholarship, a teaching portfolio, a research statement, and a statement of contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Review of applications will begin on October 1, 2023, and continue until the position is filled. The department plans to hold semifinalist interviews via Zoom in late October and on-campus visits for finalists in late

November and early December. Questions about the position should be directed to the search committee chair, Professor Shellen Wu ([shw722@lehigh.edu](mailto:shw722@lehigh.edu)). Lehigh University is an AA/EOE and does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital or familial status, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. We are committed to increasing the diversity of the campus community. Lehigh University is committed to a culturally and intellectually diverse academic community and is especially interested in candidates who can contribute, through their research, teaching and service, to this mission.



**UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT**  
Burlington, VT

**Global Environmental History.** The University of Vermont's Department of History in the College of Arts & Sciences invites applications for a full-time, tenure-track member in global environmental history, at the rank of

assistant professor. Period and area of specialization are open. Candidates should hold a PhD in history or be an advanced ABD in history. Opportunities to participate in a range of interdisciplinary programs exist at the University of Vermont, depending on the successful candidate's research and teaching interests. The position will start in fall 2024. The successful candidate will possess an ability to develop a vigorous research agenda and to publish in peer-reviewed journals and author historical monographs. The successful applicant may also pursue other forms of scholarship including digital scholarship and public history projects. Engaging classroom practices that excite and inspire students in the study of history, as well as the ability to teach courses at the introductory (including the Global Environmental History survey) and advanced undergraduate and graduate levels, are also expected. Our institution is an educationally purposeful community seeking to prepare students to be accountable leaders in a diverse and changing world. We are especially interested in candidates who can contribute to the diversity and excellence of the academic community through their research, teaching, and/or service. The

College of Arts & Sciences has a strong commitment to diversity and inclusive excellence; more information can be found at <http://www.uvm.edu/cas>. The University of Vermont is an AA/EOE. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, or any other category legally protected by federal or state law. Candidates are asked to apply online at <http://www.uvmjobs.com>. Candidates will be asked to submit the following: a CV; the names and emails of three referees (who will be contacted for their letters electronically); and a letter of interest that outlines the candidate's teaching and research interests and experience, including a statement on how the candidate plans to contribute to inclusive excellence at UVM. Candidates will be asked to submit writing samples and sample course syllabi following an initial review of applications. The review of applications will begin on October 13, 2023. For more information on the position, please visit <https://www.uvmjobs.com/postings/64811>, where candidates may view the full job ad and apply for the position.

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GABRIELLE MCCOY

# THE ROSS HOUSE SLAVE QUARTERS



Tourists often visit Frederick, Maryland, to learn Civil War history, including the city's transformation into "one vast hospital" after the Battle of Antietam. Others want to see the hometown of Francis Scott Key, the author of "The Star-Spangled Banner." In their search for history, visitors often find themselves at Ross House, a three-story brick mansion on Council Street, constructed circa 1817. A plaque in front of the house proclaims that the Marquis de Lafayette visited there in 1824 and that Francis Scott Key's first cousin Eleanor Murdoch Potts resided there. What many tourists do not realize, though, is that in the back lot of Ross House stands the only known remaining slave quarters in Frederick.

The yellow-painted brick building has three original doorways and an original chimney presumably used for everyday cooking and warmth during the winters. The doorways may have led into two living spaces with a separate kitchen, but any interior walls have long since been demolished. Today, the space looks like a long hallway about six feet wide. Like many urban slave quarters, this building stands close to the main house and outbuildings including stables, an icehouse, and a smokehouse. These buildings are surrounded by a seven-foot wall constructed to keep enslaved workers on the property and under the supervision of white enslavers.

The slave quarters and other outbuildings still stand because Ross House is classified as a Maryland historic site, thanks in large part to historians and family genealogists who have biographed the white homeowners. Yet the history of this place has ignored the enslaved people who were integral to the operation of Ross House.

Although sparse records make it difficult to uncover their stories and how they moved through these spaces, we now have insight into the identities of some of the enslaved people who lived and worked at Ross House from 1817 until 1843. One of the first people enslaved here was Suck, a girl jointly

purchased on December 14, 1821, at the age of 16 by the house's first owner, John McPherson, and his son-in-law, business partner, and neighbor, John Brien. We can imagine Suck preparing meals in the slave quarters and collecting ice from the icehouse for the McPhersons. Records do not indicate that Suck was ever manumitted, so she may have resided at Ross House until 1835, when the property was sold.

The last person who lived enslaved at Ross House was a man named Notley Brown, who arrived in 1835 with his enslaver, Eleanor Murdoch Potts. Brown may have lived in the section of the slave quarters closest to the stables. Perhaps he cared for Potts's horses and drove her carriage, given he was raised in the city and thus knew it well. Brown was enslaved at Ross House until 1843, when he was manumitted at age 34 in accordance with Potts's final will. After his manumission, Brown would have faced an uncertain future as he navigated the precarious transition from enslavement to legal freedom.

Suck's and Notley Brown's stories are not directly tied to the Civil War history that so often draws tourists to Frederick, apart from slavery being a cause of the Civil War. Yet the Ross House slave quarters are a powerful physical reminder of the often overlooked history of enslavement in the city. This structure and the stories held within also remind us to be active tourists as we explore familiar and unfamiliar places. The slave quarters, unmentioned on Ross House's historic marker, are evidence that there is often more to historic places than meets the eye. So the next time you come across a historic marker, read it with a curious mind and ask what history may be unrepresented and, perhaps, yet to be discovered. **P**

*Gabrielle McCoy is a history PhD student at the University of South Carolina.*

*Photo: Gabrielle McCoy*



## Recently Published Online in *Perspectives Daily*



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# American Historical Review

## Call for Proposals: "The Mistakes I Have Made"

**The *American Historical Review* seeks proposals for a special issue of the journal on "The Mistakes I Have Made."**

Historians are trained to work carefully to avoid mistakes. With the threat of losing professional credibility, historians rarely admit to their errors, while at the same time, they are trained to expose the errors of others.

In this *AHR* special issue, we invite historians to reflect on their missteps and how they reveal insights into historical practice. We welcome stories that explore mistakes you have made, where they have taken you, and what you have made of them.

### **Procedures for Submission:**

The special issue will be in digital form only. We invite individuals or teams of scholars to propose interventions in a wide variety of textual, digital, and visual forms.

Proposals should be no more than 500 words and submitted via an online submission form.

To read the call for proposals and access the submission form, visit [historians.org/ahr-special-issue](https://historians.org/ahr-special-issue)

## **Proposals are due on December 15, 2023**

History Unclassified consulting editors Kate Brown and Emily Callaci are the editors for this special issue.

**Questions? Email [ahr@historians.org](mailto:ahr@historians.org)**