Humanities for All

Documenting the Public Humanities in Higher Education, 2017–2023

National Humanities Alliance

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Introduction

In 2017, the National Humanities Alliance began to document public humanities projects based at higher education institutions around the United States through its *Humanities for All* initiative. Through the initiative, NHA staff documented more than 2,200 projects; wrote more than 60 in-depth profiles of individual projects; published more than 80 blog posts by public humanists writing about their own work; and wrote four synthetic essays that provide context for higher ed-based public humanities work. The initiative also published a monthly Public Humanities Newsletter and two key resources for public humanities practitioners—*Approaches to Training in the Public Humanities* and *Documenting the Impact of the Public Humanities in Higher Education: A Toolkit* (both are available on the NHA website).

Humanities for All resources help students, faculty, staff, and communities understand the full range of ways that universities can partner with communities using humanities research, teaching, programming, and infrastructure. This compendium collects the synthetic essays, in-depth profiles, and a selection of blog posts originally published on HumanitiesforAll.org, along with a new resource that has not been previously available: an annotated bibliography of secondary sources on the public humanities that serves as a durable resource for students, faculty, and communities. The compendium is organized into four sections:

Essays

The four synthetic essays written by the *Humanities for All* team provide context to the field of public humanities and are grounded in examples from across our project database.

Profiles

All 62 in-depth project profiles are organized by five central goals of public humanities scholarship: informing contemporary debates, amplifying community voices and histories, helping individuals navigate difficult experiences, expanding educational access, and preserving culture in times of crisis and change.

Voices From the Field

A selection of 15 exemplary posts from the blog highlight some of the work that has been shared with *Humanities for All* over the years.

Annotated Bibliography

An annotated bibliography of secondary source texts related to the public humanities offers direction for further reading and support for those creating doctoral qualifying exam lists and syllabi.

We hope that this publication can become a teaching tool, a starting point for budding public humanists, a source of inspiration for students and scholars, and evidence of the humanities' capacity to contribute to civic and community life.

Synthetic Essays

Building off the *Humanities for All* database of over 2,000 higher-ed based public humanities projects and 62 in-depth profiles, the *Humanities for All* team authored three essays in 2018 and 2019 that explore trends across public humanities projects. These essays create a typology for public humanities projects, delve into the goals that animate public humanities projects, and explore the mutually beneficial partnerships between scholars and community organizations that underpin so much of this work. A final essay, authored in 2022, explores the role that scholarly societies play in the public humanities ecosystem, both by engaging the public directly while drawing on the tools of their disciplines and by recognizing and providing essential support to scholars who are carrying out publicly engaged work.

A Typology of the Publicly Engaged Humanities

Daniel Fisher-Livne, National Humanities Alliance

Students using Clio to discover archival materials relating to the world around them. Image courtesy of Clio.

Publicly engaged humanities work has proliferated at colleges and universities across the U.S. over the last 10 years, as the over 1,500 initiatives compiled on *Humanities for All* illustrate.

In order to foster and raise the profile of publicly engaged humanities work in U.S. higher education, *Humanities for All* offers a rich collection of examples of this work—searchable, sortable, and illustrated with select in-depth profiles. In collecting these examples, we searched existing resources that feature publicly engaged humanities work (including grants databases, conference proceedings, and publications), interviewed leaders in the field, and issued calls for participation through NHA's members. While we will continue to collect new examples to ensure that *Humanities for All* captures developments in the field, to date five distinct—but very often overlapping—types of engagement have emerged:

- **Outreach**
  scholarly programming and media for a general audience;
- **Engaged Public Programming**
  public programming in which the primary objective is not to transfer knowledge but to cultivate an exchange between facilitators and participants concerning matters of shared interest;
- **Engaged Research**
  research initiatives in which higher education faculty and students partner with community members in the creation of knowledge;

Engaged Teaching
higher education instruction involving engaged research, teaching, and public programming; and

The Infrastructure of Engagement
research and institutional structures that support engaged scholarship.

For faculty and students interested in embarking on or deepening their publicly engaged work, these five types offer a menu of possibilities that can be drawn on individually or combined. For advocates seeking to broaden narratives about the humanities in higher education, these five types can serve as a structure for articulating the public value of the humanities to students, parents, administrators, and elected officials. They can articulate the range of ways in which the humanities are addressing society's pressing concerns, broadening perceptions of what humanities work can involve and impact.

Outreach

A first and well-established type of public engagement in the humanities in U.S. higher education involves outreach: the sharing of university-created knowledge with communities. Outreach activities include:

- Lectures for public audiences on and off campus;
- Websites, apps, and podcasts for public audiences;
- Exhibitions at museums, libraries, and online;
- Books, blogs, and op-eds for the public; and
- Consulting and producing reports grounded in disciplinary knowledge for media and public partners.

The dominant mode of engagement in projects included in this category is unidirectional, that is emanating from faculty members or students outward into the community. Consider, for example, Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes at colleges and universities across the U.S. These campus-based institutes offer noncredit programs for older adults, creating opportunities for outreach and enrichment involving the humanities. However, in many cases, there is an exchange of some kind. Audience members and participants are not necessarily passive consumers of content; they can often shape programming through their participation and feedback.

For faculty and students, the experience of planning and executing outreach activities can often impact their professional practice. Barry Lam, a philosopher at Vassar College, articulates the impact of his publicly engaged work—the podcast *Hi-Phi Nation*—on his own scholarship. Podcasting offers Lam new ways to connect with audience members. In academic philosophical writing, there is a rigor that moves the field forward. Through his podcasting work, Lam has come to see the complementary value of writing that is less regimented and perhaps more likely to have a broader appeal.

Outreach can also be a component of broader programs of engaged humanities scholarship. Consider, for example, "Art of the Hunt: Wyoming Traditions"—an exhibition at the Wyoming State Museum that documents Wyoming's hunting and fishing culture, arts, and lore. The exhibition itself fits within the category of outreach,

but it was based on five years of fieldwork by University of Wyoming folklife specialist Andrea Graham and American studies master's degree students, interviewing artisans including saddle makers, taxidermists, and fly tiers. In addition to incorporating these artisans' work into the exhibition, a number also came to the museum to demonstrate their crafts and to share their stories in events supported by a grant from the Wyoming Humanities Council.

Engaged Public Programming

Engaged public programs are distinguishable from the outreach activities discussed above in that their primary objective is not to transfer knowledge but rather to cultivate an exchange between facilitators and participants concerning subjects of mutual interest. Programming of this sort has long been a key contribution of state humanities councils. For example, The Conversation Project, led by Oregon Humanities, equips Oregonians to facilitate conversations on matters of public concern.

To appreciate how this model can be implemented in higher education institutions, consider the Encounters Series at the University of Connecticut (UConn) Humanities Institute. Programs in the Encounters Series bring UConn humanities faculty into dialogue with community members about issues like citizenship and wealth inequality in the U.S. The Encounters Series is a fully collaborative and collective endeavor, produced in partnership with off-campus centers including the Hartford Public Library, the Wadsworth Atheneum, and the Amistad Center for Art & Culture. These community partners play equal roles in determining the subjects of the conversations and planning the events, in addition to building connections with the community. Each session revolves around the group analysis of a significant "text," including, among other things, writings, images, and pieces of music. Through a structured conversation in small groups with members of the Encounters team, participants share their thoughts and assemble a list of questions they would like to ask an expert. When each table is primed with questions, the Encounters team brings in a subject-matter expert from the university or the community for a discussion based on each table's questions.

Engaged Research

Engaged research—often referred to as community-based, participatory, or action research—involves collaboration between higher education faculty and students and community members that creates knowledge.

A good example of this approach is "I'm Still Surviving," a design and oral and public history project that documents, interprets, and presents women's experiences with HIV/AIDS in the U.S. Led by historian Jennifer Brier at the University of Illinois at Chicago and designer Matthew Wizinsky at the University of Cincinnati as a part of the History Moves initiative, the "I'm Still Surviving" project is a partnership with women living with HIV/AIDS in Brooklyn, NY, Chicago, IL, and Raleigh-Durham, NC. Almost all of these women have been part of the Women's Interagency HIV Study (WIHS)—a longitudinal medical research project established in 1993. With "I'm Still Surviving," the participating women become the researchers. Together with their university-based partners, they collect and analyze oral history interviews to produce books and traveling exhibitions on their experiences as women living with HIV. Through this collaborative work, "I'm Still Surviving" is broadening historical understanding of HIV/AIDS and breaking new ground in oral and public history practice.

Scribes of the Cairo Geniza represents another compelling engaged research project. The international partnership led by the University of Pennsylvania Libraries and Zooniverse mobilizes volunteer humanists to identify,

decipher, and transcribe pre-modern and medieval texts in Hebrew and Arabic script from the geniza (storeroom) of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Fustat, Egypt. These texts offer an unparalleled window into Jewish and non-Jewish cultural and commercial history in the region, especially during the 10–13th centuries. With a sample size this large, dispersed, and diverse, Samantha Blickhan of the Adler Planetarium and Zooniverse suggests that crowdsourcing presents a fruitful way forward for research and public access. "Online volunteering ... offer[s] an alternative or complementary form of engagement that has many benefits," Blickhan notes. "Online projects can reach a wider range of individuals, including those who are less able-bodied or geographically remote from the institution in which they want to volunteer and/or unable to travel. This is particularly useful for a dataset like the Geniza fragments, due to their wide range of geographic locations across institutions."

Engaged Teaching

Engaged teaching projects integrate public engagement—whether through outreach, engaged public programming, or engaged research—into undergraduate and graduate instruction. The results can enhance curricula with project-based learning that benefits both the higher education institution and the community partners.

Clio—a GPS-enabled app and website for sharing local history—is an example of a project that uses digital technologies to incorporate public engagement into undergraduate humanities classrooms. Illinois College's Jenny Barker-Devine has used Clio in a first-year classroom to create entries for significant locations in Jacksonville, IL. "Clio offered an ideal entry-level platform," Barker-Devine writes. "I wanted students to not only learn technical skills, but also to take on a local history project that would develop their research capabilities, promote civic engagement, and foster a connection with Jacksonville, the students' home for the next four years." The class's ultimate impact was significant, Barker-Devine concludes: "As they honed a variety of skills, from historical research and writing to public speaking and marketing, they came to appreciate the broader applications of history outside of the classroom and as a vehicle for civic engagement."

At California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB), engaged teaching is an integral part of the student experience through service learning that offers opportunities for personal, professional, and community development. Seth Pollack of CSUMB explains that the university's service-learning programs address issues of social responsibility and social justice. "We see service learning as a way to rethink the knowledge of your discipline through the lenses of service, social responsibility, and social justice," Pollack says. Humanities students in the museum studies program and the oral history and community memory program have become directly involved in telling a more inclusive version of the region's history through the Salinas Chinatown Oral History Project. Pollack says, "these programs have worked with the Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino immigrant communities to help build the foundation of a new Asian American museum in Salinas, which is our county seat, to be able to tell the hidden history, and the important role that these communities played in our region." This work has impacted both students and the Chinatown community in tangible ways, deepening disciplinary knowledge through service, social responsibility, and social justice; equipping students with critical skills and experience through the humanities; and helping to revitalize the neighborhood and its residents.

Publicly engaged teaching can also prepare graduate students for a variety of career paths, as Joseph Stanhope Cialdella of the University of Michigan has noted. A powerful example of this comes from the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation (WUDPAC), where public engagement is an integral component of graduate education. Art Conservation MA students build critical skills by working with

community members and their cherished items, including participating in regular no-cost conservation clinics at the Winterthur Museum and treating collections of badly damaged photographs salvaged from disasters. In 2015 and 2016, Art Conservation students helped to stabilize and conserve fire- and flood-damaged photographs—developing skills by working with real things that matter to their owners and their communities.

Infrastructure of Engagement

Colleges and universities, scholarly societies, higher education organizations, and foundations have invested in a variety of programs and institutions to support engagement activities. *Humanities for All* includes these efforts under the category of Infrastructure of Engagement. This infrastructure can involve:

- Funding for faculty- and student-engaged research, teaching, and programming;
- Recognition of engagement in policies for tenure and promotion;
- Faculty and graduate student training programs (institutes, certificates, degrees);
- Centers dedicated to engaged research, teaching, and programming;
- Event series, including lectures and other engaged public programs; and
- Conferences and consortia supporting publicly engaged scholarship;

Infrastructure can support engagement for both faculty and graduate students.

For example, a $5,000 competitive fellowship for faculty from the Center for the Humanities at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) supports work that "emphasizes sustained collaboration and partnership with community organizations, mutual respect among academic and community partners, and the recognition that knowledge and expertise are not the exclusive purview of academic practitioners." Eleanor Harrison-Buck received such an award and was later nominated by the director of the Center for the Humanities at UNH for a Whiting Public Engagement Fellowship. The Whiting Fellowship allowed her to expand on her work with Kriol communities in Belize and to develop a collaboration with Sara Clarke-Vivier, leading to the establishment of the Crooked Tree Museum and Cultural Heritage Center.

To support engaged graduate work, the University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School created the Rackham Program in Public Scholarship. Working with graduate students in all fields, the program offers a range of professional development resources, including a summer institute on public scholarship, a yearlong series of workshops on engaged teaching, and financial support for public scholarship in the form of grants and fellowships.

Scholarly societies also play key roles in creating infrastructure to support and incentivize engagement. To list a few examples on *Humanities for All,* the American Philosophical Association organized an annual public philosophy op-ed contest; the American Academy of Religion collaborates with the Religious Freedom Center of the Newseum Institute to lead the Public Scholars Project, supporting scholars of religion to communicate effectively and foster religious literacy; and the Society for Biblical Literature operates Bible Odyssey—a website where scholars present historical and literary research on the Bible for a broad audience.

Five Overlapping Types of Publicly Engaged Humanities Work

While examples of each of the five types of publicly engaged humanities work reviewed in this essay are represented on *Humanities for All*, more than one of these types are often present in a single project. By way of conclusion, it may be helpful to discuss a project that includes all five types discussed above: Baltimore Traces courses at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). These publicly engaged courses bring faculty, students, and community members together to create media and public programming on Baltimore's residents and changing neighborhoods.

Baltimore Traces courses represent an important engaged learning opportunity for UMBC students. The fall 2017 iteration of the course taught by faculty member Nicole King brought students to Baltimore's Lexington Market soon after the city announced a $40 million plan to raze and redevelop the public market. King and her students worked with the market's community of customers, vendors, and management to communicate news about the redevelopment and to explore their responses. They researched the market's history and created media and programming to share with the market community, including two public history zines, a ten-minute podcast, and a public event at the end of the semester to share student research and celebrate the community's recognition of Lexington Market. In doing so, the course included all the types of engagement listed above. First and foremost, it represents an example of engaged teaching. It involved outreach, sharing information about the market through a range of media. It involved engaged public programming, creating a humanities experience through the end-of-semester public program. It involved engaged research, including oral history research that served as the driver of the class's work. The Baltimore Traces courses have been supported by a number of internal UMBC grants, which represent examples of the infrastructure of engagement.

For practitioners in higher education, Baltimore Traces represents a model that can inspire new or broader outreach and engaged public programming, research, and teaching. It also makes clear that institutional funding creates the infrastructure necessary to support public engagement.

For advocates, Baltimore Traces courses can help make the case for the potential impact of all five types of publicly engaged humanities work. Their engaged teaching shows how the humanities connect students with their communities and provide them with hands-on experiences. Their engaged research demonstrates that the humanities can play an essential role in preserving, understanding, and amplifying a community's stories. Their public programming and outreach efforts make clear that the humanities have a key role to play in facilitating dialogue around issues of public concern. Finally, UMBC's internal funding can serve as an example in advocating for similar infrastructure on other campuses.

Humanities for All works to capture the details of projects like Baltimore Traces and the voices of those involved. As Christina Kwegan, Baltimore Traces fellow and UMBC alumna, writes in a zine produced in the fall of 2017, "I am able to combine the love I have for my city with my passion to capture meaningful stories from the city's residents and visitors. This has opened up new doors for me and given me a different perspective on parts of the city I've known my whole life." Words like hers—and those of other students, project directors, and community members who have participated in publicly engaged humanities work—capture the multi-faceted benefits of these projects for all involved.

Goals of the Publicly Engaged Humanities

Daniel Fisher-Livne, National Humanities Alliance

A visitor to the States of Incarceration exhibit listens to audio content that helps explore the local impacts of mass incarceration across the United States. Photograph by Chris Choi. Image courtesy of the Humanities Action Lab.

Across the United States, humanities faculty and students are extending the benefits of the humanities beyond the classroom by engaging diverse communities in their work. A project in Bowling Green, Kentucky, for example, is working with local Bosnian Americans to collect oral histories and artifacts and to create exhibitions that broaden understanding of their community's experience. A project on Standing Rock Reservation in North and South Dakota is working with the tribal community to document the endangered Dakota/Lakota language.

While each project has its own particular aims, as we have collected the over 1,500 initiatives in the *Humanities for All* database, we have found five overarching goals toward which nearly all of these projects work:

- Informing contemporary debates;
- Amplifying community voices and histories;
- Helping individuals and communities navigate difficult experiences;
- Expanding educational access; and
- Preserving culture in times of crisis and change.

In providing descriptions of these overarching goals and examples of projects that fit into each one, this essay offers a broad view of what humanities scholars are aiming to contribute to public life. These broad categories also offer new avenues for research into the public value of the humanities. While the individual projects featured here have particular impacts—greater community understanding in Bowling Green or the preservation of Dakota/Lakota language for future generations, for example—we hope that these broad categories will serve as ways to link humanities work to broader policy conversations.

1. Informing Contemporary Debates

Publicly engaged humanities projects aim to inform contemporary debates on issues ranging from mass incarceration to environmental change to race and identity. Faculty and students bring together diverse community stakeholders, often in collaboration with community organizations, and use the humanities to start conversations. Humanities content and methodologies can productively reorient these conversations by contextualizing concerns, encouraging participants to question previous assumptions, and enriching both disciplinary and public knowledge through discussion.

The work of the Humanities Action Lab (HAL)—a Rutgers University-Newark-based coalition of universities and community organizations—showcases the importance of collaboration with local partners to bring diverse participants to the table and to use humanities content and methodologies to facilitate conversations across difference.

HAL's States of Incarceration project, for example, facilitates conversations on mass incarceration. The project connects students and scholars with individuals impacted by incarceration in 20 cities around the country to create a traveling exhibition, web platform, and series of public dialogues exploring the roots and possible futures of mass incarceration. Associate Director Margie Weinstein explains that the project embraces humanities approaches by "bringing historical perspective to contemporary concerns to examine how the past can inform the present and understand how we got here." States of Incarceration is student- and community-driven in all 20 locations. DePaul University, for example, co-created their contribution with an Inside-Out class at Stateville Penitentiary in Crest Hill, Illinois. As the exhibition travels to HAL chapters, it continues to spark and nuance conversations about this pressing local, national, and global issue.

Florida Water Stories—a project of the University of Florida's Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere (UF CHPS) and the Florida Humanities Council—is a key example of how different humanities disciplines can each enrich public discussion for people of all ages. The program brings together students and educators in two separate week-long residential summer programs on the Gainesville campus.

History helps participants in Florida Water Stories understand the roots of Florida's contemporary relationship with water, UF CHPS Associate Director Sophia Krzys Acord explains. Religious studies, meanwhile, helps participants understand the relationships between water and sacred space—in particular how different groups including Indigenous populations have valued water and conceived of the environment. Archaeology has proven to be an especially powerful way of approaching Florida's environmental history. "Archaeologists help us to see how the issues we're facing in Florida actually are not new," Acord says. "People have been adapting to different kinds of climatic variations, different types of sea level rise, for millennia, and their lives provide valuable lessons that we could learn from in terms of living flexibly with water instead of trying to control it." During their time on campus, teachers produce "action plans" to incorporate what they've learned into existing state-approved standards for use during the school year, broadening the conversation about environmental change for children—and their families—across Florida.

To inform public debates, publicly engaged work can also draw on humanities scholarship to encourage participants to question previous assumptions about themselves and their opinions. The DNA Discussion Project, for example, opens up conversations about race and identity using commercially available DNA ancestry tests. In doing so, this work is informed by and contributes to academic research in communication concerning the perception and articulation of racial identity.

Led by Anita Foeman and Bessie Lawton of West Chester University, participants have their DNA analyzed and then come together to discuss the questions their results sometimes raise. The project begins with a pre-survey, in which facilitators ask participants what they expect and how they would define themselves racially.

When the results of the tests are shared, the group assembles to discuss the relationship between what they expected to find and what they found and to fill out a post-survey. Two types of conversations ensue, according to Foeman. The first concerns differences between expected and actual results of the DNA test. The second explores the test's potential impact. "How," Foeman asks, "does this then join you to people in unexpected or expected ways?" The conversation can be personal and can uncover things that can be uncomfortable. Discomfort is not necessarily bad, though. "If you can catch people off guard with their own story, then that's like rebooting the conversation around race," Foeman says. "Because if I don't even know what my story is, then maybe I should be a little more humble about trying to identify what box somebody else fits into."

2. Amplifying Community Voices and Histories

Many publicly engaged humanities projects are rooted in an effort to highlight stories that are under-represented in a community's understanding of its past and present. These projects generally depend on robust collaborations to foster narratives and identify artifacts with community members. The projects then bring a higher profile to these stories through public programming that introduces the community members' diverse experiences and can even shift understandings of the wider community itself.

Behind the Big House, for example, works to enrich tours of antebellum houses in Holly Springs, Mississippi by incorporating the stories of enslaved people and their quarters. Behind the Big House was created in 2012 by Chelius Carter and Jenifer Eggleston of the Hugh Craft House, a historic house in Holly Springs. Jodi Skipper of the University of Mississippi began collaborating with Carter and Eggleston in the project's first year. "I was inspired to work collaboratively with them, in an effort to remedy the paucity of sites [where] slavery [is] visible on the Mississippi landscape," Skipper says.

Skipper has helped Carter and Eggelson highlight slave dwellings in a number of ways, including integrating Behind the Big House into University of Mississippi coursework in Southern studies and African diaspora studies by, for example, bringing students to Holly Springs to serve as docents. By bringing together students and community members, this work re-inscribes African American history into the region's landscape through its slave dwellings, addressing a fundamental gap in Southern public history.

Efforts to amplify more contemporary voices can build off different research methodologies but with similar goals. In Bowling Green, Kentucky, for example, Brent Björkman of Western Kentucky University is collaborating with local Bosnian Americans to showcase their traditional arts and culture. The project developed out of a chance encounter between Björkman and Denis Hodžić of the Bowling Green Bosnian American community. As the two spoke, they resolved to work together to help Hodžić's community tell its story through oral history research. In monthly meetings with partners from the university and the community, community members learned oral

history methods and conducted interviews. As members of the Bosnian American community participated in the oral history project, they had the opportunity to reflect on their experiences and cultural traditions in Bosnia and Kentucky. In late September 2017, the community came together to open "A Culture Carried: Bosnians in Bowling Green" at Western Kentucky University's Kentucky Museum. The exhibition shared the community's rich and, at times, difficult history through their arrival in Bowling Green, broadening conceptions of what it means to be a Kentuckian.

In Newark, New Jersey, Newest Americans shares A Culture Carried's goal of broadening perceptions of a community, executing its vision through an innovative public-private "multimedia collaboratory" led by Tim Raphael of Rutgers University-Newark, Julie Winokur of Talking Eyes Media, and Ed Kashi of VII Photo.

Working across humanities and arts disciplines, the project brings together faculty, students, journalists, media-makers, and artists to tell the stories of Newark's residents and university students who are migrants and immigrants from all around the world living together in an urban metropolis. Through classes at Rutgers University-Newark and community events and collaborations, the project creates high-quality media to celebrate Newark as a global city in which, Raphael writes, "the newest Americans from all over the world are acquiring a college education and social mobility." With this goal, the project involves students in fellowships and courses that research, identify, and communicate the city's stories in the archives and in the community: what Raphael calls "activating the archives."

3. Helping Individuals and Communities Navigate Difficult Experiences

Humanities scholars and students are also engaged in a variety of efforts that use humanities pedagogies, methodologies, and content to support individuals and communities as they navigate difficult experiences. This approach has been used effectively in efforts to engage and support veterans. Another approach to supporting individuals and communities draws on the intercultural and language expertise developed through the humanities, often to connect with immigrant or refugee populations and offer them support in a variety of ways.

The efforts of English faculty from South Dakota State University are emblematic of programs for veterans that facilitate reflection and support veterans in sharing their experiences. SDSU's Veterans' Writing Workshop/Book Club engages veterans in creative writing and guided discussions of literature and films about war that help members of the armed forces community express themselves and explore their experiences. Undergraduate aviation major and student veteran Paul McKnelly recalls that a simple conversation about an essay "turned into a conversation about life. I really recognized it right away as therapeutic to everybody that was there. It could be used as a tool for checks and balances—hey, how are you doing; how's life—it was a great experience for me."

Other approaches to supporting individuals and communities in navigating difficult experiences involve service learning opportunities for students of world languages and cultures. At North Carolina State University, Spanish language and culture students partner with organizations that address the needs of the Hispanic community through Voluntarios Ahora en Raleigh (VOLAR). This work is mutually beneficial. For the Hispanic community, the program offers organizational support. For NCSU students, the program offers opportunities to gain professional experience and exposure to Spanish language and culture.

The University of Texas at Austin's Refugee Student Mentor Program, meanwhile, connects university students studying Middle Eastern languages, cultures, and histories with K–12 students who are refugees from the Middle East. Roughly 70 undergraduate and graduate students serve as mentors in Austin Independent School District

(AISD) schools each year, supporting existing English as a Second Language programs for Arabic, Persian, Pashto, and Dari speaking students and their families.

Working in 16 AISD schools, UT-Austin volunteers typically mentor one to three students. Following an on-campus orientation focusing on regional dialects, cultures, and how to respond to some of the typical experiences of refugees, the UT-Austin students help in any way they can. "They go according to their schedule and meet with students as mentors and tutors. Sometimes they are in classes helping students to understand assignments," Katie Aslan of the UT-Austin Center for Middle Eastern Studies says. "They are also a social support. Occasionally, they will have lunch with students. They're just there as a friendly face, someone who understands their background and their culture. A lot of work is sitting with students and helping with specific assignments. But they also work with teachers. If a teacher has a particular task that they think their student might need help with, they might talk to one of the mentors and have them help out with that." These experiences buttress UT-Austin students' coursework in languages and cultures of the Middle East, exposing students to, for example, varieties of spoken Arabic and the kinds of interactions they would not get in the classroom or even by studying abroad.

4. Expanding Educational Access

A number of publicly engaged humanities projects work to broaden access to college-level humanities pedagogy, recognizing that the study of the humanities engenders lifelong benefits but is inaccessible to many. Several programs are modeled on Clemente Courses in the Humanities, which offer college-level humanities courses to people facing economic hardship. Faculty members at colleges and universities across the country tailor the Clemente model to meet particular local needs. Other projects make particular humanities disciplines more accessible to K–12 students: fields like ethics, philosophy, and anthropology are not available to the vast majority of pre-collegiate students, but access to these fields introduces them to new ways of thinking and opportunities for academic engagement. Efforts to broaden access are often designed for teachers. The University of Florida's Florida Water Stories program discussed above helps K–14 teachers develop curricula that include religious studies, archeology, and anthropology. Other efforts involve direct engagement between scholars, college students, and K–12 students, either in the classroom or in extra-curricular activities.

The University of Notre Dame's World Masterpieces Seminar at the South Bend Center for the Homeless is an example of a program modeled on the Clemente Course that works to address a particular community's need. The South Bend Center program offers a version of Notre Dame's undergraduate Great Books seminars. Focusing on the reading and discussion of great works of literature. The program creates learning opportunities for the Center's residents to earn Notre Dame credit and to build community, self-confidence, and critical life skills that learning in the humanities endows. They are operated as interactive undergraduate seminars, a format that builds enthusiasm by encouraging residents to see themselves as students. Enrollment is open to all the Center's homeless residents, with free on-site childcare available.

Co-founder of the program, Stephen Fallon explains that the project is driven by the conviction that the humanities create positive change. "We have a strong belief that humanities are important politically speaking. Not in terms of right or left, but in terms of enfranchising people to join the public conversation," Fallon notes. "We believe that students who are empowered by reading classic texts will gain more of a voice and confidence to address issues in the public. We have found that students report growing in self-confidence and in the sense of belonging to a larger intellectual community."

Operating on a similar model, numerous projects provide incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals access to humanities educational opportunities. For incarcerated individuals, Columbia University's Justice-in-Education Initiative offers courses in local prisons. For formerly incarcerated individuals, Columbia also offers on-campus skills-intensive and humanities gateway courses. The cost of these courses is covered by the university. Those who complete the program are advised on ways to continue learning, at times through cost-free courses at Columbia.

The National High School Ethics Bowl, meanwhile, creates extra-curricular ethics learning opportunities for high school students who do not otherwise have access to the study of philosophy. The program, headquartered at the Parr Center for Ethics at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, brings high school students together to discuss complex ethical dilemmas after school and in regional and national competitions. In preparation for these competitions, participating high school students meet throughout the year with coaches from the community and local universities, colleges, and high schools to discuss cases produced at the Parr Center for Ethics. This programming broadens the traditional high school curriculum with the humanities, empowering students across the country to form and discuss positions on complex social problems.

5. Preserving Culture in Times of Crisis and Change

In times of crisis and change, humanities faculty and students have partnered with community members to undertake scholarship that is both integral to their disciplines and preserves culture in the U.S. and around the world. This dynamic drives a range of projects listed above, including, for example, Western Kentucky University's work with the Bosnian-American community of Bowling Green or Jodi Skipper's support of Behind the Big House. Partnerships with communities can often enhance preservation efforts, building trust and resources and creating channels for ongoing engagement with cultural heritage including Native languages and at-risk archeological sites in conflict zones.

On the Standing Rock Reservation in North and South Dakota, Sitting Bull College is invigorating the endangered Dakota/Lakota language. In partnership with the last generation of fluent speakers, the Standing Rock Dakota/Lakota Language Project is creating original indigenous language resources by collecting traditional texts and recording conversations between Elders with the goal of inspiring new Dakota/Lakota learners. The project is led by Michael Moore, Mark Holman, and Elder and language instructor Gabe Black Moon, who see the project's preservation of Dakota/Lakota language and culture as more pressing than ever. "We're losing Native speakers at a very rapid rate," Moore says. "This project is creating and preserving the knowledge of the Elders—the way the Elders spoke, the idioms that they used, and so on—in order to provide a base for these younger people."

Consider also the Emmett Till Memory Project, led by Dave Tell of the University of Kansas and Patrick Weems of the Emmett Till Memorial Commission. Plaques marking the people, places, and events surrounding the murder of Emmett Till have been vandalized since their installation in 2007: sprayed with bullets, scraped of their words, and even uprooted and thrown in the nearby river. Mobilizing methodologies of historical, communication, and digital humanities research, the Emmett Till Memory Project creates digital memorials that cannot be defaced. These digital memorials are currently available through the Field Trip app. Phase two, which will help users grapple with the perspectives of different historical figures, is in development.

ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives also illustrate the potential impact of the publicly engaged humanities during periods of crisis, in this case in anthropology. Working in the conflict zones of Syria, Northern Iraq, and Libya, the

initiatives document, protect, and promote global awareness of at-risk cultural property including museums, libraries, and archaeological, historic, and religious sites. ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives work with stakeholders in the Middle East to protect all cultural property from both accidental and deliberate destruction as the region remains engulfed in conflict. The project team understands the protection of cultural heritage to be a matter of crucial importance, Principal Investigator Michael Danti explains. "We see what we're doing as a highly integrated and inextricable part of a larger humanitarian effort," Danti says. "We see access to cultural heritage and cultural expression as a fundamental human right that … has been deliberately attacked and/or suppressed through the course of this conflict."

Conclusions

Through publicly engaged research, teaching, preservation, and programming, humanities faculty and students are directing their expertise and resources to create positive change across the U.S. This mutually beneficial work aims to inform contemporary debates surrounding a range of pressing issues, amplify the voices and histories of new and long-standing American communities, support individuals and communities navigating difficult experiences, expand educational access for students in K–12 schools and beyond, and preserve cultural heritage in times of crisis and change.

The outcomes and impacts of the individual projects highlighted here are remarkable in their own right. They can be invoked as examples of what humanities faculty and students can offer particular communities and populations. They can also be invoked to shift perceptions of the humanities in contemporary higher ed institutions. They show that the benefits of the humanities in higher ed extend beyond the benefits conferred to individual students who study the humanities. Yes, humanities majors excel both personally and professionally; however, the humanities in higher ed institutions also aim to serve their broader communities every day and in times of crisis.

At the same time, we are hopeful that the overarching categories articulated here will move us toward more precise understandings of how the humanities enrich public life. To this end, this essay has worked to not only identify the goals animating the projects in *Humanities for All*, but also the humanities methodologies that scholars and students employ when working to achieve those goals. By articulating what the scholars themselves aim to accomplish and linking their work to these broader categories, we hope to articulate pathways for describing and documenting the impacts of humanities work. Further, we hope that these pathways will help connect this work to broader policy discussions. Better understanding the role of the publicly engaged humanities in providing educational access, for example, can intersect with broader debates in educational policy and even criminal justice reform. Similarly, the unique role of the humanities play in preserving culture in times of crisis and change makes clear that the humanities should be well-integrated into plans for disaster mitigation.

We look forward to identifying additional intersections and refining the categories here—and perhaps adding additional ones—as we continue to collect examples of publicly engaged work.

Partnership and Publicly Engaged Humanities Work

Daniel Fisher-Livne, National Humanities Alliance

Putnam County resident Mrs. Georgia Benjamin Smith, speaks with Putnam County Charter School System students at the Uncle Remus Museum, Eatonton, GA in 2016. Image courtesy the Willson Center for Humanities and Arts.

Partnerships drive the publicly engaged humanities initiatives collected in the *Humanities for All* database. As a window into publicly engaged humanities work, this essay introduces four examples of public partnerships drawn from *Humanities for All*. These initiatives involve a wide variety of on- and off-campus partners, including colleges of education, research and public libraries, K–12 schools and school systems, community organizations and centers, and individual community members. In all cases, however, they draw on shared knowledge and resources to advance particular academic and public objectives.

For humanities faculty and students, these case studies offer windows into the origins and potential benefits of publicly engaged humanities work. In communities across the country, these partnerships have taken different paths and forms. Some originate in higher education institutions, with scholars proposing collaborations to community partners. Others originate in the communities themselves. Across these diverse contexts, these four partnerships have led to the creation of new humanities knowledge and benefits for partner organizations, students, and communities. They have broadened awareness and preservation of local history, working with and for local communities to tell their stories. They are creating new and more relevant K–12 resources, drawing on the expertise of educators at all levels. They are preserving cultural heritage, creating a more representative regional history, and training new community leaders. Their work challenges academic partners to share authority and responsibility for their work, a shift that can help to both address past inequalities and injustices and to create new broader, more inclusive humanities knowledge.

An American Literary Landscape

In Putnam County, Georgia, the University of Georgia's Willson Center for Humanities and Arts is partnering with the local K–12 school system to explore the region's history and literary heritage through its initiative, An American Literary Landscape. The writer Alice Walker was born and raised in Putnam County, and the project explores the world in which Walker grew up through the collection and exhibition of images depicting African American life in Putnam County. The images depict the people and places that made up the world of her grandparents, her parents, and her peers. By conducting and curating oral histories using these images as prompts, An American Literary Landscape is raising awareness of the region's rich literary and cultural heritage and establishing this heritage as an asset for its schools and the wider community. The initiative is a partnership between the Willson Center (with collaboration on campus from the UGA Libraries and the College of Education) and the Putnam County Charter School System, the Eatonton-Putnam County Historical Society, and Georgia Humanities. It has benefited from funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

An American Literary Landscape was proposed and is directed in partnership between UGA and school system staff, including Christopher Lawton and TJ Kopcha. Willson Center Executive Director Nicholas Allen explains, "The school system is the seedbed of everything. It is the community and the location, and it provides the students, teachers, parents, and fellow citizens who are engaged in the program, which has had a definable positive effect on many individuals." On-campus partners have also been crucial to An American Literary Landscape. "The College of Education has been powerful in creating structures that teachers can use in their classes for programs and assessment, in particular in shaping these practices to fit in with state requirements, and so not adding more work to an already deeply committed group," Allen explains.

An American Literary Landscape benefited partners in ways that were both expected and unexpected, according to Allen. Students in Putnam County have benefited from a rich and locally grounded humanities experience. Their school system benefited from the curriculum that grew out of this work, as well as the positive publicity and publication opportunities for staff members. On the benefits to the campus community, Allen notes: "[W]e benefited most from being part of a diverse and engaged public humanities project that taught us a lot about planning and alliances, and also gave us a local story to tell nationally, which has had other positive effects. And our Board of Friends really gets the project, and likes that it follows our larger mission, which is to engage all our citizens in humanities partnerships."

The work also built on—and offered perspective to—Allen's own scholarship, which is in the literature of Ireland. "I would say … that the basis of that study prepared me to see the necessity, and the benefit, of engaging advanced thinking in literature and history in communities that desired a transformation in their self-perception," Allen notes. "This was one basis of the Irish revolution in cultural terms and the logic applies as much to rural Georgia as it did to rural Ireland, which is to say that the imagination applied to local problems can lead to unexpected opportunities for creative minds to reshape their circumstances, if only as a dream for the future. That dream has become an unfolding reality in this project, with who knows what consequences for the economy and the community in Putnam County for the future."

In the context of these shared benefits, Allen explains that building partnerships like this one challenges scholars to be cognizant of the legacy of past injustices. "It is a constant responsibility to be aware of this, to try and make as few missteps as possible (and some missteps perhaps are part of our own continuing education), and to attend persistently to the voices you speak with and listen to. This is all the more complicated within diverse institutional and community settings, which are themselves complex and shifting terrains."

(Dis)placed Urban Histories

In New York City, "(Dis)placed Urban Histories" courses at New York University bring faculty and students together with community organizations to document the city's changing neighborhoods. In addition to conducting research in libraries and archives, students in faculty member Rebecca Amato's courses collaborate with community partners as they create an online archive, a physical exhibition, and walking tours. "I usually frame it as a community-engaged teaching and learning opportunity," Amato explains. "The idea is to use history, public history, or the humanities to engage the communities with whom we're partnering in telling their own stories and then using those stories to build common purpose and advocate for themselves and their neighbors."

"(Dis)placed Urban Histories" has been taught in partnership with two organizations that focus on housing and land use issues, first Southside United HDFC ("Los Sures") and then Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco). The two relationships have different origins, Amato notes. "In the case of Southside United HDFC, I'd heard that they had just opened up a museum space in one of the buildings they manage. This space was actually a basement storefront that they were calling 'El Museo de Los Sures' and they envisioned the space holding exhibitions about the history of the Latinx community in South Williamsburg. However, they were having difficulty finding people who could do this work, as well as staffing the space." Amato saw this as an opportunity to help Los Sures realize its vision while providing a meaningful experience for her students. The project with WHEDco grew out of a conversation Amato had in the course of directing a fellowship program. As Amato discussed the possibility of placing a fellow with WHEDco, Kerry McLean, WHEDco's vice president for community development, mentioned their ambitions for an oral history project. Amato noted, "I volunteered my class and the rest fell into place."

In helping to set goals for their projects and determining their form, both Los Sures and WHEDCo played substantive roles in shaping the project and contributing to it. Both organizations helped identify candidates for oral history interviews. WHEDCo staff members also assisted with the logistics of the class and exhibition and sat in and talked to the (Dis)placed Urban Histories students. They were involved in all stages of the course, clarifying goals before and debriefing after each time Amato taught the course with WHEDCo.

In sharing leadership of this work, Amato stresses the importance of honoring community-based knowledge and expertise. "Working with a community partner is a process in which the scholar is not the expert, or even a researcher, so much as a student. The lessons I learn each time are really about humility. For one thing, what knowledge is and how it is kept is not always what scholars might consider legitimate. A photo album accompanied by its owner and its owner's spoken description of the photos is a kind of knowledge-making and -keeping. Knowing which neighborhood gang you should join to secure housing for your young family in a dangerous neighborhood is another kind of knowledge. And how—or if—you record that knowledge decades later is more than an academic decision. So, ultimately, I benefited from being reminded that my knowledge is limited by a certain dominant perspective that is validated within a scholarly and, for lack of a better term, mainstream setting. But, for most people, knowledge is something very alive, very necessary for navigating everyday life, identity, and community ties. I stress all of the above in teaching."

"[A] community partnership has to be built on mutual trust and a willingness on the part of a scholar to do the hard emotional work of not being in charge."

This can require scholars to set personal professional goals to the side and to step back, Amato says. "[A] community partnership has to be built on mutual trust and a willingness on the part of a scholar to do the hard emotional work of not being in charge." This might mean that the course of the project is different than initially

imagined, Amato continues: "The goal is to change the stakes of what it means to be a scholar and to disassemble the walls between universities and the rest of the city. To use a popular term, I do this work to decolonize knowledge-making, knowledge-keeping, and the institutions that are responsible for setting the unequal terms of what these practices mean. As a cisgender, heterosexual, middle-class, white woman in the public humanities, I cannot make these partnerships all about me. If I do, I simply perpetuate a structure of power that has long existed and needs desperately to change."

To ensure that the project would be mutually beneficial, Amato worked with the organizations to pre-determine the goals of the project. "For Los Sures, our collaboration allowed the organization to use the museum space they had constructed in a way that was consistent with their vision for it," Amato noted. "For WHEDco, oral history was the whole point of the collaboration and that's precisely what my students produced. More than that, WHEDco could see the value I saw in using interviews and humanities practices, such as archiving, exhibition, and historical research, to organize their current community. Having that shared vision early on meant that we were both served by the result. As for the students, I have heard only good things about how the course helped them understand urban planning policy and gentrification better, while also introducing them to some of the people whose lives are directly affected by affordable housing construction, urban renewal, rezoning, and displacement pressure."

Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project

In Southwest Virginia, Gregory Samantha Rosenthal of Roanoke College is helping to lead a grassroots community-based public history initiative to tell the stories of Roanoke's LGBTQ+ individuals and organizations. The Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project's primary partners are individual community members, the Roanoke Public Library, and the Roanoke Diversity Center, an LGBTQ+ community organization. The project, organized through democratic monthly community meetings held at the Roanoke Public Library, has produced a digital and physical archive, collected oral histories, and offered walking tours and public programs including re-creations of LGBTQ+ social events from Roanoke's past.

The project is community-led, Rosenthal says. "Since our very first meeting, we've invited people from the LGBTQ community to come out and they have set the agenda for what we work on," Rosenthal notes. "We're very focused on the ideal of democracy in doing this work and making sure that LGBTQ+ people are the leaders in this project and are taking the lead and are telling the stories about our community."

There is also a broader reason for ensuring that community members take the lead. "Our project is about creating leaders and empowering leadership," Rosenthal explains. "The goal here is to pass on skills. In fact, we have volunteers who are involved in accessioning archival collections, digitizing and putting in the metadata for digital collections, leading public walking tours, and conducting oral history interviews. These are all things I learned to do in graduate school studying public history, but they're things we have trained young LGBTQ+ people in the community who are not affiliated with the university to do. It provides a sense of ownership over these stories. We feel that LGBTQ+ history is our community's story and it's on us as LGBTQ+ people to decide how we want to tell the story."

While individual community members guide the project, the project's organizational partners have played important roles. The Roanoke Diversity Center's role in the project's history was formative, Rosenthal explains: "The Roanoke Diversity Center, in fact, hosted the initial Roanoke LGBT History Project event that I facilitated in September 2015 at which the 18 people in attendance decided to found the Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+

History Project." The Roanoke Public Library has provided archival expertise and labor, hosted the oral history collections produced by the project, and has been the site for most of the project's meetings.

The formation of these partnerships with the public library was an intentional process, Rosenthal explains. "The Virginia Room, which is a regional archive within the Roanoke Public Library, was very receptive to working with us. We arranged a tour of the archives for some of our LGBTQ+ elders so that they could see what it's like before deciding on going with Roanoke Public Library for our needs. Once we decided to partner with Roanoke Public Library, they have been great about amending forms to fit our needs, such as allowing for chosen names, and for varied privacy options, for both donors and oral history narrators."

The Roanoke Diversity Center has continued to play a key role in the project. Initially, the center served as the drop-off point for materials to be archived in the Virginia Room at the Roanoke Public Library. Though these materials now go directly to the library, Rosenthal says the center continues to play a key role. It hosts the Roanoke LGBT Memorial Library, a 3,000-volume community lending library the project helped to preserve and move into the center, and continues to help manage. The Roanoke Diversity Center also provides space for the project's community outreach events and social media support.

Each partner has benefited in concrete ways as well, Rosenthal says: "The library had no LGBTQ archival or oral history collections before our project. We have helped the Roanoke Public Library expand its collections and thus serve a broader regional audience. We have also brought a lot of LGBTQ people into the library doors for meetings and archival work." For the Roanoke Diversity Center, the project helps bring people to the community center. "Every event we plan and hold at the Roanoke Diversity Center helps add events to their calendar," Rosenthal notes. "We bring diverse LGBTQ people into the Roanoke Diversity Center's doors. We manage their library. … We have provided a lot of volunteer hours to helping the Roanoke Diversity Center over the past four years. When the Roanoke Diversity Center was the sponsor of a summer camp for LGBTQ youth (which has now broken off to become its own organization), we also facilitated LGBTQ history workshops at the camp: one of our favorite programs!"

While Rosenthal emphasizes that the Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project is itself a community, rather than a university-based initiative, Roanoke College and Rosenthal's academic work have benefited from the initiative. Roanoke College students have conducted oral histories and served as paid research assistants. The project has also shaped Rosenthal's book project on the theory and practice of doing queer public history. "[S]o many of the chapters in my book look very carefully and critically at the politics and ethics of doing just this kind of community work," Rosenthal notes.

Great World Texts in Wisconsin

Great World Texts in Wisconsin is a project of the University of Wisconsin–Madison Center for the Humanities. In partnership with high school educators and on-campus units and curricular experts, the initiative brings literature from around the world to life in high school classrooms across the state. Focusing on different texts each year, UW–Madison scholars produce an educators' guide and a series of on-campus programs for high school teachers and their classes. Through the adaptation and implementation of the year's curriculum, new pedagogical and curricular engagements with literature are forged in classrooms statewide.

The project's primary partners are the high school educators themselves, who are the engines of curricular creativity and innovation around the year's text. In 2018–2019, the project partnered with 33 high schools.

Schools have ranged from small rural charter schools to large urban Catholic schools. The program is dedicated to providing them with copies of the book and a curriculum that is useful to the teachers. The schools continually shape the program through innovative pedagogy. In implementing and adapting the Great World Texts curriculum in their individual classrooms, Aaron Fai, assistant director of public humanities at the UW–Madison Center for the Humanities, observes that teachers develop new curricular approaches to the study of literature. "We have been impressed over the last several years by Southern Door High School, who each year completes a group project involving the entire class—last year, in response to Rachel Carson's Silent Spring, they learned how to make beauty products from local, organic materials, and taught themselves the business skills to market and sell the finished products."

The project also partners with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and on-campus units such as the University of Wisconsin Libraries. DPI has helped reach out to high school teachers and evaluate the curriculum since the inception of the program. Aaron Fai explains, "We invite DPI to each stage of the program (fall colloquium, spring student conference, and any planning meetings) and every several years, they help us evaluate the content of the program. Most recently in 2015, they helped us evaluate our curriculum against common core standards, and ensured that we were meeting statewide educational standards." In the past, the partnership with the UW Libraries helped to purchase books for high schools and to collect and display rare materials relating to the year's text for high school teachers, informing their teaching. Fai notes that this partnership is growing: "We now have a librarian liaison who will help with the selection of each text, as well as find us a regional librarian who will assist with the writing of our curricular guide for that year's text."

Conclusions

The four examples highlighted here showcase the many ways publicly engaged humanities projects benefit both academic and community partners. (Dis)Placed Urban Histories in New York City is engaging both undergraduate students and community organizations focusing on housing and land use, informing practice with library, archival, and oral history research. An American Literary Landscape in Putnam County, Georgia, preserved and provided access to a critical period in Georgia's literary cultural history while creating locally-grounded curricular innovations, positive publicity, and publishing opportunities for the Putnam County Charter School System. Madison's Great World Texts in Wisconsin is helping the university serve its state by enriching literature curricula for its high school students in partnership with high school educators across the state. The Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project in Roanoke, Virginia is preserving culture, building community, and creating new resources and community spaces. It is clear that the directors of these projects value their partners, leading to processes and outcomes that recognize the contributions of all involved and that work to ensure that historical power imbalances are not reproduced.

Scholarly Societies and the Public Humanities

National Humanities Alliance

Third grade students from South Loop Elementary School in Chicago visiting the Glessner House Museum, as part of the Society of Architectural Historians American Architecture and Landscape Field Trip Program, 2017. Photo by Michele Rudnick for Glessner House Museum.

Our *Humanities for All* initiative is dedicated to documenting the landscape of publicly engaged work in higher ed as well as learning about the infrastructure that supports that work—from public humanities training programs to national grant programs and campus-based centers. Scholarly societies are key players in the field. They both engage the public directly by drawing on the tools of their disciplines and provide essential support to scholars in carrying out and gaining recognition for their publicly engaged work. Building off a review of scholarly societies' activities and a set of follow-up focus groups, this essay offers a synthetic view of the work scholarly societies carry out in both categories. In offering examples of projects and initiatives that fall under these two types of work, we aim to provide a resource for scholarly societies so they can consider their own work in the context of their peers and for scholars to explore ways in which they can partner with and gain support from their own disciplinary societies.

Engaging Public Audiences

Scholarly societies work to ensure that a wide range of publics, from lawmakers to K–12 students to community

organizations, have the opportunity to engage with their discipline. At times, scholarly societies draw on knowledge generated in their academic discipline to weigh in on policy questions, inform public discussion, or enhance K–12 curricula. At others, scholarly societies develop mutually beneficial partnerships with community organizations and other partners beyond academia with the goal of co-creating curricula and research. Here we offer examples that fall into both categories.

With the goal of reaching policymakers, scholarly societies often harness disciplinary knowledge to take public stands on questions of contemporary law and policy. These efforts most commonly take the form of a policy statement or an amicus brief. In 2015, the American Sociological Association (ASA) filed an amicus brief with the Supreme Court in relation to its hearing of Obergefell v. Hodges, the landmark case that led to the national legalization of same-sex marriage. The ASA brief "highlights the social science consensus that children raised by same-sex parents fare just as well as children raised by different-sex parents." Similarly, in October 2019, the American Historical Association (AHA) joined Seattle University's Korematsu Center for Law and Equality, the Organization of American Historians (OAH), and several individual historians on an amicus brief supporting respondents in Department of Homeland Security, et al. Petitioners v. Regents of the University of California, et al. Respondents. The collaborative brief explains "the relationship between the history of anti-Mexican and Latinx racism and the use of related racist code words in the decision to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program." In September 2021, AHA and OAH became signatories to an amicus brief in the Supreme Court case Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization. This brief worked to provide a historical perspective as the Court considered the state of Mississippi's challenge to a woman's right to abortion, as protected by Roe v. Wade.

Scholarly societies also issue policy resolutions and public statements that demonstrate a constituent-wide stance on a particular event or piece of legislation. Many scholarly societies follow board-approved guidelines that target their efforts to areas where disciplinary knowledge can inform a debate or where a policy or situation directly affects the professional lives of its members. In response to the backlash against teaching about racism and related histories in K–12 classrooms, the American Studies Association published a Resolution on Defending Academic Freedom Against Attacks on "Critical Race Theory," developed in solidarity with the #TruthBeTold campaign of the African American Policy Forum. These resolutions are also occasionally co-authored by a number of organizations, such as the Joint Statement on Efforts to Restrict Education about Racism issued by the American Association of University Professors, PEN America, the American Historical Association, and the Association of American Colleges & Universities. Usually, one organization with particular expertise in an area will take the lead and other organizations will sign onto the statement to show their support.

Scholarly societies also work to reach broad publics with their disciplinary knowledge to enrich public conversation about contemporary issues. The National Communication Association (NCA) produces a "Concepts in Communication" video series, which it circulates to media organizations to support their efforts to explain social phenomena such as microaggressions, digital anxiety, and navigating the proliferation of misleading news sources. The American Musicological Society (AMS) partners with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame on a lecture series for the general public that highlights the work of musicologists that intersects with the collections of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame museum and archives. During the COVID-19 pandemic, societies have also produced virtual webinars and conversation series that have attracted a wide non-member audience, such as the Latin American Studies Association's (LASA) Dialogues series on topics ranging from the Biden presidency's effect on Latin America to racism and anti-racism in Brazil.

Another key audience that scholarly societies have worked to engage in their disciplines is K–12 students. For disciplines without a presence in K–12 classrooms, scholarly society outreach can be the first introduction to the field for K–12 students. The Society for Ethnomusicology uses its annual meeting as an opportunity for scholars to visit schools in the meeting host cities and to hold a workshop for local K–12 teachers. In addition, it invites students from predominantly minority-serving high schools to the meeting for a "Day of Ethnomusicology," which enables them to learn about career opportunities in the discipline. At the Society for Architectural Historians (SAH), donor-funded grants support K–12 engagement programs, including the American Architecture and Landscape Field Trip Program. SAH partners with other nonprofit organizations that offer design education, architectural history, and historic preservation programs to youth and docent-led tours of architecture, parks, gardens, neighborhoods, and town and city centers. Since receiving funding in 2014, the initiative has supported hundreds of architecture and landscape field trips for underserved students in grades 3 through high school.

In addition to sharing disciplinary knowledge with a range of public audiences, scholarly societies also build collaborative relationships with community organizations and other partners beyond academia where participating organizations and academics exchange resources and ideas. The American Academy of Religion, for example, assembled a task force of K–12 teachers through a partnership with the Religious Freedom Center at the Newseum to create a set of literacy guidelines for teaching religion. The fifty-page document, developed by the task force over a period of two years, addresses why teaching religion is important, the distinction between a devotional approach to religion and a non-devotional religious studies approach appropriate for public schools, as well as skills- and content-based approaches to teaching about religion.

In addition to enhancing pedagogy, partnerships of this sort have advanced research as well. Working in the conflict zones of Syria, Northern Iraq, and Libya, the American Schools of Overseas Research Cultural Heritage Initiatives (ASOR CHI) documents, protects, and promotes global awareness of at-risk cultural property, including museums, libraries, and archaeological, historic, and religious sites. ASOR CHI issues monthly reports to the U.S. Department of State, which are redacted and posted online. These reports outline the status of damage and threats to cultural heritage in conflict zones and are used by organizations such as UNESCO, Interpol, and Europol. Similarly, members of the American Folklore Society (AFS) have joined the Southwest Folklife Alliance in partnership with the Surdna Foundation, the Highlander Research and Education Center, and the Othering & Belonging Institute to facilitate Participatory Action Research (PAR) training for Black, Indigenous, and people of color researchers nationally and in the U.S./Mexico border corridor. PAR is a methodology that challenges the idea that academics or trained professionals are solely equipped to do research. Rather, PAR "recognizes that people whose lives are most affected by inequities, barriers, and problems already hold deep knowledge through their own lived experience." By combining folklore and PAR research methods, the initiative celebrates everyday cultural expressions in the Greater Southwest while equipping participants with cultural documentation tools that lead to personal enrichment and social action.

One of the most visible public humanities initiatives carried out by a scholarly society has been the American Anthropological Association's (AAA) museum exhibition "Race: Are We So Different?" Created in 2007 as part of AAA's public education initiative, the traveling exhibition has reached over three million visitors on human biological variation and the history of race as social construction. Over time, it has grown to include an interactive website and K–12 educational materials. After the success of this initiative, AAA has created a second public education initiative on migration and displacement in collaboration with the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Culture Heritage and the American Library Association. Taking a case study approach to present stories of

migration throughout human history, World on the Move includes a traveling exhibition, a podcast, and curricular resources.

Supporting Publicly Engaged Scholars and Scholarship

In addition to engaging public audiences directly, scholarly societies have developed a variety of approaches to supporting their members in engaging with public audiences. Taken as a whole, these efforts encourage recognition of publicly engaged work in their field and give their members the tools to more fully engage with public audiences.

Several scholarly societies have leveraged their authority to promote recognition for publicly engaged work in the tenure and promotion process—thereby aligning professional incentives with their interest in pursuing publicly engaged projects. Through a collaboration, the AHA, the National Council on Public History (NCPH), and the OAH produced tenure and review guidelines for the evaluation of history professors. The ASA and the Modern Language Association (MLA) have also produced guidelines, with the MLA's resource placing emphasis on digital humanities scholarship. In a similar vein, the American Philosophical Association (APA) offers a statement on valuing public philosophy. The APA's statement was developed by two APA committees working on public philosophy and issues in the profession, and is offered as a subject-specific resource for faculty to use to advocate within their departments and institutions for the support of public humanities scholarship. Across these guidelines, societies urge universities and academic departments to create tenure and review guidelines that evaluate scholarship as a process rather than as a product. With an eye towards process, scholarship that engages in community-partnered work can be evaluated for its mutually beneficial impacts, with departments celebrating practitioners for their ability to address the evolving needs of local communities or the strength of their applied pedagogy. Not only does this shift help make visible the value added to scholarship from community-partnered research and teaching methods, but it also acknowledges the extra labor of service and administration that public humanities work requires.

Scholarly societies have also used prizes to foster recognition of publicly engaged work. Prizes offer individual scholars external validation (that can be added to a CV) while also raising the visibility of publicly engaged work in academia more generally. These awards include AHA's Herbert Feis Award, which recognizes distinguished contributions to public history, and its John Lewis Award for History and Social Justice, which recognizes leadership and sustained engagement at the intersection of historical work and social justice. In collaboration with *Places Journal*, in 2022 SAH will award its inaugural SAH | *Places* Prize on Race and the Built Environment, which honors public scholarship that reconsiders race and the history of the built environment through a contemporary lens.

In an effort to provide scholars with the tools that they need to engage broader audiences, meanwhile, several scholarly societies have trained scholars in translating their research into writing for public audiences and connected them with public writing opportunities. The AAA funds a cohort of members each year to participate in a day-long op-ed writing workshop organized by the OpEd Project, that connects participants with media mentors and teaches them how to pitch and write pieces for the media. With funding from the Mellon Foundation, the OAH similarly collaborates with the *Washington Post's* Made By History section to host webinars and in-person workshops to help historians produce public works. Topics range from how to write for public audiences to how to grow a social media base. As these gatherings are relatively inexpensive to produce and draw

high interest from members, with modest investment OAH has been able to support the desire within their scholarly community to respond to current events and participate in public debates.

Other scholarly societies have engaged their memberships working beyond academia to support them in fostering rich engagements with public audiences. At the AFS, leadership noted that almost half of U.S. folklorists, including an increasing number of those based at universities, work in the public sector and engage with audiences through public programs. As a result, the Public Programs section of AFS provides a network for individuals and organizations working in public folklore. Section members gather around a shared interest in supporting traditional artists and creating educational materials and opportunities for the public about folk culture. Section activities include hosting awards for public folklore, annual publications, fundraisers for student and public grant support, and the maintenance of a directory of state and local public folklore organizations. The Renaissance Society of America, meanwhile, offers a grant program for high school teachers, museum docents, library curators, and directors of education at theater companies that awards $1,000 for an exemplary online project related to renaissance studies involving primary source materials.

Conclusions

Scholarly societies have created an essential infrastructure that provides support for their members to grapple with how their discipline can engage broader publics and carry out publicly engaged projects. Scholarly societies are also themselves practitioners of the public humanities, engaging partner organizations and communities in collaborative research and programming through their disciplines. While these categories don't encompass everything scholarly societies do to support engagement with the public, we hope that these categories provide a useful structure within which scholarly societies can conceptualize their own work. Finally, by highlighting examples of what scholarly societies themselves aim to accomplish and linking their work to these broader categories, we hope to demonstrate the invaluable role that scholarly societies play in nurturing, legitimizing, and proliferating publicly engaged humanities scholarship.

Project Profiles

Through its *Humanities for All* initiative, the National Humanities Alliance from 2018 to 2023 published 62 in-depth profiles of public humanities projects based at colleges and universities across the country. The profiles detail the efforts of higher ed students, faculty, and staff—frequently collaborating across disciplines and with communities—to create meaningful humanities research, teaching, programming, and preservation and access opportunities with and for a range of publics.

At the core of many of the profiles is a look inside a collaborative partnership between higher ed and community partners. Of course, the "community" here takes many forms, including individuals, nonprofit organizations, public libraries, religious organizations, or a broader public.

The project directors interviewed for these profiles spoke openly about the opportunities and challenges of doing publicly engaged work. At times, these reflections capture the effort it takes to translate, or make legible, their academic scholarship to different kinds of audiences. As Barry Lam reflects on his work with his philosophy podcast, *Hi-Phi Nation*, "publicly engaged scholarship is a second career, with a whole different set of skills, talents, incentives, and learning opportunities than an academic career. … But the best thing about publicly engaged work is the public is grateful and will let you know it."

Project directors also detailed the productive—though sometimes embattled—relationship between scholarship and activism. Garrett Felber, who is one of the founding members of the Study and Struggle collective, which supports reading groups inside and outside of Mississippi prisons, notes in our 2021 project profile how difficult it can be to translate and meld organizing tactics with the structures of higher ed. "The way the university even thinks about what's possible within it, it becomes illegible to them once you stop seeing people in fundamentally hierarchical terms," he explains. "If you see people as either students or professors that's legible to them, but the second you start talking in non-hierarchical organizing terms of like, 'we're building this together, we're co-organizers, these people aren't just participants' it just becomes out of their scope of possibility." Despite these challenges, Felber still acknowledges that what the university offers scholars is a community of individuals committed to sustained study, brought together by the social issues and identities that make humanities texts meaningful beyond academic life. Samantha Rosenthal, director of The Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project, similarly notes how the work has had a significant impact on her personal life: "Doing transgender history with community members pushed me to come out as a transgender woman. The project has provided similar opportunities for other participants to explore their relationship with queerness and their sense of place here in Southwest Virginia. It has brought many of us together as friends and as fellow activists."

In this section of the compendium, we include all 62 profiles. These profiles capture a snapshot of the projects as they existed at the time the profile was written, and they reflect project directors' and community partners' understanding of the evolution and impact of the project at that time.

We have organized the profiles by the five goals identified in our essay, "Goals of the Publicly Engaged Humanities": informing contemporary debates, amplifying community voices and histories, helping individuals navigate difficult experiences, expanding educational access, and preserving culture in times of crisis and change. These categories make visible how project-specific impacts—such as building community and strengthening feelings of belonging—connect to more general ways the humanities can serve the public good. In exploring these profiles, readers will also find that many of them do not fall neatly into disciplinary or methodological categories but rather cross these boundaries and mix these categories.

Many of the profiled projects are ongoing and continue to evolve, changing in aim and scope and including new types of humanities work. To underscore this growth, we reached out to a number of project directors to learn more about where their projects were at the time of this writing. Their replies (which follow the project profiles) serve as a reminder of the dynamic nature of public humanities projects and how that dynamic nature presents a challenge for documenting public humanities work.

We encourage you to use these profiles as models and inspiration for future projects.

Informing Contemporary Debates

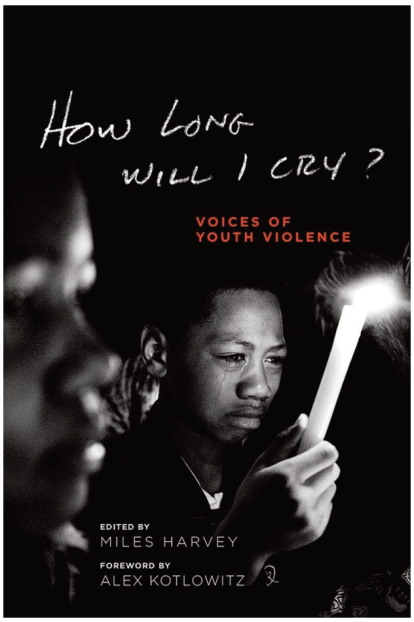
Publicly engaged humanities projects aim to inform contemporary debates on a range of issues including mass incarceration, environmental change, and race and identity. Faculty and students bring together diverse community stakeholders, often in collaboration with community organizations, and use the humanities to start conversations. Humanities content and methodologies provide context and challenge prior assumptions, enriching the discussion.

Big Shoulders Books

PUBLISHED
March 2023

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Chris Solis Green; Michele Morano; Miles Harvey

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
DePaul University



How Long Will I Cry cover, a book published by Big Shoulders Books.

Big Shoulders Books brings DePaul University English and Creative Writing graduate students together with members of different Chicago communities to publish quality works of writing by and about Chicagoans and distribute them for free to individuals and organizations across Chicago, nationally, and even internationally. Led by DePaul University English professors Miles Harvey, Chris Solis Green, and Michele Morano, the press is devoted to the twin goals of telling Chicago stories that might not otherwise be shared and teaching undergraduate and graduate students how to produce books.

Big Shoulders Books grew out of earlier publishing efforts by Green, who had collaborated with DePaul students and fellow faculty members on *A Writers' Congress: Chicago Poets on Barack Obama's Inauguration* (2009) and *Brute Neighbors: Urban Nature Poetry, Prose, and Photography* (2011). Harvey, meanwhile, had just begun a partnership with the Steppenwolf Theatre Company on a documentary theater project, *How Long Will I Cry*, based on interviews Harvey and his students had done with Chicagoans affected by gun violence.

The production toured Chicago as part of a collaboration with the Chicago Public Library. Despite working with a Tony award-winning theater company, Harvey was worried the production would not be successful in the neighborhoods most affected by gun violence. "I thought no one would show up in the neighborhoods that were most

affected by gun violence, which, in our city, are still largely economically challenged areas, black and brown areas," Harvey says. "I thought no one would show up at these readings but, in fact, people were out the door. We saw instantly that just hearing their own stories with these professional actors, reading the narratives was really powerful."

Realizing the power of personal narratives in fostering identity and healing, Green, Harvey, and Morano wrote a grant for seed money to bring *How Long Will I Cry* into a book format, patterned loosely on the oral-history projects of Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Studs Terkel. After receiving a grant from the Vincentian Endowment Fund at DePaul, Big Shoulders Books was born. Green and Harvey worked with DePaul students to edit the stories and work them into a book. Green, Harvey, and Morano published the first edition of *How Long Will I Cry* in 2013, distributed copies of the book for free, and toured readings a second time across Chicago. For this second tour, professional actors worked in collaboration with contributors to the book, with actors reading some segments and community members reading others. As of 2022, *How Long Will I Cry* was in its eighth edition with more than 50,000 copies distributed worldwide. The book has been used in a wide variety of educational and social contexts. For example, the Cook County Jail ordered hundreds of copies of the book and used it for a number of years to raise empathy among teenage inmates, many of whom had been perpetrators of gun violence.

In 2015, *How Long Will I Cry* was followed by *I Remember: Chicago Veterans of War*, a collaborative publication led by Green and inspired by *An Iliad*, a play narrated by a single character, the Poet, whose fate was to narrate all wars. Green based the format of *I Remember* on the premise that soldiers' perspectives, rather than politicians' perspectives, are crucial for public narratives of war. Green emailed veterans with an invitation to share their memories for a collaborative anthology on memories of wars the United States had been involved in.

Although the idea of the project was to return the power of narrative to those who had the most direct experience with war, Green's initial attempts to gather contributions from veterans were not fruitful. After his email solicitations largely went unanswered, he began attending Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) barbeques through invitation, and while he developed friendly relationships with veterans, veterans were still not readily sharing their memories with him. Green explains that through this process, he realized community publishing requires physical and emotional investments in building trust that are based on the unique needs of each community. "I was going around these barbecues asking people for their memories and finally, a veteran pulled me aside and said, 'Look, most veterans don't want to remember'" Green recalls. "So it really came down to building trust. That was to me, as an editor, probably the best thing about these books, building trusting relationships."

The project eventually began to take shape through an intimate process of one veteran sharing their memories and then recommending another who may be willing to share their experience, who would then recommend another.

Green had a rule that no one would be turned down for the project if they submitted a memory, and the format of the book is anonymous with memories listed by number, rather than by name. Contributors' names are listed at the end of the book associated with their respective memories. In that regard, the book mimics the way people are known by numbers rather than names in the military, and from the reader's perspective, it seems as though one veteran is remembering all of the wars. As one reads these memories, an awareness develops that every war is different, but also that every war is the same. As with *How Long Will I Cry*, Big Shoulders has held readings of *I Remember* across Chicago with chapters read by both professional actors and veterans.

Big Shoulders Books has published five additional books since the publication of *How Long Will I Cry* and *I Remember: Chicago Veterans of War*, including *Write Your Heart Out: Chicagoland Teens on Relationships*, *The Garcia Boy: A Memoir* by Rafael Torch, and *American Gun: A Poem by 100 Chicagoans.* All Big Shoulders Books include

discussion questions at the end, which has facilitated their use in high school classrooms across the country. They have also been featured in a number of media stories and Book of the Month clubs. "We're always talking about how we get these books in high schools … get kids who are already passionate about these subjects, and high school teachers who are so busy and struggle to find material."

Using the term "literary service" to describe the full scope of this work on campus and in communities, Green explains that a core goal of Big Shoulders is demonstrating the value that the humanities can bring to improving social conditions: "To be able to use a literary form in a direct, powerful, communal way and create a chorus of voices from the community shows that the literary imagination is important for very practical life-saving reasons. … The people that are in the books, who don't normally have a platform to share their stories, they take ownership of the book in a way that normally is just a single author," Harvey further explains. "In this case, it could be 100 people who suddenly take ownership over their own stories, and they want to share them."

As a teaching tool, Big Shoulders Books' mission is also to show DePaul students that their humanities studies are intimately embedded in the real world. "Anything we can do to help our students connect their literary lives to their work lives is just vital because they are not two separate things," Harvey notes. Because the DePaul graduate program has a training emphasis on publishing, its English and creative writing program students are full collaborators on the books Big Shoulders publishes. Working with the professors, with members of the community, and with other writers, students learn how to assemble and distribute a book from the initial stages of inception to the final stages of distribution. As such, the academic component of the projects has evolved to consist of three classes associated with each book Big Shoulders publishes: an editing class, an interview methods course, and a promotions class. The promotions class is taught by professional literary publicists, with students learning all aspects of how to promote a book. When launching each book, the students work with the professors and contributors to arrange a reading that often uses the approach piloted by *How Long Will I Cry* of partnering with professional actors and community participants to stage readings of the book.

Through Harvey's "The Art of the Interview" course, students interested in pursuing community storytelling learn interviewing skills that are not solely focused on getting newsworthy information, but rather on understanding the deeper dimensions of a person's life. "When we interviewed someone who saw their good friend shot, I urged my students not to say 'Okay, let's start with your friend.' It was always 'let's start with a neighborhood. Let's start with your life. Let's start with the world you're in,"' Harvey explains. While these interviews can sometimes generate over one hundred page transcripts, it is important for Harvey to teach the students how to gather stories that encapsulate the fullness of an individual's positionality rather than one sensational aspect of their lives.

Since 2013, Big Shoulders Press has benefitted from funding from the William and Irene Beck Charitable Trust. This funding and the relationship between the Trust and the press have allowed the project to work improvisationally, at its own pace, and with methods intentionally focused on the process. Due to a strong trust built between the funders and the press' creative leadership, Big Shoulders is able to lean into a level of introspection and experimentation that is typically difficult with grant-based funding that can often require rigid timelines, predetermined deliverables, and time-consuming reporting requirements. Further, Big Shoulders' funding model allows it to give its books away for free without the need to recoup its costs through book sales. However, as Harvey is careful to point out, this level of freedom and flexibility does not indicate disorganization or lack of tangible outcomes. "This doesn't mean we're not organized, but if we had been rigid people who needed a 20-year game plan, this never would have happened. So when all of the books need some improvisation, it's a high-wire act. We may have an idea that is great but doesn't get off the ground. So we'll go with another one,"

Harvey says. "And it's the same with classes. If we need a particular class for a particular project, we'll just add it to our curriculum."

The latest Big Shoulders Books project is *Virus City: Chicago 2020–2021*, a collection of oral histories and photographs documenting the upheavals that shook Chicago during the COVID-19 pandemic. Edited by DePaul faculty members Rebecca Johns and Robin Hoecker, the book debuts in the fall of 2022. Future books include projects on immigration and environmental justice, both of which will be produced in partnership with HumanitiesX, a Mellon Foundation-funded initiative at DePaul that pairs students and faculty members with community groups to utilize humanities methods in real-world projects. As always, the stories Big Shoulder Books tells are aimed to resonate with a demographically expansive readership, including many people who have not previously been avid readers. Harvey explains that hearing stories of how these books impact Chicaogans is one of the most powerful indicators of success for them. "It's amazing to read the stories of people who have been readers of our books, teachers of our books," Harvey says. "Our books make it to a lot of classrooms, a lot of prisons, and we get these amazing stories like, 'This kid never read before. Now she's running up and down the hallways handing out copies of the books.'"

Drag Story Hour

PUBLISHED
July 2023

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Harris Kornstein

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Arizona

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Drag Story Hour

A still of Lil Miss Hot Mess at a Drag Story Hour in Brooklyn, taken from "Tall Tales with True Queens," directed by Kristina Budelis and Leandro Badalotti.

Drag Story Hour (DSH) is a storytelling and performance organization that uses the art of drag to read books to children in libraries, schools, and bookstores. Beginning in 2015 as a local initiative in San Francisco under the guidance of Michelle Tea, Julián Delgado Lopera, Virgie Tovar, and RADAR Productions, the operation has since grown into an international organization with over 30 chapters worldwide.

Harris Kornstein, assistant professor of public and applied humanities at the University of Arizona, is on DSH's Board of Directors, and also works as one of the organization's drag storytellers performing under their drag persona, Lil Miss Hot Mess. While initially Kornstein kept their work as a drag storyteller intentionally separate from their academic profile, things soon became more integrated. A few years into storytelling with DSH, Kornstein was approached by a friend at Stanford University to perform at an event at the School of Education. After the event, Kornstein and their friend, Harper B. Keenan, who is now a professor of gender & sexuality in education at the University of British Columbia, had a conversation about some of the ways in which DSH does important cultural and pedagogical work by blending drag performance and storytelling for children. The pair ended up writing an article in *Curriculum Inquiry* about the incorporation of drag as a queer storytelling modality into early childhood education, arguing that elements of DSH's work such as play as praxis, aesthetic transformation, strategic defiance, destigmatization of shame, and embodied kinship form important opportunities for educators and students to develop a sense of queer imagination. In addition, Kornstein has also published two popular children's books, *The Hips on the Drag Queen Go Swish, Swish, Swish* (2020) and *If You're a Drag Queen and You Know It* (2022), both of which are routinely used for DSH's storytelling sessions. In 2020, they recorded a video of themselves reading their book as their drag persona, Lil Miss Hot Mess, for PBS affiliate WNET.

While wearing multiple hats (storyteller, author, board member, professor) provides plenty of opportunities for interdisciplinary work, Kornstein said that ensuring that this work is legible to a variety of audiences is something that has become central to how they operate in each of these spaces. "There's always a background thought of how do I make drag legible to children? How do we speak using the vocabularies and grammars of drag, but in a way that's age appropriate and that children will appreciate?" Kornstein explained. "I think a lot as a performer about things like what kinds of humor children will understand and respond to, versus what's more typical at an adult drag show." This element of the work that DSH does is especially important in terms of trying to forge the best connections possible between storytellers and their young audiences. To capture the creative spirits of as many

children as possible, a typical storytelling session might include reading from three or four books, usually with LGBTQ+ themes, as well as singing songs, doing some group movement, and oftentimes craft activities such as coloring or face-painting. Depending on the strengths of the performers in each individual chapter, storytellers sometimes also present child-friendly lip-sync performances to their young audiences.

Across DSH's many chapters, each storytelling event looks a little different. "We like to think about chapters being locally autonomous and independently run, having the authority to be responsive to issues and themes in their communities," Kornstein said. As an example, Kornstein mentioned that the DSH chapter based in New York City runs story hours specifically aimed at neurodiverse and disabled children, as well as middle school and high school programs that have included sewing workshops and makeup tutorials. While different chapters have ultimate control and responsibility for their own operations, DSH as an international organization is there as an umbrella for administrative, financial, and curricular support.

Given that DSH as an organization prefers to prioritize stories that are written by and center LGBTQ+, BIPOC, and other marginalized people and narratives, it is perhaps unsurprising that not everyone receives their work with an open mind. Drag events for young people are frequently targeted by hate groups, and DSH has not managed to avoid this type of unwelcome attention, despite the significant amount of thought that the organization puts into its messaging.

"We've seen opposition almost since the very beginning," Kornstein said. "It started in some of the more rural and conservative areas, but also quickly found its way to places like San Francisco and New York." In the early days of the initiative, countering the kind of backlash that DSH events faced was not always seen as a priority by arts and humanities organizations, and even some larger LGBTQ+ organizations. Kornstein attributes this to a perception that drag storytelling events were cutesy and relatively unimportant kinds of representation for the queer community. While this perception has largely changed now due to sustained media coverage, Kornstein also draws a distinction between this form of backlash and broader forms of discrimination like book bans and more generalized anti-drag behavior. "We saw ourselves as the canaries in the coal mine—we saw this rise of the false rhetoric around 'grooming' and 'pedophilia' and the overt sexualization and condemnation of queer people," Kornstein stated. Additionally, they also note that this backlash feeds into broader attacks on public educational and cultural institutions—and the humanities and arts more broadly—that seek to limit creative expression and foreclose political imagination.

During Pride Month 2022, the Proud Boys violently disrupted one of DSH's story hours in San Lorenzo. Kornstein believes that the media attention following the event "both brought attention to the backlash we were facing, and in some ways also invited more copycat kinds of behavior." In response to the increasing risk of this kind of threat, DSH launched a pilot program called "Shields Up!," which explores putting more effective community-based safety protocols in place to help mitigate the risk of future disruptions. This community safety program offers chapter organizers, venues, and storytellers training sessions on situational awareness, as well as mobilizing volunteers (who DSH calls the "Royal Guard") to be safety marshalls in and outside of events. However, despite the elevated levels of hostility that the organization has seen, their core programming has not changed dramatically.

Performing as Lil Miss Hot Mess, Kornstein has personally experienced direct attacks on their drag storytelling work in the form of censorship. When Kornstein produced the storytelling video for PBS, it was initially published on PBS's website and sent out to other regional affiliates, but received pushback from hate groups that caused the video to be pushed to a backchannel online. The censorship didn't stop there, however, as the

Republican Governor of Oklahoma, Kevin Stitt, this year cited Kornstein's video as a reason to veto funding for Oklahoma's PBS affiliate, among other condemnations from high-profile conservative politicians and spokespeople. In July 2023, DSH decided to close their Miami chapter due to anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, citing concerns for the physical safety of their storytellers and chapter directors.

Kornstein says that they wish that the general public had more context for drag as an art form. Drag has a long history and thrives on its multiplicity—it can easily be adapted for children and families while also providing a space for the irreverence that adult drag shows in clubs invite. "When I describe drag, both to children and in publications, I oftentimes focus less on drag as gender play—which is not to downplay that element—and instead think about the other cultural work that drag does in terms of being a form of play that more broadly activates people's imaginations and disrupts binaries, not just of masculinity and femininity, but also of truth and fiction, or publicness and privateness," Kornstein said. For Kornstein, emphasizing this kind of viewpoint highlights the intersection between performance, the arts, literature, and the humanities that drag invites its audiences to navigate.

And it's an intersection that DSH's audiences are willing to navigate. For Kornstein, one of the biggest joys of doing this work is receiving photos, videos, and anecdotes from parents on social media, communicating that they have read Lil Miss Hot Mess's books over and over, or that their children won't stop talking about the characters in the back seat of the car. In one particular instance, after what had been a challenging and noisy DSH event, a trio of young children who had just missed the storytime came over to Lil Miss Hot Mess, who was dressed as a mermaid. Their genuine, inquisitive questions were a reminder of why drag storytelling is such an important example of the public humanities—"Is your hair real? Why is it purple? How do you get the glitter to stick to your face like that?" Kornstein treasures the picture they took together to this day: "It really spoke to the question of 'what does this unusual queer presence bring out in children, and what kind of questions does it allow us to ask?'"

Sovereignty and Climate Change in Guåhan: Creating Sustainable Futures

PUBLISHED
August 2022

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Tiara Na'puti

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of California-Irvine

An image from Independent Guåhan's outreach event to educate about true decolonization during the 2022 Liberation Day parade. (Image Source: Monaeka Flores)

Several organizations and political movements on the island of Guåhan, known also as the U.S. territory of Guam, are devoted to re-establishing Guam as an independent nation governed by the CHamoru people in order to address the challenges that stem from a lack of political autonomy. One such organization, Independent Guåhan, has been working since 2016 to reclaim their sovereignty by educating, uniting, and empowering the CHamoru people.

Tiara Na'puti, a CHamoru (familian Robat & Kaderon) scholar from Guam, has returned to the island every year for over ten years to work with a number of organizations committed to independence and environmental justice for Guam. In 2016, she began to collaborate with Independent Guåhan on efforts to disseminate their message of independence throughout the island. An assistant professor in the Department of Global and International Studies at the University of California, Irvine, Na'puti's academic research focuses on the military buildup in the Pacific and how it relates to the political status, sovereignty, and climate issues in the region. After years of volunteer work with Independent Guåhan, Na'puti applied for and received funding as a Mellon/ACLS Scholars and Society Fellow to spend 2021–2022 in residence in Guam working with Independent Guåhan to carry out a project entitled "Sovereignty & Climate Change in Guåhan: Creating Sustainable Futures" (CSF). The project is committed to addressing the urgent intersecting challenges of climate change and democratic governance on Guåhan, and is designed to advance Independent Guåhan's mission by developing humanities resources and programming that make the case that political independence is the best course for creating a sustainable future.

Working collaboratively with artists, activists, and educators, the project produces music concerts, visual art, zines, webinars, workshops, podcasts, qualitative reports, and community meetings to educate the public about the benefits of political sovereignty for the island and the impact it would have on environmental sustainability and cultural heritage preservation. Na'puti, Independent Guåhan members, and the others they work with form a core group they refer to as Kulo', which is translated as conch shell. The Kulo' is significant to CHamoru culture for its historical role in calling people together and informing them of important issues. The Kulo' involved with Creating Sustainable Futures are gathering people together to inform them of the importance of political

independence Na'puti explained: "The blowing of the Triton shell, it's kind of an arrival. And we're using that idea with our first zine on decolonization. Tomorrow, it will be self-determination."

The resources they create draw historical and cultural connections between Guam's political status as an unincorporated territory of the United States and the island's ability to make decisions about its future, particularly around climate change and its cascading impacts. To be sure, Guam has a fraught and violent political history dating back to the beginning of Spanish colonization in 1521. Following centuries of Spanish colonial rule, Guam was occupied by the United States in 1898, and, with the exception of a few years during WWII when the Japanese occupied Guam, has remained a non-self-governing territory of the United States. Since U.S. colonization, the military has used Guam as a site for military training and testing, activities that have had a devastating impact on Guam's land, air, water, people, and culture. Yet, as a non-self-governing territory, Guam does not currently have the political sovereignty to prevent military testing on its lands, nor does it have access to important resources that are available for sovereign states to combat the effects of military testing and climate change in the region.

The Kulo' are always thinking intentionally about the most effective methods to communicate their message across different demographic groups. The varying methods they use complement each other, with one providing an entry point for another, leading to deeper engagement with each topic. "I think an important thing about the humanities is to come up with creative ways of communicating and conveying what are the issues that we are dealing with, because 'sovereignty' is a word that doesn't roll off the tongue, and neither is 'decolonization,'" Na'puti explains. "We want people to feel comfortable, not only thinking about but also sharing these ideas with others because that's the way that decisions happen when they occur. Being able to talk to elders or family members or friends about these things, and not have it seem so overwhelming."

The *Kulo' Zine*, published in the Spring of 2022 in both print and digital formats, and a mural project led by the Kulo', are two examples of easily digestible formats that engage the community and introduce the topic of sovereignty. To gather material for the zine and bring people together to showcase their perspectives, CSF solicited an open call for contributors, accepting images, poems, and writing on what independence for Guam could mean. CSF printed and distributed the zines in local shops and around the island for free. The zine format provides a way for CSF to create and sustain relationships with shop owners and to spread the word to places that might not seem like a natural fit for a sovereignty movement. The murals, spread throughout the island, highlight climate warriors, women, and youth climate supporters organizing in their schools to talk about climate issues in the Pacific. Providing a visual way to communicate issues and information that often feels overwhelming in other formats, these murals can serve as a bridge into deeper discussions and further learning and action on the topic through other mediums.

Funding from ACLS for CSF allowed Independent Guåhan to continue to do outreach and bring people together during the pandemic at a moment when traditional forms of in-person gatherings were not possible. Since its inception, Independent Guåhan has held monthly general assemblies to bring people together for the purpose of opening up space for decolonization conversations, to share food and discussion with family members, friends, and broader networks, and to provide general information about self-determination and sovereignty for Guam. When the pandemic forced a pause to hosting these assemblies in person, the ACLS funding supported Independent Guåhan's transition to online meeting platforms. As Michael Lujan Bevacqua, co-chair of media and development at Independent Guåhan, explains, "The support from this fellowship/grant has supported our efforts to develop strategic plans and team-building by supporting a retreat for our Kulo' (core members). It has also helped us enhance our virtual, distance, and online capabilities by supporting live streams, virtual teach-ins, and

the Fanachu! podcast, allowing us to purchase equipment and software." As a result, Independent Guåhan was able to continue the work of community building that Na'puti explains is at the heart of Independent Guåhan: "We're excited about the work. We want to be in community, we're in relation with people, we're trying to build these networks and maintain them for a sustainable future. And that's justice work. That's work that higher education can, and is in a lot of ways, supporting and it's value added to everybody's lives."

As co-chair of Independent Guåhan's educational development team, much of Na'puti's work includes thinking of ways that educators can use the material CSF creates as entry points for student discussions about sovereignty. She collaborates with teachers to create curricula that can use clips from webinars or visits to a mural to introduce students to topics and to get them to think about independence in digestible ways. In addition, her work includes engaged research initiatives, such as Independent Guåhan and CSF's contributions to the multi-volume, self-determination study, "Giha Mo'na: A Self-Determination Study for Guåhan," organized and published by the Guam Commission on Decolonization. She is also preparing an edited volume tentatively titled "Detours Guåhan" that will use the popular guidebook format to address Indigenous issues and urgent community challenges brought about by the island's political status. While the study is invaluable and the first of its kind and the edited volume will add tremendous value to academic understanding of issues in the Mariana Islands, Na'puti knows that due to their highly academic nature, their audience is limited. The educational development team works to bridge the divide between academic studies and publicly available educational materials by working with teachers to create curricula with materials that make thinking about sovereignty accessible.

With ACLS funding, Na'puti is also identifying opportunities to enhance doctoral education opportunities in Guam and in the continental U.S. The University of Guam is one of the main four-year institutions in the Marianas and the Micronesian region, but it does not have a PhD program. Na'puti is excited to think about how engaging with community organizations can be useful in supporting doctoral education on Guam and on the mainland, and, in conjunction with ACLS's goal of expanding public humanities opportunities for doctoral students, can create infrastructure that brings community organizations and higher education together to help doctoral students develop their own community-based research projects on Guam and in the diaspora. She is also in the early stages of teaming up with the Los Angeles-based organization Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC) to cultivate undergraduate and graduate student leadership initiatives and to train students to work with their communities to build their own political power. "We're tackling all these different elements of self-determination and sovereignty and climate change, they are seeing all these issues, or any one or two of them, really resonating with them for an area of study that they might not be able to get training for in the region," Na'puti explains. "But what if they could do it somewhere else? And then bring that back to their community? What could that look like?"

Across the creative, artistic, and educational programs offered through Independent Guåhan and CSF, Na'puti recognizes the power that higher ed-based public humanities initiatives have to nourish community knowledge and bolster the mission of independence for Guam. "You have to have an orientation, but you also have to have hope," Na'puti says. "I think the public humanities aspect of things allows us to flourish in a way that we can do both. It doesn't always have to be about educating about social justice through the ills and the problems of injustice, it can be about demonstrating the revitalization and the cultural activities and practices that have been going on forever, in a way that's important and in line with what universities have done, but not always what universities have committed to and showcased."

Notes on Creating Livable Black Futures

PUBLISHED
December 2022

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Stacie McCormick

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Texas Christian University

Poet KB Brookins reading their poem "Sexting at the Gynecologist" at Java Lavender Lounge in Dallas, TX for the Livable Black Futures Storytelling Collective's closing session / image credit: Stacie McCormick.

Black maternal mortality in the United States is astonishingly high. According to a study published in the American Journal of Public Health, Black people are three times as likely to die during childbirth as their white counterparts, and traumatic experiences of pregnancy and childbirth are even more common. "Notes on Creating Livable Futures," is a collaborative humanities project that responds to the reproductive challenges that systemically impact Black women and womb holders. Through story circles, programming, and engaged research that opens up space to imagine and enact livable black futures, a Texas-based team of scholars, doulas, and community organizers is working to support birthing people in healing from medical trauma.

The project was initiated by Stacie McCormick, an associate professor of English at Texas Christian University (TCU), and designed in collaboration with Marsha Jones and other members of the birth justice team at the Afiya Center, a Black reproductive justice organization serving black womxn and girls in Dallas, Texas. Driving this collaboration are two core components: uplifting the healing power of stories through creative and critical writing, oral storytelling, and performance; and using stories to promote research that informs policy conversations about reproductive healthcare in Texas.

Noting an absence of support structures for Black women to navigate and share their stories of medical trauma, McCormick connected with the Afiya Team to co-imagine what a livable future could look like in the context of Texas' current reproductive healthcare landscape. "I wanted to talk about Black birth from their perspective," McCormick noted, "because every perspective I was seeing was from medical doctors who were engaging in mother blame, or they were engaging in patient blame and other types of harmful language that wasn't getting to the stories of what people were experiencing in these spaces." Across the initiative McCormick uses the language of "livable Black futures" intentionally: "In naming our experiences with gynecological violence and institutional medical racism, how do we imagine the possibilities of being and care that enable black futures?"

In 2021, McCormick received an ACLS/Mellon grant to develop the project, and McCormick and the birth justice team at the Afiya Center officially launched Notes on Creating Livable Futures in the Fall of 2021. The project began with four storytelling circle sessions hosted at the Afiya Center for people to share their reproductive journeys and continued in the spring with a second circle series with formerly incarcerated women who had been recruited to participate from local transitional housing and re-entry programs. During these sessions, Afiya Center birth justice team members, Allison Tomlinson, a trauma-informed social worker and professor at the University of Texas at Arlington, and local creative writers led exercises in creative storytelling and poetry that helped people who had

experienced reproductive trauma to tell their own stories and take collective ownership in voicing their experiences.

In the storytelling circles, participants shared birthing stories as well as personal histories of obstetric racism, gynecological care, abortion, and pregnancy loss. Considering that sharing experiences of medical trauma can be a vulnerable and sometimes retraumatizing task, creating a sense of trust and community solidarity was of utmost importance during all storytelling sessions. To establish this atmosphere of care and solidarity, the Afiya Center team leveraged their positions as both long-standing advocates for Black women and girls' sexual and reproductive health in Texas and members of the community: "We are actually the folk that we serve," birth justice full-spectrum doula Qiana Arnold explained. After some staff members of the Afiya Center shared their own stories of both incarceration and medical trauma, participants felt safe to share personal experiences as well. McCormick recalled the shift in tone that these moments brought: "It was amazing how our participants then opened up. The conversation just went in a whole different direction in terms of just people really deepening. Once they started talking, I realized why they hadn't been talking because what they've experienced is almost borderline unspeakable." D'Andra Willis, the birth justice coordinator at the Afiya Center and a full spectrum doula as a part of their Southern Roots Doula Collective, remembered the importance of providing care once stories were shared. "We learned that mental health was a big priority, and having mental health experts in the space at those times was crucial. Because having to relive those experiences caused a lot of things to come up that we either suppressed, or never healed from, or learned that we never ever healed at all."

A chronic lack of access to reproductive care in Texas, a lack of post-partum Medicaid coverage, rampant housing discrimination, a lack of access in certain communities to healthy food and hospitals, and a systemic overcriminalization of Black people create a reproductive environment that is nearly impossible to navigate. As McCormick noted, the storytelling circles gave participants creative outlets to share their experiences within the Texas reproductive environment and, consequently, access powerful forms of healing. "They could give a metaphor to their experience that would help them to talk about it in a way that felt like they weren't just reliving everything for us," she explained, "So that creative part, people could enter the space in a way that not only allowed them to name their experience, but to even push the boundaries so that they could tap into another form of healing through creativity."

To further educate and gather the local community around obstetric racism in the medical industry, the first storytelling sessions as part of the Notes on Creating Livable Futures project culminated in a public showcase that included poetry readings, storytelling, and music at Java Lavender Lounge in Dallas. McCormick describes this final gathering, held around food and drinks, as a celebration that created an all-encompassing, joyful, and supportive environment: "It was beautiful … we had some people who spit fire, some created poems, some people created letters to themselves, to their past self. Some people even wrote to providers, some people wrote quarters affirmation, just kind of building themselves up."

Alongside the storytelling components, McCormick and the Afiya Center team are also collaborating on a research project that builds on the narratives that surfaced during the story circle sessions. Arnold explained that the added research component required further maintenance of trust, given the historically harmful nature of academic research and data collection in black communities: "Keeping in mind that this is still a research project and historically, not just incarcerated people, but black folk period have experienced a lot of trauma and violence for institutions. They know that this is an institution gathering information, so it was a lot. We had to go through processes to get them comfortable enough so that we can still create healing, but also gather the information to create change." Here, McCormick's positionality as a Black researcher helped bridge the gap between the community the Afiya Center serves and the institutionalized nature of a research project.

Given this commitment to sensitivity, the project team structures their research and data collection around community needs, rather than institutional or academic needs. Research questions are driven by what the story circle participants have articulated that they want and need to know. For example, community members have suggested that the research team take up the question of abortion access more deeply, as well as how biases related to fatphobia and disability show up in the medical system. Birth justice doula Helen Zimba explained that the relationship between researcher and community deepens the trust for the project: "For us as a group not coming in, as authoritative in a 'we're here to teach you' way. But we're here to do things together."

Although the research is community-driven, the presence of an academically trained researcher helped give a tangible structure to the collaboration. The Afiya project team members explained that the partnership with McCormick allowed for important growth in the work they do. "When we are with women going through the lowest point in their life, we don't think about research or gathering information" Willis noted, "But Dr. Stacie, with her training, puts a name to it and is able to capture important information because she looks at it from a different lens. So our partnership that we have has been amazing, because we now have some important information." Indeed, the data collected through the research will help the Afiya Center advocate for patient-centered policies around reproductive justice and health in Texas.

Just as developing trust and attending to the mental health needs of the participants was a core feature of the storytelling circles, attending to the participants' basic material needs by providing childcare, food, and stipends to those who participate is integral to the project. McCormick explained that the attention to the logistics of providing participants with what they need to participate often gets ignored in many academic projects, but is necessary to affirm mutual respect between researcher and participant. "Where academia can be so disembodied, the Afiya team was so careful and attentive to people's humanity. The premise for our research was always thinking about how black women and black people deserve care and support, and that we need to prioritize that when we're doing this research."

Following the second storytelling circle and the *Dobbs* Supreme Court ruling that overturned the constitutional right to abortion, Notes on Creating Livable Futures is in a transitional phase, moving with urgency into strategic planning for the post-*Dobbs* legislative landscape. The Afiya Center will move into a larger building and will open a birth center in Dallas, and with the new changes the project team will continue their relationships with the participants of the first two storytelling circles. McCormick is also working with students and faculty at TCU to build out an infrastructure to support graduate students interested in training in community-engaged methods and in working with communities upon graduation. "One of the things that this fellowship and opportunity has given me is that there are other valued points beyond a capitalist framework for the work you do." McCormick explained, "We're more than what we produce, we're also the communities we build or that we engage with. We are the impacts that we make on people's lives. It might not show up in a peer-reviewed article, but you've done something important."

McCormick is working with students to develop an academic practice that reflects these thoughts and that creates an applied research method that supports rather than extracts from communities. She emphasizes to students that her work with the Afiya Center is new, that she is working not as an expert, but as someone learning alongside her students on how to research with communities: "I'm working with students to try to get them to a place that re-frames how they think about their own intellectual growth, and what they end up ultimately doing in the world with their knowledge. We are in a moment where people are really thinking through what research looks like from people who are connected deeply to these communities, and who are invested in ways that we haven't done before—a kind of research reparations."

Humanities Action Lab

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Liz Sevcenko; Margie Weinstein

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Rutgers University-Newark

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
University of Massachusetts at Amherst; University of Texas at Austin; Northeastern University; DePaul University; University of Miami; Duke University; University of North Carolina at Greensboro; Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis; Vanderbilt University; University of New Orleans; The New School; Parsons Paris; Brown University; University of California-Riverside; University of Connecticut; Arizona State University; University of Minnesota

A visitor to the States of Incarceration exhibit listens to audio content that helps explore the local impacts of mass incarceration across the United States. Photograph by Chris Choi. Image courtesy of the Humanities Action Lab.

Based out of Rutgers University-Newark, the Humanities Action Lab (HAL) is a global coalition of universities and community organizations that explores urgent, difficult, and often contested social issues through collaborative public humanities projects. HAL produces exhibitions and programming that foster dialogue and create new models for addressing issues through the humanities.

Local partnerships are key for the Humanities Action Lab, Assistant Director Margie Weinstein explains. "HAL partners create a major public project every three years that explores the history, memory, and current realities of a pressing social issue," Weinstein says. "Each project includes an exhibit, digital platform, oral histories, face-to-face community dialogues, and interactive media. Students and community partners in each participating locality contribute their local histories and perspectives to the international project, which then travels to each community that created it, opening a space to generate and exchange unique locally-grounded approaches to common global questions."

HAL is currently in the planning stages of a project on environmental justice. Previously, HAL partners developed local projects exploring mass incarceration called States of Incarceration. "[S]tudents worked with returning citizens and others impacted by incarceration in 20 cities around the country to create a traveling exhibit, web platform, and series of public dialogues on the roots of mass incarceration in each of their communities, and how to address it today," Weinstein recalls.

In this work, Weinstein emphasizes the power of the humanities. "The humanities are critical to HAL's activities, opening up deadlocked conversations by highlighting questions of history and memory. We do this by bringing historical perspective to contemporary concerns to examine how the past can inform the present and understand how we got here, by creating space for multiple perspectives that allow stories and memory to humanize issues that are often reduced to numbers and statistics, and connecting the local and inter/national by examining regional portraits of an issue that become assembled into an inter/national whole."

HAL's projects are student- and community-driven, a process that involves deep engagement and ongoing dialogue with a wide variety of stakeholders: community partners who have been impacted by the issues the project explores, faculty coordinators, and other HAL chapters across the U.S.

"HAL university [chapters] offer courses, through which students collaborate with community partners to curate a history of a local site of the issue as one piece of the international project," Weinstein explains. "For instance, with States of Incarceration, DePaul University co-created their piece with students in an Inside-Out class at Stateville Penitentiary. Brown University students debated issues of crime and punishment for that chapter of the exhibit with men from the Rhode Island Adult Correctional Institute. The team at the University of California Riverside collaborated with directly impacted youth activists involved in the Youth Justice Coalition in exploring the school-to-prison pipeline."

In States of Incarceration, each chapter contributed components grounded in local experience and research. They were then integrated into a national touring exhibition that visited the site of each chapter, grounding the project's national view in work from around the nation. "[M]en and women directly impacted by the issue are involved at every stage," Weinstein explains, "including a national working group that frames the traveling exhibition's guiding questions and potential public interaction mechanisms allowing affected communities to create and share stories in an ongoing way as the exhibit grows and travels."

HAL projects are guided by experts in history and public policy, who, Weinstein explains, are driven by "commitment, lived experience, and curiosity."

"Student curators may have no background in the issue at all or have deep personal connections; they may have a strong intellectual foundation in one area but have much to learn in another," Weinstein continues. "Community partners will always have strong direct experience and involvement in the issue; they may have no historical perspective on the issue or they may be experienced non-university historians and policy-makers. In any case, the process of selecting stories, images, and questions in each locality involves powerful discovery and difficult dialogue among people with a wide range of knowledge and experience, a significant experiment in project-based, action-oriented learning."

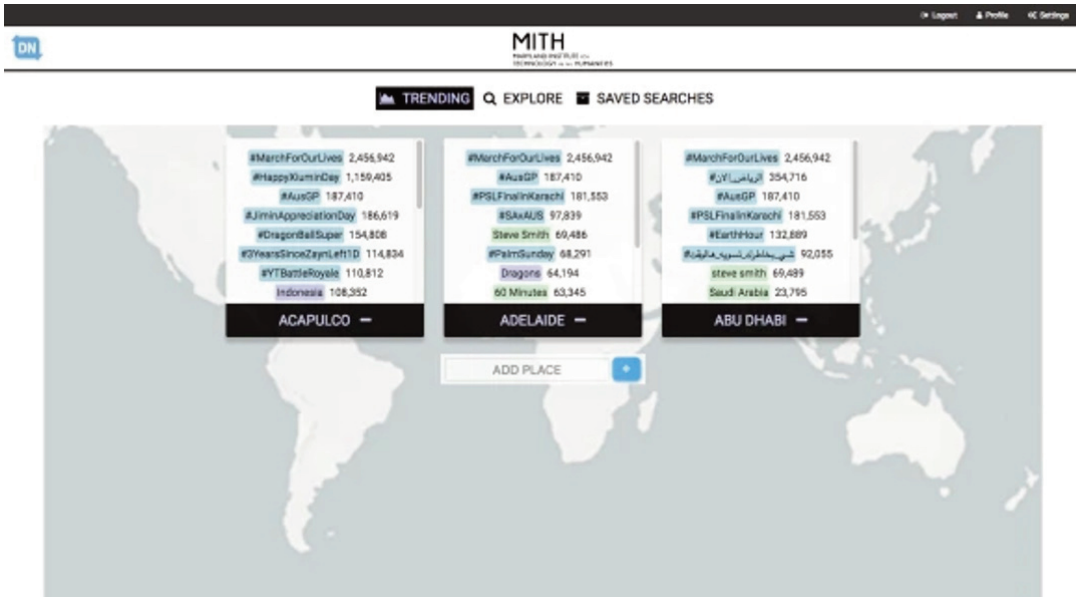
Documenting the Now

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Bergis Jules; Ed Summers; Alexandra Dolan-Mescal; Francis Kayiwa

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities at the University of Maryland-College Park; Washington University in St. Louis; University of California-Riverside

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Journalists; Human Rights Activists



Screenshot from DocNow. Image courtesy of Documenting the Now.

Social media platforms like Twitter offer an important window into contemporary experience and social movements, but archiving tweets for preservation poses challenges that are both practical and ethical. Practically, how are archivists to sort through and preserve social media content? Ethically, how can archivists navigate issues relating to the content owners' privacy, consent, and control? Documenting the Now addresses these complex challenges. The community-driven project is creating ethical standards and tools for the collection and preservation of significant social media content.

"Documenting the Now is aimed at accomplishing two different, but deeply interrelated goals," Co-investigator Ed Summers explains in an article introducing the project. "The first is to develop an open source Web app called DocNow that will allow researchers and archivists to easily collect, analyze and preserve Twitter messages and the Web resources they reference. The second is to cultivate a much needed conversation between scholars, archivists, journalists and human rights activists around the effective and ethical use of social media content."

The project began in the aftermath of the police killing of 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri on August 9, 2014. Twitter played a key role in raising awareness and mobilizing response. It was clear that this material needed to be preserved, but how?

The Practical Challenge

It has proven difficult to apply traditional archival processes to the vast amount of social media content available, co-investigator Bergis Jules explains.

"One thing we're finding is that archivists are having a hard time making sense [of the] volume of content [on social media]," Jules says. "I think people have just resorted to collecting massive amounts of data because they don't have tools to help them make sense of the content. The normal process of archiving [begins with] appraisal and selection, making decisions about what is taken to the archive. But it's hard to transfer that over to social media content."

Ethical Issues

Though social media content is potentially available to all online, content creators do not necessarily intend their posts to be preserved indefinitely in an archive. This is particularly the case for media produced by activists and others in times of crisis, when content owners may be especially interested in issues of privacy and access.

When collecting material, archivists typically require deeds of gift to receive the material, Jules explains. "We have practices that we put around consent with our deeds of gifts that we could easily transfer to this type of material, we just need to rethink how we do it," Jules continues: "What does a deed of gift look like for tweets or Facebook posts? How do we get that out to 500 people? Is there an automated process you could create to make contact with a large number of people? We're rethinking some of the processes we already have."

Twitter enables users to delete posts at any time. For Jules and the Documenting the Now team, any archiving solution needs to accommodate this and respect the rights of content owners not to be archived.

DocNow is a Community and a Tool

With these practical and ethical challenges in mind, Documenting the Now has convened diverse activists, journalists, and academic stakeholders in person and online via a Slack channel and Twitter to discuss possible ways forward. These ongoing conversations are helping to clarify ethical standards and are producing a number of tools for archivists, including DocNow.

Currently in development, DocNow is a cloud-based open-source app that will enable archivists to assess social media materials for collection. Through the app, users are able to search Twitter along a range of axes. The app retrieves a manageable sample of 1,000 tweets and breaks them down by their users, hashtags, links, and media, offering a number of entry points for analyzing Twitter conversations.

With DocNow, archivists can save searches and download their data in a way that honors content owners' rights to opt out and delete their tweets. The app saves only unique tweet identification numbers, not the text of the tweets themselves. The text of tweets is saved in a central database that is updated regularly. If a content owner deletes a tweet, it is deleted from the central database and the tweet will not be accessible in the archive.

The Emmett Till Memory Project

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Dave Tell; Pablo Correa; Davis Houck; Chris Spielvogel; Patrick Weems

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Kansas; The Pennsylvania State University; Florida State University

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Emmett Till Memorial Commission

A historical marker at Bryant Grocery and Meat Market in Money, Mississippi, where Till was accused of whistling at a white woman. The marker was set up on the Mississippi Freedom Trail by state tourism officials in 2011 and scraped clean by vandals in 2017. Photo by Allan Hammons.

In the early morning of August 28, 1955, Emmett Till was abducted and murdered in Money, Mississippi. Plaques marking the people, places, and events surrounding the killing of the 14-year-old African American and the subsequent trial have been vandalized since their installation in 2007: sprayed with bullets, scraped of their words, and even uprooted and thrown in the nearby river. In 2014, Dave Tell of the University of Kansas and Patrick Weems of the Emmett Till Memorial Commission launched the Emmett Till Memory Project to respond to these acts of vandalism by creating digital memorials that could not be defaced.

The collaboration began after a chapter of Tell's dissertation began to circulate among activists in the Mississippi Delta. Weems and local community organizers and historians invited Tell to the area. "It was a transformative trip for me," Tell says—including engagement with significant people and places from the abduction and murder of Emmett Till.

"What was going on then, the big anxiety was after 50 years of silence … the state of Mississippi was finally putting up roadside markers and doing work to commemorate the memory of Emmett Till. But no sooner would they put a sign up than it would be stolen or shot with bullet holes or thrown in the river," Tell continues. "There was this anxiety about how we can commemorate these sites in a way that's relatively vandal proof. That was combined with another problem, that the community organizers doing the work in the Delta didn't have the historical background to be able to tell the nuance of the story."

Phase 1: A Prototype in Partnership With Google

While Tell was touring the Mississippi Delta, his hosts suggested creating a five-site GPS-enabled mobile app to tell Till's story. Tell made contact with Google, which at the time owned Field Trip—an app that alerts users to sites of interest in their immediate vicinity.

"They said, we'll do this, but we need you to have 50 sites and not 5 sites. So I went back down there and worked with Patrick Weems," Tell explained. "Patrick and I spent two weeks driving around the Delta, talking to people, and figuring out what could be sites we could use. Lo and behold, we came up with these fifty sites. For sure, some of them are rather distant from the Till story. Including them was the cost of getting our prototype on Google."

Phase 2: The Emmett Till Memory Project App

In August 2019, Tell and the Emmett Till Memory Project Team launched a new dedicated website and app using the National Endowment for the Humanities-funded CurateScape platform.

The app offers a more deliberately curated experience, featuring 18 rather than the initial 50 sites. This arrangement is both more manageable for users and better suited to the project's core mission of enabling individuals to engage thoughtfully with Till's story. "Our hope was that if people thought critically about the murder, then Till's memory would live in their minds, instead of simply stored online," Tell explains. "Our mechanism for encouraging people to thoughtfully engage the murder was to tell the story from the perspective of each site. For example, users standing near the courthouse would get the jury's version of the story, while users at the site where the black press stayed would get their version of the story. These are very different stories, and that is the point."

Reducing the number of sites from 50 to 18 makes this possible, Tell notes. "With 18 sites on the CurateScape platform, we guarantee that no matter what route a user chooses, they will be confronted with different stories of Till's murder and, accordingly, forced to think about the murder, weigh the evidence, and decide for themselves what story they want to believe."

CurateScape is an NEH-funded web and mobile app platform that uses Omeka to publish location-based content.

"CurateScape has been a fantastic experience," Tell reflects. "Although it is far from free, it was far more competitive financially than other options we had been exploring. CurateScape uses a common code for all its projects. While this results in a certain aesthetic and functional similarity across projects, it also allows CurateScape to keep the costs down. We have found CurateScape to be easy to work with, their platform easy to use, and their staff responsive to the unique needs and challenges of the Emmett Till Memory Project. I recommend CurateScape without reservation."

What's Next for the Emmett Till Memory Project

Looking to the future, Tell plans growth in three areas. First, the Emmett Till Memory Project will add five sites in Chicago, where Till lived, selected by the Till family. Second, historical photographs will be added to the app with funding from the Institute of Museum & Library Services. Third, Tell and the project team will ensure that each site features archival documents to support the app's narrative.

Beyond these areas of growth, Tell explained that the Emmett Till Memory Project will continue to grow beyond the app. "Our agreement with CurateScape lasts for two years, so we are already thinking about next steps," Tell explains. "Our largest goal is to use the Emmett Till Memory Project as the basis for a digital exhibit to be housed at the Emmett Till Interpretive Center in Sumner, MS, ... includ[ing] the app, a digital timeline on a touch-screen kiosk, Virtual Reality immersive learning experiences, and oral histories. While the exhibit would be housed at the Interpretive Center in Sumner, it could travel to any library or museum that has the technological capacity to display it."

DNA Discussion Project

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Anita Foeman; Bessie Lawton

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Participating students at West Chester University of Pennsylvania give DNA samples. Image courtesy of Anita Foeman.

The DNA Discussion Project uses commercially available DNA ancestry tests to open up conversations about race and identity. Led by Anita Foeman and Bessie Lawton of West Chester University of Pennsylvania, participants have their DNA analyzed and then come together to discuss the questions their results sometimes raise: Were the results what participants expected? What do they mean for participants and their understanding of race, self, and community?

The project takes place largely on West Chester University's campus, though Foeman and Lawton do bring the project to other universities and organizations.

The DNA Discussion Project grew out of Foeman's experience facilitating diversity training programs and excitement about the human genome project.

"I saw that in the human genome project you could look at people's ancestry," Foeman recalls. "I remember thinking there are a bunch of people walking around with this narrative about race and putting people in 'silos.' I bet their profiles are much more complicated than that. As if by magic at the same moment this was coming together, our Multicultural Faculty Commission asked if anybody wanted to apply for these small grants and to do something that was nontraditional around race."

Foeman applied for and was awarded a $1,500 grant, which at the time covered three tests. "I tested one person who identified as Black, one person who identified as white, and one person who identified as biracial Black-

white. Now the readouts of the tests were not anything they are today. Today you get these really neat pie charts with percentages. At that time, it was a list of things that might be in your background. But even in that, you could already see that the story that we walk around with in terms of race was much too narrow," Foeman recalls.

The project's protocol has remained stable over the years, although it has been tweaked occasionally to shift research objectives for different grants. It begins with a pre-survey, in which facilitators ask participants what they expect and how they would define themselves racially.

"Then we do the saliva test," Foeman explains. "It takes about six weeks to get back. If I do it in a class, then we have reading and discussions [during that time]. But sometimes when we do it with community people with other mixed groups, people go away for a period of time and then they come back for the reveal."

At the time when the results of the survey are shared, the group assembles to discuss the relationship between what they expected to find and what they found and to fill out a post-survey, which has led to a number of scholarly publications.

"There are really two kinds of conversations that take place," Foeman states. "One is: what's the difference between what I expected and what I found? So it's internal and that's where we start. What surprised you about your own narrative? Can you explain it? What do you think? And then the second conversation is: How does this then join you to people in unexpected or expected ways?"

The conversation can be personal, of course. It can uncover things that can be uncomfortable. Discomfort is not necessarily bad, though. "If you can catch people off guard with their own story, then that's like rebooting the conversation around race," Foeman says. "Because if I don't even know what my story is, then maybe I should be a little more humble about trying to identify what box somebody else fits into."

Comparison of the pre- and post-surveys has enabled Foeman and Lawton to explore conceptions of race in a new way.

"We look at how [participants] responded, what they said on the pre-survey and what they said on the post-survey in terms of what surprised them," Foeman explains. "We looked at the different attitudes that they have expressed about race or different groups. One project that we did was on interracial individuals and we wanted to look at how fluid people were in terms of their racial identity. We wanted to see if people who are already identified as multiracial were willing to change their racial identification based on a DNA test." This and other studies are available on the project website.

Women Who Rock

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Sonnet Retman; Michelle Habell-Pallán

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities at the University of Washington-Seattle

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Ladies First's CARA and Seattle Fandango Project; Home Alive; Washington Hall; Hidmo Restaurant; De Cajón Project; Sistah Sinema: Queer Women of Color Cinema; Open Hand Reel; 4Culture; Asian Pacific Islander Women & Family Safety Center; B-Girl Media; Central District Forum for Arts and Ideas; Green Bodies; Seattle Girls' School Latina Affinity Group; Social HeARTistry Educators (S.H.E.); Uzuri Productions; Zenyu Healing; StoryGarden Seattle; Seattle Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs; Youth Speaks; ASUW Women's Action Commission; FEEST: Food Empowerment Education Sustainability Team

Alice Bag and Medusa deliver the keynote at the 2012 Women Who Rock unconference. Photo by Angelica Macklin. Image courtesy of Women Who Rock.

In the cradle of grunge music, the University of Washington's Women Who Rock (WWR) is exploring how women and popular music have impacted cultural and social justice movements. WWR brings together a range of partners including scholars, archivists, activists, musicians, performers, media-makers, and artists. The project involves interrelated work in three areas: project-based learning in classes at the University of Washington, an annual community-driven "unconference" and film festival, and an oral history archive created in collaboration with the University of Washington Libraries Digital Initiatives Program.

"This is a project that addresses the kind of intentional forgetting that's happened in much of popular music history around women's participation in music. We are speaking to a silence in the archives," co-director Sonnet Retman explains. The contributions of women, especially women of color like Willie Mae "Big Mama" Thornton, are not widely acknowledged. Thornton was the first to record "Hound Dog," which, though successful, has largely been eclipsed by Elvis Presley's version.

Women Who Rock addresses this silence, Retman continues: "Its underlying intellectual and political inquiry is about telling a different kind of story about pop music history. What would you do if you began pop music history by centering a country blues player like Memphis Minnie or Sister Rosetta Tharpe? What happens if you tell the story that way?"

In graduate and undergraduate courses at the University of Washington, WWR explores these questions through seminars, lectures, and project-based learning. Beginning in 2011, select classes have asked students to collect oral histories and contribute them to the Women Who Rock Digital Oral History Archive.

WWR has also served as an entry point for higher education: a number of community participants have entered the University of Washington as a result of the relationships they built through WWR, either embarking on higher education for the first time or returning after a break.

The annual unconference and film festival brings all partners together to explore the project's core areas of inquiry, women, music, cultural scenes, and social justice movements.

Initially, conference participants set the program of the unconference on the day of the event. It has evolved over the years and become increasingly pre-planned. The program is now set collaboratively in community meetings in the months leading up to the event. The final program features a range of offerings including dialogues, a bazaar, a film festival, and a keynote, as well as children's programming.

The curricular and public programming components of WWR come together in the Women Who Rock Digital Oral History Archive, which is hosted by the University of Washington Digital Libraries Initiatives. The growing archive collects oral histories and digital media from the courses, the unconference, and the film festival.

The library's involvement has helped address issues of sustainability for the archive, ensuring its preservation moving forward. As WWR continues to thrive, the archive will grow to reflect the project's contribution to the stories of women's impact in popular music and culture.

2023 Project Director Update

> The project has always been process oriented, valuing feminist convivencia, "the deliberate act of being with each other and of being present to each other," as its primary ethos (Gonzalez 2014). We keenly felt the loss of convivencia when the pandemic in spring of 2020 forced us to adopt remote digital modes of engagement in our teaching, research and conference planning. Yet, we found other ways to work in collaboration. In our undergraduate online course, Rock the Archive: Hip Hop, Indie, Pop and New Media, for example, we led our students in an ofrenda project where they used the Adobe Spark platform to build virtual ofrendas dedicated to musicians who changed the story of popular music across the Americas, creating a powerful collective visual story of mourning, remembrance and resilience.
>
> Out of necessity, then, our collective digital praxis expanded. We assembled a tool kit of remote digital media that eventually augmented our in-person gatherings as well. For instance, during Spring 2022, in WWR's Plurifeminisms Across Abya Yala Symposium and Humanities Public Engagement Encuentro, scholars, musicians, and community members dialogued about reproductive rights and Indigenous and Black feminisms across Latin America, simultaneously in-person and on Zoom. In the process, we learned that language justice is key to public humanities. Because our guests' mother tongues included Spanish, English, Kichwa, and K'iche, we needed simultaneous interpretation in-person and on Zoom to engage in conversation, yet another instance of an event's format and structure being intimately tied to its political commitments and outcomes. Our use of digital platforms helped finesse these complex forms of engagement across communities, languages and geographies. We draw upon Women Who Rock's expanded digital praxis as we envision the project's next phase, a Sound Practices Collaboratory, a cross-campus and community venture that seeks to create a dedicated recording and collaboration hub for sound studies practice at the UW.
>
> — Sonnet Retman and Michelle Habell-Pallán, University of Washington

Hi-Phi Nation

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Barry Lam

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Vassar College

Cover art from *Hi-Phi Nation* Season 2, Episode 8 by Katherine M. Zhou. Image courtesy of Barry Lam.

Hi-Phi Nation is a story-driven podcast about philosophy created and hosted by Barry Lam of Vassar College. In the stylistic tradition of NPR's *This American Life* and *Freakonomics*, the podcast addresses big questions: What is love? Why do we honor the wishes of the dead in wills and trusts, tying up resources long after they have passed away? Why do we accept soldiers killing in war but not outside of war?

Lam investigates these questions, weaving non-fiction storytelling with philosophical discussion with field experts.

"Every episode has a story in it. It's up to half of it, that gets either a block of its own time or it gets weaved in and out of the episode," Lam explains. "The stories I select are the ones where a central conflict cannot really be resolved or understood unless you think about some philosophical topic in a certain way." To illuminate this central conflict, Lam invites philosophical experts. "They are going to help us understand so that we can think through if not resolve the conflict of the story," Lam explains.

This has been Lam's model from the very first episode, which explores the story and ethics of what has become of the Hershey's chocolate fortune after Milton Hershey's death in 1945. Milton Hershey left his fortune to the Milton Hershey School, a private philanthropic boarding school originally for male orphans in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

"The central tension in that story is that on the one hand we feel that if somebody earns money, they get to say what happens to that money when they die. Nobody else gets to say what happens to that money when they die," Lam explains. "What happened in the ensuing years since that happened, is that that chocolate fortune and the amusement park fortune grew so large it's basically the gross domestic product of some countries. It's all going to the service for this small school." The unintended consequences of this are significant, Lam continues. "When you multiply that kind of thing that's happening all across the country, what you have is part of the story of growing wealth inequality that has nothing to do with the rich getting richer. It all has to do with the fact that wealth that's 100 years old can be tied up forever according to wishes of somebody who died a long time ago."

The story of the Milton Hershey's bequest raises difficult philosophical questions.

"I go through a lot of the actual investigative story of what's going on in Hershey to raise the problem of how do we think about this issue of the rights to wealth after death," Lam explains. "It's a philosophical topic: what

constitutes a right and how long does that right hold on for? Is it eternal? What kind of world would that end up producing? If we think it's an unjust world, what is the relevant moral principle that allows us to put a limit on what people can do with their wealth after their death? Academic philosophers have written about that kind of thing. The story is a story of a particular instance of it."

The narrative podcast has proven to be very well-suited to the exploration of philosophical questions, Lam explains.

"My experience has been that philosophical questions don't automatically resonate with every style of thinker," Lam observes. "There is a kind of human thinker that naturally gravitates toward abstract questions that have a broad reach, but it's a subset. It's probably a smaller subset than 50 percent. On the other hand, personal experience—and also a wide range of cognitive science—shows that narrative appeals to close to 100 percent of people. When you have a story about individual characters, things happening, there being a conflict, that conflict pulling people in opposite ways towards a resolution, that has an emotional hit."

Podcasting offers Lam ways to connect with audience members that differ from the ways people engage with writing. For rigorous philosophical argumentation, print is the best method of dissemination, Lam explains. But audio has its advantages. "There is a lot that audio can do that print can't do. There is an emotional and aesthetic impact you can have through audio. People can engage with it when they can't engage in print, when they're driving, when they're at the gym, or when they're doing the dishes," Lam says. "You have soundtracking and scoring that can produce motion for you, moving things along or having people stop when you want them to stop and think about something for a second. You can highlight that by introducing gaps, not just silence but moments of music."

The experience of podcasting has illuminated the value of different kinds of philosophical communication for Lam. In academic writing, there is a rigor that moves the field forward. Lam sees complementary value in the type of writing that is less regimented and is likely to have a broader appeal that he is sharing across the U.S. and around the world through *Hi-Phi Nation*.

2023 Project Director Update

> Since 2018, *Hi-Phi Nation* was signed to a major podcast network, Slate, and has released four more seasons, including seasons dedicated to philosophy and the criminal justice system, and philosophy and emerging technologies. Other seasons featured a mini-series on the life and work of David Kellogg Lewis, and a series on the cultural history and philosophical significance of monsters. On the basis of the show, Barry Lam has started a major initiative, Philosophy in Media, that seeks to expand access and publishing of philosophical work in popular media such as magazines, newspapers, podcasts, and videos.
>
> — Barry Lam, Vassar College

Ecohumanities for Cities in Crisis: Conversations for Miami's Future

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
April Merleaux

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Illinois-Chicago

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
The Wolfsonian-Florida International University; HistoryMiami Museum; Vizcaya Museum & Gardens; Miami-Dade County Public Schools; Catalyst Miami; The Deering Estate; The Eco-Theater Lab; Miami Dade County Public Library System; Historic Hampton House; The Kampong

Participants discuss the "Politics and Poetics of Environmental Crisis" in an Ecohumanities for Cities in Crisis event at The Wolfsonian-Florida International University in 2016. Image courtesy of Florida International University.

South Florida's fate has always been bound with its climate, which has been a major draw for residents and tourists. As rising sea levels impact life in the region, Ecohumanities for Cities in Crisis: Conversations for Miami's Future—a project based out of Florida International University—worked with a range of partners to generate community conversations over the course of 2016–2017 about Miami's changing climate. Project Director April Merleaux—now at Hampshire College—explains: "The goal of the Ecohumanities for Cities in Crisis project was to put environmental activists, artists, and humanities scholars in conversation with the general public around questions of climate change, sea level rise, and adaptation in Miami."

There have been a number of public efforts to address climate change in Miami, Merleaux notes. These efforts involved planning officials, engineers, and scientists at the research universities in Miami. "The scientific community is thinking about ecological and technical processes and ways that those issues might be addressed," Merleaux explains. "Then there's also a social scientific and public policy contingent of people, who are thinking about the policy implications of those things—but what there really hasn't been as much of … are these more open-ended discussions about what kinds of values might guide the decision making."

This is where Ecohumanities for Cities in Crisis has intervened, beginning conversations across communities in Miami about who makes these decisions and how they are made.

"The thing that the humanities can do is offer a way for people—particularly people who might not come into conversation with each other otherwise or who might not have seen themselves as environmentalists or engaged in environmental issues—to start to think about what it means to be in this environmentally vulnerable place," Merleaux explains. "What does it mean to be in a place that is a city built around migration? [Miami is] a city built around global migration, some of which are migrations in response to environmental catastrophes—and then

to potentially be facing another kind of migration out of this place as it becomes uninhabitable?" Conversations focused on how Miami can respond to challenges, Merleaux continues. "We were having conversations that were not necessarily solutions-focused conversations, but conversations that were more about values and ideas and ways of thinking about communities and selves in relation to the environment."

Events followed the same basic formula. "Every event needed to have at least one humanities scholar, usually more than one," Merleaux says. "Every event had to have at least one person who kind of thought of themselves as an environmental activist in some form and at least one person who thought of themselves as an artist." To facilitate conversation, Merleaux explains that university-based participants engaged as community members. "I really encouraged them to think of themselves as being members of the community, equal participants in the discussion yet equal participants who had a particular kind of contribution to the conversation."

In partnership with cultural institutions around Miami, Ecohumanities for Cities in Crisis brought these questions to different communities with themed panels and discussions. Working with different community partners helped Merleaux and the project team craft and promote programs that would reach and appeal to different communities in diverse South Florida. "Each of the programs would be slightly different in that it was somewhat tailored to the particular strengths of each of the partner organizations, Merleaux explains." At Vizcaya Museum & Gardens, local environmental humanities scholars discussed the role arts and culture can play in the exploration of attitudes towards climate change. Edda L. Fields-Black lectured and facilitated a community conversation on living with nature in the African diaspora at the Hampton House, a historically preserved motel that was a venue for African American musicians in the Jim Crow Era.

Leading this project has enriched Merleaux's teaching. "I've used some of the discussion techniques in classes," Merleaux explains. "I also just taught a course that was very much inspired by the project. It was sort of a condensation of the various ideas that have been bouncing around in my head since I did the project." It has also helped Merleaux appreciate the importance of conversation in public humanities programming. "I really feel so strongly that public programming around the humanities has to decenter the expert on a stage," Merleaux notes. "Successful public humanities programming has to be about facilitating conversations and not about transferring information or knowledge."

In this connection, humanities scholars need to find conversation topics that people are having or need to have. "There often are these issues that are clearly very vibrant, hotly discussed local issues. You can sort of identify these issues by whether there are other people in other disciplines working on them." Merleaux notes. "So in this case, there are lots of scientists and lots of public policy people thinking about these questions like sea level rise and climate change. But humanities scholars have not yet really claimed a place. And so I would say this was one of the things that really made for the success of this is that there was lots of interest and very little of it was coming from a humanities perspective. It was a really unique opportunity to show what kinds of things humanities scholars can do and say and what kinds of conversations can be facilitated."

Humanities and the Sunshine State

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Sophia Krzys Acord; Steve Noll; Christy Rodkin; Julie Bokor

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere at the University of Florida

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Florida Humanities Council; University of Florida Center for Precollegiate Education and Training

K–14 educators and students explore the past, present, and future of water in Florida by visiting Florida's diverse ecological environments. Image courtesy of the University of Florida Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere.

In partnership with the Florida Humanities Council, the University of Florida (UF) Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere (CHPS) is exploring the past, present, and future of water in Florida. In two separate week-long residential summer programs with high school students and K–14 and informal educators on campus in Gainesville, the program helps introduce diverse students from across the state to the humanities.

The high school program and the educators' program share a core curriculum focused on storytelling, CHPS Associate Director Sophia Krzys Acord explains. "Our theme is Florida water stories and we've embraced the nomenclature of storytelling ... to say that we live in a place that we don't necessarily understand. We don't know the stories of people outside of our families. We might not even know our family stories. What the humanities do is help us to understand the stories of all the groups that live in Florida."

Humanities in the Sunshine State is collaborative in its design and its implementation. Florida Humanities Council Associate Director Patricia Putman explains that its partnership with the university enables the humanities council to magnify its impact across the state "without being on the ground every minute of every day." The collaboration extends beyond the funding of the program, Putman continues: "As a state council with a limited budget and limited resources, we rely on our partners to implement programming. But we're not simply writing a check. We were very collaborative from the beginning, sharing best practices from teachers' programs that we have run in the past; consulting on the agenda and site visits; and connecting [the Center] to other scholars that we've used both at the University and throughout the other communities that they take the kids to."

The humanities are as important as ever for high school students, Putman says: "Now more than ever, it's so important that young kids are learning the value of civil discourse and just some of these basic tenets of the humanities."

The programs introduce Floridians to the humanities by approaching Florida's relationship with water and climate change from a number of disciplinary perspectives. "The foundation of the workshop is history, because you need to understand why Florida has the relationship to water that it does," Acord explains. As the program's lead instructor Steve Noll explains, "For the longest time in Florida, too much water was the problem. Therefore, we

worked to get rid of the water by filling and dredging and building. As the state's growth exploded after World War II, we began trying to reclaim and pump up water from the aquifer to meet the needs of agriculture, development, and industry, which created new water problems."

Perspectives from other disciplines add richness to the curriculum. Religious studies helps participants understand the relationships between water and sacred space, in particular how different groups including Indigenous populations have valued water and conceived of the environment. Studying languages and literature helps participants understand the lives of different groups in Florida. "We've had a Haitian Creole studies scholar talk about the ways in which Haitian Americans talk about social issues through rap music," Acord explains.

Archaeology has proven to be an especially powerful way of approaching Florida's environmental history. "Archaeology is wonderful because those are our oldest stories," Acord says. "The archaeologists help us to see how the issues we're facing in Florida actually are not new. People have been adapting to different kinds of climatic variations, different types of sea level rise, for millennia, and their lives provide valuable lessons that we could learn from in terms of living flexibly with water instead of trying to control it."

During their time on campus, teachers produce "action plans" to incorporate what they've learned into existing state-approved standards for use during the school year. The action plans are also uploaded on the program's website, making them available for a broader group of teachers.

Teachers have incorporated what they have learned in a number of ways. One participating AP environmental science teacher in a Tampa-area public school uses oral history to explore environmental history, Acord says: "They do oral histories with their grandparents about weather events, then they correlate these events with [historical] geographic data." The oral histories "let students look at people's actual experiences of what these weather fluctuations were. We get a lot of science teachers. I think the classroom teachers especially see the humanities as a way to make what they teach real and personalized and relate to Florida."

Other teachers have used literature and writing in creative ways. "We have a high school biology teacher in Jacksonville who has partnered with a world history teacher to plant a Columbian Exchange Garden of indigenous plants," Acord says. The two teachers combined their lessons around this garden, learning about plant biology while examining the ethics and global context of sustainable actions. "One of our first teachers on the program is a Language Arts teacher," Acord continues. "She developed an action plan to teach argumentative writing, which is in the state standards, by having the students do a letter campaign to UNESCO to argue that the Florida Springs should be put on the World Heritage List."

The summer programs on water are part of CHPS' broader commitment to mutually beneficial engagement with public partners. The Center offers a series of public lectures followed by smaller seminar discussions to encourage conversation. The Center also convenes an Imagining America working group for faculty, which has led to the creation of professional development activities relating to engaged scholarship. The Center offers a number of funding lines as well, including graduate fellowships and grants for faculty and community partners to fund collaborative projects. Center-affiliated faculty are also involved in committees and working groups across the university to encourage the formal recognition of publicly engaged scholarship.

Amplifying Community Voices and Histories

Many publicly engaged humanities projects are rooted in an effort to highlight stories that are underrepresented in a community's understanding of its past and present. These projects generally depend on robust collaborations with community members to identify artifacts and narratives. The projects then bring a higher profile to these stories through public programming that introduces the community members' diverse experiences with the goal of shifting understandings of the wider community.

Chicory Revitalization Project

PUBLISHED
February 2021

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Mary Rizzo

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Rutgers University-Newark

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Writers in Baltimore Schools; Dewmore Baltimore; Johns Hopkins University Writing Seminar; Enoch Pratt Free Library; University of Maryland, Baltimore Countyty

April 1974 cover of *Chicory* magazine. Image courtesy of Enoch Pratt Free Library.

Using the poetry of Baltimore's young people from the 1960s–80s published in *Chicory* magazine, the *Chicory* Revitalization Project is engaging high school and college students in conversations about the city of Baltimore and its history. With funding from the Whiting Foundation, Rutgers University history professor Mary Rizzo has leveraged collaborations with trusted community organizations to bring *Chicory* magazine back into the public domain in creative and accessible ways.

Chicory was a publication in circulation from 1966–1983 that printed poems, stories, plays, and essays by working-class Black Americans living in Baltimore. Yet more than a literary magazine, *Chicory* was itself a public humanities project. Funded with War on Poverty funds and housed within the Enoch Pratt Free Library, the magazine's editors (Sam Cornish, Lucian Dixon, Augustus Brathwaite, Melvin Brown, and Everett Adam Jackson) partnered with organizations and institutions around Baltimore—such as a school for pregnant teens and the local jail—to find willing writers. Not only did *Chicory* encourage community members to engage with Baltimore's cultural institutions, *Chicory* was also a voice of the Black Arts Movement, offering, in the words of Cornish, "people

who don't like to write but have something to say" a space to convene around a shared Black identity and social justice issues.

Consistent with *Chicory*'s earlier role, the *Chicory* Revitalization Project has digitized the magazine's full corpus and is using the magazine as a primary source to guide writing workshops, surface local oral histories, and inform classroom projects that draw out the relationship between Baltimore's past and its present. Rizzo first encountered *Chicory* in Pratt's archive while doing research for her book *Come and Be Shocked*, which examines how Baltimore's urban leaders from the mid-20th to early-21st centuries have used art to shape how the city is seen and how artists have fought back through their own representations. In working to make *Chicory* accessible to the public again, Rizzo—herself a university researcher located in Newark—knew that for both logistical and ethical reasons horizontal partnerships with well-respected community organizations would help the project connect with the city's youth in impactful and enduring ways. In 2018, Rizzo used her Whiting Foundation Seed Grant funding to assemble the *Chicory* Advisory Group, a team made up of Baltimore community members and stakeholders invested in *Chicory*'s future, including two of the magazine's former editors, Melvin Brown and Everett Adam Jackson.

As a result of those initial Advisory Group conversations, *Chicory*'s wide-ranging content is being used as a foundation for community writing workshops and student events across Baltimore. During an event in celebration of the one-year birthday of DewMore Baltimore, a cultural organization that uses poetry and art to foster civic engagement with Baltimore's historically marginalized youth, students celebrated the city by drawing connections between *Chicory*'s content and their own lives. Students read and discussed selected poems, created their own art in response, and shared their works during an open mic session. Other events with Writers in Baltimore Schools, an organization that hosts after-school writing programs with middle school and high school students, have similarly used *Chicory* during their Senior Reading and Year-End Showcase. These events treat *Chicory*'s poetry as an entry point for students to better understand the past and make connections to the present.

Rizzo noted how in these workshops students are particularly keen to draw out similarities between the social issues of Baltimore's past and their endurance in the present, particularly the prevalence of anti-Black violence and over-policing in the Black Lives Matter moment. Rizzo reflected: "Certainly the students are living in the aftermath of the murder of Freddie Gray and the 'riots' or uprisings that happened in Baltimore in 2015. Because *Chicory* encompasses the late 1960's era of urban unrest there is a real kind of connection point there as they are trying to figure out what it means to call something a riot or uprising." Conversations in student workshops not only prime important civic dialogue around issues specific to Baltimore but also make space for conversations about identity. As Rizzo noted, "these are young people, they're figuring out their own identities. So, not everything that they're interested in is about The Social in terms of big historical ideas. A lot of what they're interested in is about themselves and relating to people who were like them."

In her own undergraduate teaching at Rutgers, Rizzo has also used *Chicory* as an example of place-based public history for her students and developed a final project in partnership with the Peale Center for Baltimore History and Architecture. In her intro to urban history class, Rizzo asked her students to read and respond to poems from *Chicory* that were connected to a specific place in Baltimore and that spoke to them personally. Students then produced audio essays that contributed to the "Be Here Stories" collection housed on the Peale Center website. In other courses, Rizzo has used *Chicory* poems alongside historical documents as a way of drawing out differences in narrative and perspective for students.

Beyond the classroom and workshop spaces, Rizzo has used the work of digitizing *Chicory* to ensure that the magazine is not only preserved for future generations but also broadly accessible, which she sees as a question of equity. Rizzo, who is also the associate director of Public and Digital Humanities Initiatives at Rutgers, saw the need to "break open the digital archive" for young people and extend the public reach of *Chicory* beyond its virtual repository on Enoch Pratt's Digital Maryland website. The *Chicory* Revitalization Project's Instagram page, created by Rutgers American studies doctoral candidate Sydney Johnson and run by American studies master's student Crystal Robinson, has served as one way of bringing *Chicory*'s rich visual content to the public. The page invites viewers to read the history of Black cultural production and expression onto *Chicory*'s cover art and content, offering opportunities for conversation among followers in the comments through reflective writing prompts and questions.

As the project grows Rizzo hopes to continue this digital preservation and access work by creating a website for *Chicory*'s poetry to exist as both art and historical document, where interviews with former editors, critical essays, virtual exhibits, and reflections enrich readers' ties to the magazine.

Coming to the Heartland

PUBLISHED
June 2021

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Elizabeth MacGonagle; Marta Caminero-Santangelo

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Kansas; The Hall Center for the Humanities; Kansas African Studies Center; The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at the University of Kansas

KU faculty Tanya Hartman's exhibition "When a Stranger Sojourns in Your Land" at Studios Inc in Kansas City.

When sharing stories of migration to the United States, we often focus on immigrant communities in densely populated cities on the east and west coasts. At the University of Kansas, however, The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CLACS), the Kansas African Studies Center (KASC), and the Hall Center for the Humanities have come together to support a collaborative research team to collect stories of migration in the "heartland."

Coming to the Heartland: Intergenerational Stories of Latin American and African Migration to Kansas is an engaged research and community programming initiative that uses the power of stories to connect immigrant communities in Kansas, including Wichita, Topeka, Kansas City, Garden City, and Dodge City. In these five cities and across the midwest, demographic changes due to immigration over the last decade have dramatically shifted the number of African and Latinx people in the region, especially from Senegal, Somalia, and Mexico. Through storytelling, Coming to the Heartland is hoping to digitally document the lived experiences of migration in this region and is working to bridge cultural gaps between generations and national identities. The project is led by Elizabeth MacGonagle, associate professor of history and African and American Studies and director of the Kansas African Studies Center, and Marta Caminero-Santangelo, professor of English and director of the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies. MacGonagle and Caminero-Santangelo also work with an interdisciplinary project team of faculty, staff, and students.

Coming to the Heartland builds on KASC's and CLACS's past research projects and networks within the region. At the African Studies Center, the Migration Stories Project has offered a range of programming for Kansas' African immigrant population. Funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the research team has collected migration stories of recent African migrants (specifically migrant youth) and individuals from Kansas' host communities. "Coming from these fields of history and English in the humanities, stories are this entree point for us to be able to unpack some of these bigger issues," MacGonagle notes. The Migration Stories project began with a public forum in Kansas City to establish the community's needs, and then offered a series of programs that helped migrant youth participants shape, interrogate, and share their experiences. Events included a

storytelling workshop, participation in public story slams at the Lawrence Arts Center, and workshops at local high schools in Wichita and Kansas City where high school students created videos to tell their stories in collaboration with KU undergraduate theater students. The Migration Stories Project also worked with public libraries to facilitate book group discussions and documentary viewings and relied on relationships with Humanities Kansas to gather participants and promote the events. "The NEH grant was about bringing humanities experts to the public square, so how do you connect" MacGonagle asks, "How do you connect the academy to the public square through stories?"

At the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, a similar effort to collect Latinx migration stories worked to document the presence of Latinx people in Kansas. With funding from the NEH, the center partnered with the PBS documentary *Latino Americans: 500 Years of History* to create public programming and educator workshops that engaged community members through the film. Another project, Portraits of Latinx Identity, commissioned a photographer to take portraits of Latinx people in Lawrence, which were then displayed in the Kansas Union gallery and published on a website alongside narrative essays of those photographed on what it meant to be Latinx in Kansas. In the classroom, Caminero-Santangelo collaborated with Tamara Falicov, a professor in film and media studies, to co-teach an undergraduate service-learning class called "Latin American immigration in Literature and Film." As a final project, students created *Stories From Our Neighbors*, an interview-based documentary in which undocumented immigrants told stories about their experiences with migration.

In joining forces, the Coming to the Heartland collaboration builds on this past interviewing and programming work at both Title VI centers, with an emphasis on cultivating intergenerational stories of migration. "The immigrant generation that arrived and the younger generations that grew up here don't always fully understand each other's experiences" Caminero-Santangelo notes, "and so we thought it would be great if we could get the generations sharing their stories with each other and potentially whole families contributing to the project we had in mind, but then it could be really multimedia and we could have audio or video recordings for the older generation (depending on what they were more comfortable with) and we could also have their archival photographs and photographs of objects that they brought with them or photographs of the places they'd left behind." Knowing that each generation has a different entry point into telling their story, the team took a multi-modal approach to story collection. While older generations might enter their family histories through family photographs, younger generations might feel more comfortable sharing their stories on social media, or on other digital platforms.

Given the project's many connection points, several centers on campus have played a role in supporting the project. In partnership with the Institute for Digital Research in the Humanities, Hall Center's digital and public humanities fellow, Slyvia Fernandez, has created an interactive bilingual story map that shows the trajectories of Latin Americans/Latinos and Africans who have made Kansas and the midwest region their home. The map is based on the project's collected stories and archival materials and works to humanize immigration data that often abstracts the movement of peoples across geographic borders. Alongside this map, each family that participates is given a digital copy of their memories and stories to preserve for future generations. Working with the Center for Undergraduate Research, first- and second-year undergraduate researchers tasked with interview collection and translation are supported with federal work-study funds through the center's Emerging Scholars program. As several of the student researchers are themselves first generation or have ties to immigrant communities in the area, they have leaned on their interpersonal relationships to build the network of interviewees.

Across the many interviews, now totaling 30 and growing, themes of generational cultural loss speak to the need to preserve family knowledge and culture amidst times of crisis and change. In interviews with the children of Mexican immigrants in Argentine, Kansas, Caminero-Santangelo recounts the frustrations of older interviewees with their children and grandchildren who could not speak the language or cook traditional dishes. Similarly, Caminero-Santangelo related moments of hesitancy amongst older generations to dig up old stories and traditions in the present amidst ongoing battles over citizenship. In the case of one young African migrant, her family was "going through so much now as an undocumented family that they just didn't talk about that stuff. And she said, you know, 'maybe after all this is over, maybe after we have a Dream Act, maybe after we have comprehensive reform my family will be able to share those stories, but right now we just can't.'" Indeed, across interviews families express not being able to necessarily tell each other their stories, much less the wider public. Through the project's many public programming offerings and preservation efforts, Coming to the Heartland aims to make space for these stories to breathe.

Another resonant theme across migration stories is the need for advocacy around issues related to immigrant justice, and the power of stories in facilitating local and national actions. Screenings of the *Stories From Our Neighbors* documentary have served as fundraisers for Centro Hispano, a community organization in Lawrence that offers services for Latin American immigrants and DACA scholarships. In each of the project's five cities, funds will be directed to a community organization that serves the needs of project participants. The project team is planning an educator workshop that will build on the themes of the collected stories and train educators to help their immigrant students tell their stories in their own voices. As the project grows, the team hopes that these migration stories will continue to evolve. "These stories aren't supposed to be static stories," says Caminero-Santangelo, "they're supposed to be developing and collective stories, individual stories, and shaped by the back and forth."

Newest Americans

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Tim Raphael; Julie Winokur; Ed Kashi

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Rutgers University-Newark Center for Migration and the Global City

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
VII Photo; Talking Eyes Media

Mayor Ras Baraka enters the chamber before giving his first State of the City address in Newark, New Jersey on March 18, 2015. Photo by Ashley Gilbertson. Image courtesy of VII Photo/Newest Americans.

Newest Americans tells the stories of Newark, New Jersey: of its residents and university students who are migrants and immigrants from all around the world living together in an urban metropolis. Newest Americans is a "multimedia collaboratory" led by Tim Raphael of Rutgers University Newark, Julie Winokur of Talking Eyes Media, and Ed Kashi of VII Photo. The project brings together faculty, students, journalists, media-makers, and artists through an online publication and community events that celebrate Newark as a global city.

"Our stories emanate from the campus of Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey, where the newest Americans from all over the world are acquiring a college education and social mobility," Raphael explains in the first issue's letter from the editor. "It is here in Newark that their stories converge with those of immigrant Jews and Catholics, Portuguese, Germans, Italians, and Irish, as well as African Americans who arrived as part of the Great Migration, the largest internal migration in American history. Newark has always been a crucible for the construction of new American identities. It is also the connective thread that ties these new immigrant journeys to the foundational story of American identity born of migration and transformation."

Newest Americans is a collaboration between the city's public university and private, professional media makers to tell Newark's stories, Winokur explains. "We felt that we could pair up the expertise of faculty with professional media makers to explore ways to tell stories that might be groundbreaking." Capitalizing on some of the existing archives at the university and in the city, the project translates stories of migration and immigration for larger, younger, and more diverse audiences: what Raphael calls "activating the archives."

"For way too long, there has been a fetishization of archives as a really important and necessary thing for scholars to create, but very little attention has been paid to how you actually get those archives out into the hands of people in ways that are useful to them," Raphael says. "They're largely the province of scholars. Our belief is that they are far too important to be left solely for the use and purpose of academic scholarship."

The project's work with the Krueger-Scott African-American Oral History Archive is illustrative.

"It's an archive of over 120 interviews with African American Newarkers who moved here during the Great Migration," Raphael explains. "It's a project that started over 8 years ago, when a grad student of mine discovered microcassette tapes on the back shelf of the Newark public library with this remarkable collection of interviews no one had listened to since they were conducted. So we digitized, cataloged, and created a website for the interviews and began creating media from them: a series of short films, audio pieces, articles for journals, glass book sculptures, and two exhibits here in Newark."

The work with the Krueger-Scott African-American Oral History Archive often involves students at Rutgers University-Newark. Newest Americans partnered with Newark artist Adrienne Wheeler and the founder of the ongoing GlassBooks Project, Nick Kline—a faculty member in the Department of Arts, Culture, and Media. In Kline's Book Arts class, students were asked to engage with the archive. "Working with a selection of six narratives, Kline, Wheeler and the students created book sculptures made of glass, inspired by the remarkable life stories related by the narrators of the collection," Samantha Boardman explains in the Summer 2015 issue of Newest Americans. "[The project] explores the effects of the seismic change the Great Migration brought to individuals, their families, the City of Newark and the country at large. The strength, fragility and weight of the glass personify the emotional impact of this massive historical event at the human level." The books were displayed as part of a larger multimedia exhibition in the Gateway Gallery in Newark.

Students at Rutgers-Newark participate in this project through interdisciplinary coursework and student research.

"We were able to take advantage of our students here, who have experience which is both unique when you combine all different backgrounds of our students and that is also often lacking from scholarly studies of immigration," Raphael says. "Since the beginning of the project we have had undergraduate and graduate fellows working on the project. We've been teaching classes and developing curricula around Newest Americans media. We've also been working with students to conduct research, identify stories, and create high-quality broadcast-quality media from the research."

The project's multimedia approach was by design, Winokur emphasizes, in order to find "fresh ways to tell stories."

"We decided that to do that we wanted to free ourselves to be able to tell those stories through visual media, through film, photography, written text—we decided we would do fiction and nonfiction," Winokur notes. "We didn't want to be beholden to any one discipline. We wanted to be able to play to the strengths of the story; the strengths of the collaborators that we were able to pull in on the project." The online publication embodies this approach. "From the conception we knew that we wanted to do an online magazine that was going to be a platform for storytelling to capture all the materials we were generating," Winokur continues. "We knew we wanted an online magazine as a living breathing document that is multimedia highly accessible to anybody that is interested."

Salinas Chinatown Oral History Project

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Seth Pollack

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
California State University-Monterey Bay

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Asian Cultural Experience; Community Organizations in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties

CSUMB students conducting interviews as part of the Salinas Chinatown Oral History Project. Photo by Kristen LaFollette.

At California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB), service learning is an integral part of the student experience. Coordinated by the Service Learning Institute (SLI), service learning has been a curricular requirement since the university's founding. As a part of the university's general education program, undergraduates take two service learning courses: a lower-division introduction to the theory, method, and practice of service learning; and an upper-division course in their major. In the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, this has involved work in Salinas' Chinatown, collecting oral histories, engaging the community, and building the collection for a new museum on the neighborhood's history.

CSUMB was founded in 1995 with service to the community expressed as a part of its vision statement, with a particular focus on "the diverse people of California, especially the working class and historically undereducated and low-income populations." Service and community partnership are an integral part of the university, the vision statement continues: "The university will be a collaborative, intellectual community distinguished by partnerships with existing institutions both public and private, cooperative agreements which enable students, faculty, and staff to cross institutional boundaries for innovative instruction, broadly defined scholarly and creative activity, and coordinated community service."

With these goals in mind, the SLI was founded as an academic department within CSUMB. Director Seth Pollack explains that this status enables the SLI to both support service learning across the university and to deliver courses, ensuring consistency and advancing service learning as more than just an approach to student learning. "At CSUMB we see service learning as not just a pedagogy, how to teach the knowledge of your discipline," Pollack says. "We see service learning as a way to rethink the knowledge of your discipline through the lenses of service, social responsibility, and social justice."

For humanities students in the museum studies and the oral history and community memory programs, service learning has helped them to become directly involved in telling a more inclusive version of the region's history. "Monterey has a number of historic buildings and museums. Our museum studies program initially was doing

their service learning by sending students out into these museums on internships," Pollack explains. "But we recognized that there was something missing. With the museum studies faculty, we redesigned the course to help students think more deeply and critically about social responsibility as future museum professionals. And what emerged from that was that students needed to learn more than just how to do accession of new items to a collection and how to clean items and mount exhibitions. Students needed to learn about how communities define what has value: artistic value; historic value; cultural value; and be directly involved in that process with our communities."

Working with faculty in museum studies and the Oral History & Community Memory Archive, the SLI helped reimagine service learning to address issues of social responsibility and social justice. "That led to a whole evolution of the curriculum and the partnerships, so that that program is doing some really interesting work about helping museums address the critical social challenges of our time and our context," Pollack explains. "For example, these programs have worked with the Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino immigrant communities to help build the foundation of a new Asian American museum in Salinas, which is our county seat, to be able to tell the hidden history and the important role that these communities played in our region. These stories were pretty much unknown and untold in our community. Now those stories have been represented and are part of the discourse. We have a fledgling museum, an active community organization (Asian Cultural Experience) committed to preserving its history, and are witnessing a revitalization of what was a destitute part of town."

In 2015–16, SLI assessed the significant impact service learning has on its students and the community.

Nearly all students reported positive changes in attitude towards service (97 percent) and the community—93 percent felt that they had made a "meaningful contribution to their community," 88 percent felt "more comfortable participating in the community," and 85 percent felt "a strong sense of commitment to being involved in the community."

The impact on Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties was significant, as well. Over the course of 2015–16, 2,840 students provided 97,220 hours of service in 118 courses at CSUMB. Partnering with 415 community organizations and schools, the monetary value CSUMB service learning students contributed $2,290,503.20 (calculated according to the Independent Sector Value of Community and Volunteer Service).

Perhaps most significantly for the region's economic viability and future, 54 percent of students who participated in service learning in 2015–2016 planned to continue working with their site after their semester ended.

An American Literary Landscape: Life, History, and Memory in Putnam County, Georgia

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Nicholas Allen; Theodore J. Kopcha; Christopher R. Lawton

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Willson Center for Humanities and Arts at the University of Georgia

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Georgia Humanities; Putnam County Charter School System; Eatonton-Putnam County Historical Society; University of Georgia College of Education; University of Georgia Richard B. Russell Library

A Putnam County Charter School System student conducts an oral history interview with Putnam County resident Mr. Melton Smith at the 2017 Butler-Baker Alumni Festival. Image courtesy the Willson Center for Humanities and Arts.

The University of Georgia's Willson Center for Humanities and Arts is working with high school administrators, educators, and students to explore the life of Alice Walker and the world where she grew up in Putnam County, Georgia.

The project is grounded in the research and exhibition of a collection of 200 photographic negatives depicting African American life in Putnam County around 1940. As Walker was born in 1944, the images in the collection of the National Archives depict the people and places that made up her world: the generations of her grandparents, her parents, and her peers. The first phase of the project will involve working with Putnam County High School students to research and display these images in an exhibition to be held in Putnam County. Willson Center Director Nicholas Allen sees potential for using these images to connect with current residents and landscapes. "As few families move into or out of Putnam County," Allen notes, "we expect to be able to identify many of the individuals and locations in the images, to make contemporary photographs of the sites, and to conduct related oral history interviews."

The Willson Center has partnered with the University of Georgia's Oral History Archivist and the Richard B. Russell Library to train Putnam County High School students to conduct the oral history interviews. The interviews will provide critical insight into the region's history and literature from the students' neighbors who lived through segregation and the ongoing struggle for civil rights.

The Willson Center will reach broader audiences in two ways: first, by creating and implementing a K–12 curriculum around the images and oral histories collected in partnership with the University of Georgia College of

Education and the Putnam County Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum; second, through a collaboration with award-winning Georgia playwright Josiah Watts. Watts wrote *The Sapelo Project*, a performance inspired by the language, stories, and culture of his native Sapelo Island. Together with Putnam faculty and students, Watts will use the collected images, oral histories, and the writings of Putnam County's other literary greats—Walker and Joel Chandler Harris—to create a performance piece that embodies Putnam County.

Building Relationships in Putnam County, Georgia

The Putnam County project continues the Willson Center's long-standing involvement with the region and its charter school system.

In 2015, Alice Walker served as the Delta Visiting Chair for Global Understanding at the University of Georgia. To prepare for Walker's tenure, the Putnam County High School integrated lessons on the region's history and literature into its curriculum. For a select group of students, the year of learning culminated with meeting Walker in Athens. The visit began a larger conversation with Walker about "the literary tapestry of Putnam County," Allen explains.

In 2017, the Willson Center expanded on this work with a day of public history programming focused on Walker and Harris. The day focused on supporting the community to tell its own stories by empowering them to digitize documents and photographs, collect oral histories, and share local music and readings from Walker and Harris connected with Putnam County.

An American Literary Landscape: Life, History, and Memory in Putnam County, Georgia will continue to amplify the Willson Center's impact in rural Georgia, connecting generations of citizens through the humanities. "Education is critical to the future of Georgia's rural counties," Allen says. "Our program is designed to engage students with applied humanistic learning through the history of their own community."

The Cambria Memory Project and the Scan PA Project

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Barbara Zaborowski

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Pennsylvania Highlands Community College; Hosting Solutions & Library Consulting; Commonwealth Libraries

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Cambria County Historical Society; St. Francis University; Johnstown Area Historical Association; Digital Public Library of America

Suffragette parade, Barnesboro, Cambria County, 1919.

Led by Barb Zaborowski, the National Endowment for the Humanities-funded Cambria Memory Project at Pennsylvania Highlands Community College is preserving Cambria County's rich but increasingly vulnerable cultural and industrial heritage. The region was populated by waves of immigrants from Wales, Ireland, and Eastern Europe, who came to the area in the 19th and early 20th centuries to find work in the coal and steel industries.

"The problem [today] is Cambria County's aging population," Zaborowski explains. "We have had steady outmigration of young people." As a result, some items of cultural heritage are being taken out of the West Central Pennsylvania county, left behind with parents, and can be forgotten, and ultimately discarded.

"We were losing our history, so we applied for the NEH grant," Zaborowski says.

The Cambria Memory Project included a series of community digitization days, during which community members were offered the opportunity to bring in their cherished family objects for digitization. Grant funds covered costs related to staffing, digitization equipment, and a series of public humanities programs that included lectures from local higher education institutions on the region's history.

Digitization events offered community members the opportunity to preserve—and in some cases access for the first time in years—their most cherished family memories. Participants left with their objects scanned or photographed for preservation; copies were given to them on USB drives and posted on PA Digital—the state's hub of the Digital Public Library of America.

From the Cambria Memory Project to the Scan PA Project

Following the digitization events, three public libraries in Cambria County reached out to Zaborowski to collaborate on digitizing their local history collections. Perceiving a need for scanning equipment in public libraries across the state, Commonwealth Libraries, and the Philadelphia-based Hosting Solutions & Library Consulting (HSLC) helped the project launch statewide as Scan PA.

Scan PA equips every library district in Pennsylvania with the resources and expertise to digitize items of the commonwealth's cultural heritage including photographs, letters, videos, and three-dimensional objects.

"We reached out to the district centers, and HSLC used their funding to put one set of equipment in district library centers in Pennsylvania," Zaborowski says. "Anybody in the district could borrow it. Any public library, any historical society, anybody who wanted to digitize anything."

Scan PA requires only that all scanned material be uploaded for posterity and public access to the PA digital, where they can be explored by all.

These Words

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Diane O'Donoghue; Susan Chinsen

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life at Tufts University

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Chinese Historical Society of New England

A visitor interacts with the window perf display of "These Words: A Century of Printing, Writing, and Reading" in Boston's Chinese Community. Image courtesy of Chinese Historical Society of New England.

"These Words: A Century of Printing, Writing, and Reading" showcased the rich history of printing, reading, and writing in Boston's Chinatown, with a bilingual open-air exhibition and series of public events. Created in collaboration with the Chinese Historical Society of New England, "These Words" preserved the neighborhood's rich history with the written word and helped amplify local voices calling for the reinstitution of a Chinatown branch library. Partly as a result of the exhibition's work, the community is now home to a temporary English- and Mandarin-focused branch of the Boston Public Library while the city plans for a permanent home for the library.

The exhibition was created by, with, and for the Chinese community of the neighborhood. All exhibition materials were bilingual, written in English and translated into Chinese by a local journalist to ensure broad accessibility. Most of the images used came from the Chinese Historical Society of New England, which collaborated in all stages of the research and production of the exhibition and associated programming, including an artistic projection event and a conference.

Co-curator Diane O'Donoghue explains that the exhibition was developed in order to both create an experience for the neighborhood and to make a historical case for the (at least temporary) reestablishment of the Chinatown branch of the Boston Public Library.

"'These Words' was an opportunity to utilize a format that is extremely prevalent in the humanities (an exhibition) ... in the service of both a neighborhood experience in the public sphere and activism on behalf of a very important issue within that particular neighborhood ... the return of the public library." O'Donoghue reflects. The exhibition "situate[s] the arguments … for that library in the context of 100 years of printing, reading, and writing, in that neighborhood."

The exhibition consisted of four outdoor panels, which told the story of the Boston neighborhood and its ongoing commitment to the written word. The first three were historical, focusing on the Oxford Street Community

Bulletin Board, a wall at Oxford Street and Beach Street on which the community communicated with posters; the Shanghai Printing Company, a bilingual printing company that printed everything from laundry tickets to texts for local universities; and the history of libraries in the Chinatown-area from 1896 to 1954.

The fourth panel focused on the more recent past, present, and future, describing community efforts to bring about a return of the Boston Public Library to Chinatown. This panel described work that began in 2001 when the community came together to form the Friends of the Chinatown Library committee. Working together, volunteers created a temporary library in a storefront and a reading room in an apartment complex.

It was important to the curators that the exhibition be outdoors.

"Because this had an advocacy mission rather than a purely archival exhibition mission, we wanted it to be something that people would see in the course of their daily life experience," O'Donoghue explains. "This achieved that."

In order to display these small items outdoors, the curators printed their panels as "window perfs"—high definition perforated window signs displayed in Chinatown in front of the historic China Trade Building and the Tufts Medical School Bookstore. Window perfs are typically used in advertising in shop windows and on public buses. They enabled high definition color printing on a large scale at a lower cost, highlighting the intricate details of objects as small as laundry tickets printed by the Shanghai Printing Company.

"These Words" also included a range of supplementary programming, including a projection of archival images of a community bulletin board onto the wall on which it was once affixed at Oxford and Beach.

"The wall on which all those postings had taken place for 70 years had been left untouched, so we planned nighttime projections that were popular and quite poignant," O'Donoghue explains. "Working with a projection artist, I was able to create a bilingual program where you would see the projection of the photographs from the archives back onto the original wall and it was very powerful."

O'Donoghue explains that the community's efforts to return a branch library to Chinatown had been "at a bit of a standstill," but this changed when the exhibition opening coincided with changes in leadership at City Hall and the Boston Public Library. The exhibition helped the community make the case for the legacy of the written word in the community and a new branch library. The temporary home of the new branch is in the China Trade Center—one of the two buildings in which the exhibition's window perfs were affixed.

While the exhibition is now closed, this exhibition model is highly replicable and indeed has already been employed in Providence, Rhode Island.

Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Gregory Rosenthal; Rachel Barton

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Roanoke College

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Roanoke Public Library; Roanoke Diversity Center

Members of the Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project march in the 2017 MLK Community Parade in Lexington, Virginia. Image courtesy of Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project.

In Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains, Gregory Samantha Rosenthal of Roanoke College is helping to lead a grassroots community-based public history initiative to tell the stories of Roanoke's LGBTQ+ individuals and organizations. The Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project is organized through democratic monthly community meetings at the Roanoke Public Library. Rosenthal and the group's other leaders have organized a range of initiatives, including the creation of a digital and physical archive, the collection of oral histories, monthly walking tours, and public programs including recreations of LGBTQ+ social events from Roanoke's past. Through these initiatives, the project seeks to preserve history and facilitate conversation across generations in the LGBTQ+ community. Rosenthal explains, "We find that bringing people together to talk about history is a powerful way to break the ice and get those generations talking."

The project is community-led, Rosenthal says. "The project is based at monthly meetings at the public library that are open to all. Since our very first meeting, we've invited people from the LGBTQ+ community to come out and they have set the agenda for what we work on," Rosenthal notes. "We're very focused on the ideal of democracy in doing this work and making sure that LGBTQ+ people are the leaders in this project and are taking the lead and are telling the stories about our community."

Rosenthal's students have been involved in the collection of oral histories in classes and as paid research assistants, but they join members of the local LGBTQ+ community in conducting these oral histories. Collectively, they have conducted 33 hour-long oral history interviews. "We've moved towards recruiting young members of the community to train to come in to do the interviews. We have LGBTQ+ people interviewing LGBTQ+ people, rather than mostly straight students. That was something we wanted to move towards," Rosenthal notes, explaining that the identity of interviewers can impact interviews.

But there also is a broader reason for ensuring that community members take the lead. "Our project is about creating leaders and empowering leadership," Rosenthal explains. "The goal here is to pass on skills. In fact, we have volunteers who are involved in accessioning archival collections, digitizing and putting in the metadata for

digital collections, leading public walking tours, conducting oral history interviews. These are all things I learned to do in graduate school studying public history, but they're things we have trained young LGBTQ+ people in the community who are not affiliated with the university to do. It provides a sense of ownership over these stories. We feel that LGBTQ+ history is our community's story and it's on us as LGBTQ+ people to decide how we want to tell the story."

One of the project's first initiatives involved the creation of archives, including a physical archive at the Roanoke Public Library and an online archive built with the support of Roanoke College. "People had things that they had collected for decades in their closets: old gay newspapers, flyers, posters, and memorabilia," Rosenthal recalls. At first, the project organized events at churches, the LGBTQ+ community center, and other LGBTQ+ spaces to encourage people to bring in their personal collections. As momentum grew, people began donating materials on their own. The archive has now grown to around four archival boxes at the library. Many of the archival materials are digitized and available online, as are oral history interviews and a series of exhibitions.

One of the project's signature events has been what they call "story circles." The premise is simple, Rosenthal explains: "It is inviting people to come together and share their stories. There is no recording equipment on, no one taking notes." It began at a collection event in 2016 at the oldest gay bar in Roanoke.

"We called it a reunion. We asked people who used to go to this gay bar in the '70s, '80s, and '90s to come back. There were about 20 some people, older folks who came and just sat around in the bar talking about their memories in that place," Rosenthal recalls. "We just sat on the outside of the circle and people shared their stories. Ultimately, we realized this is a model for a really powerful experience for these people. It's not about capturing their stories and doing something with it, but about facilitating a space where people can feel like their lives matter or their stories matter."

The story circle has become one of the project's go-to events, Rosenthal explains. "That is one of the most powerful, yet undocumented things that we do. It doesn't create new evidence. It doesn't create new archives. We don't use it in any way, but the means is the end in creating a space where people feel valued and people feel like they can tell their story."

2023 Project Director Update

> We are now in the eighth year of this project. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted our project in several ways: pushing us to find more opportunities for people to connect digitally/remotely with the project, such as through our new podcast which we launched in the spring of 2020 to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Another new development is our launch of the Southwest Virginia Trans Wellness Fund in spring 2023, which translates funds from a published book (Living Queer History) about the project back into the community through direct payments to transgender residents.
>
> —Samantha Rosenthal, Roanoke College

(Dis)placed Urban Histories

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Rebecca Amato

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
New York University

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Southside United HDFC—Los Sures; Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDCo)

NYU students and Melrose neighborhood residents explore a map of the neighborhood at the semester's closing exhibition. Image courtesy of Rebecca Amato.

"(Dis)placed Urban Histories" is a project-centered course in which students engage with the past, present, and future of changing neighborhoods in New York City. Led by Rebecca Amato in collaboration with community organizations in New York City, students conduct research in the library, in the archives, and in the community leading to an online archive and a physical exhibition.

"I usually frame it as a community-engaged teaching and learning opportunity," Amato explains. "The idea is to use history, public history, or the humanities to engage the communities with whom we're partnering in telling their own stories and then organizing themselves. In general, I think of it as using the humanities for community organizing."

The course focuses each semester on one changing neighborhood in New York City, most recently the Melrose neighborhood in the South Bronx. Over the course of the semester, students learn about the neighborhood's complex history. In the 1970s and 1980s, arson displaced many Melrose residents. In their place, Melrose has become home to migrants from Puerto Rico and immigrants from a number of areas including Bangladesh, the Dominican Republic, and West Africa. In Melrose, (Dis)placed Urban Histories has partnered with a community development organization, the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDCo).

"New York City for the last 10–15 years has been going through a massive rezoning," Amato says. "It's been controversial for a lot of reasons, one of which is there is also massive development in the city that is spurring gentrification. The neighborhoods that WHEDCo serves are being reviewed for rezoning. WHEDCo is working to understand the community's needs so they can offer some input into whether it's fair or just or serves that community."

In Melrose, WHEDCo is in the process of developing Bronx Commons, a 426,000-square-foot mixed-use development featuring affordable housing, retail, and community space—including the Bronx Music Hall.

As the development progresses, "(Dis)placed Urban Histories" students are helping WHEDCo learn more about Melrose in order to protect the histories that could be lost as the neighborhood changes.

"(Dis)placed Urban Histories" students become "activist historians whose objective is to learn what histories are at risk of being silenced or displaced as the South Bronx changes," Amato explains in the course syllabus. "Students … conduct archival and secondary research; produce collaborative oral histories with neighborhood residents and business owners; and meet with activists who are working to protect the interests of the current community of Melrose."

Together with WHEDCo organizers, Amato identified people in Melrose who would be interested in participating in an oral history project.

"Each of my 18 students interviewed a person who lives in or works in Melrose now," Amato says. "The focus of the oral history was partly on life history or life story and partly on the neighborhood and their connection to the neighborhood and any thoughts they may have on changes to the neighborhood."

Each interview was documented for a digital archive built with Omeka. In addition to recording all the roughly hour-long interviews, students photographed their interviewees and offered the opportunity to digitize items for a community collection. The Omeka archive features all interviews and photographs of the community members and their items, which include records, heirlooms, and photographs. These materials formed the basis of a history-based public exhibition at the end of the semester, at which the students and community came together in Melrose.

Desegregating Hampton: Hampton University Students' Woolworth's Sit-In

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Zachary McKeernan; Linda Holmes; Luci Cochran

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Hampton University Black History Club

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
City of Hampton History Museum

Members of the Hampton University Black History Club and the Hampton community commemorate Virginia's first lunch-counter sit-in demonstration at the site of the former Woolworth's store. Image courtesy of Zachary McKiernan.

In Hampton, Virginia, faculty, students, and community members are collaborating to recover and commemorate the history of the state's first lunch-counter sit-in demonstration. On February 10, 1960, Black students from the Hampton Institute (now Hampton University) sat in protest at the segregated F.W. Woolworth lunch counter in Hampton. This demonstration developed into picket lines, voter registration drives, and economic boycotts, all of which represented important challenges to segregation in Eastern Virginia and across the United States.

Despite the widespread repercussions of the sit-in, historian Zachary McKiernan discovered that the history of student activism at Hampton was not widely known.

"As a new faculty member, I was going to a lot of things on campus, learning about the history of the campus," McKiernan explains. "There is a small interpretive sign outside the department, Martin Luther King, Jr. Hall, [with] a reference to the Hampton Institute students who sat in at the Woolworth's in Hampton, Virginia, on February 10th, nine days after the Greensboro Four in North Carolina. [But] nobody was talking about the sit-in students and their contribution to the fight against Jim Crow."

With a group of Hampton students, McKiernan formed a Black history club to investigate the university's activist history in the archives and around town. The group collaborated with outside stakeholders, including veterans of the sit-in, author and curator Linda Holmes, and Luci Cochran, executive director of the City of Hampton History Museum. Together, the group planned a series of events for Black History Month including lectures, films, and a memorial walk to the former Hampton Woolworth's.

The group also worked with the Hampton History Museum to host a panel featuring Hampton students from the time of the sit-in, who either participated in the demonstrations or followed up with picket lines, voter

registration drives, and economic boycotts. "There was a lot of energy behind this. It was really exciting. It was a big crowd," McKiernan recalls.

These activities laid the groundwork for a grant from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, funding three community conversations on race relations, the collection of oral history interviews, and a scholarly article.

Holmes and Cochran spearheaded the three community conversations about race relations, exploring the history, legacy, and future of the Civil Rights Movement in Hampton Roads. The conversations were held at a range of local cultural institutions and they included scholars, current students, former students who were involved in the sit-in and related actions, and members of the local African American community.

One of the conversations focused on the future of the Civil Rights Movement and connected the newly recovered past with present activism surrounding Black Lives Matter. Contemporary activists had the opportunity to learn about the history of the Hampton student protests, helping them to "feel more secure about their thinking about the need for protest," Holmes explains. "They were aware that they were following a kind of Hampton student tradition that had meaning in the past. I think it helped them understand that even though they might not see the impact of their protest now, that in the long run it would have significance as did the protests of the 60s."

McKiernan is currently working on the scholarly article, which will draw on the oral history research to tell the story of Virginia's first lunch counter sit-in.

To McKiernan's mind, the funding from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities allowed his team to bring a higher profile to Hampton's activist tradition: "It's not just the sit-in at the Woolworth's, it's the voter registration drive that transpired out of that, it's the economic boycotts, it's the picket-lines. It really had a huge impact on dismantling Jim Crow in Eastern Virginia."

The Relevancy & History Project

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Catherine Gudis

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of California-Riverside

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
California Citrus State Historic Park; 1900 in Black; Dora Nelson African American Art & History Museum; Loma Linda Area Parks and Historical Society; Malki Indian Museum; Riverside African American Historical Society; Riverside Chapter of Japanese American Citizens League; Riverside County Mexican American Historical Society; Save Our Chinatown Committee; Sherman Indian Museum; Spanish Town Foundation; Tesoros de Casa Blanca; YOK Center for Korean American Studies at UC Riverside

ackinghouse workers Lupé Vasquez, Margaret Rodriguez, and Elsie Frogge, Riverside, circa the late 1940s. Since World War II, Latinas have performed the majority of packinghouse labor. This image is used in *Laboring Landscapes of Citrus* in two 3D, larger-than-life-sized stereoviewers at California Citrus State Historic Park, created by artist Arnold Martin and curated by UCR Public History Program. Photo: Collection of Riverside Metropolitan Museum. Courtesy of the Relevancy & History Project partnership between the University of California, Riverside, and California State Parks.

In Riverside, California, community groups and university faculty and students are helping California State Parks tell a broader, more inclusive, and more accurate history of the state's most beloved crop: citrus. Migrants and immigrants built California's citrus industry, clearing fields, planting trees, and harvesting and packing fruit. Though they sustain the industry to this day in Inland Southern California, these groups are not well represented in the story of citrus the California Citrus State Historic Park tells. Through community-engaged research and a series of public programs and interpretive installations, the Relevancy & History Project partnership between the University of California, Riverside and California State Parks is modeling new ways of engaging with the diversity of the state's history and cultural heritage.

"[The project] at California Citrus State Historic Park focuses on migration and immigration and highlights hidden histories of people and place," explains Catherine Gudis, director of public history at UC Riverside, who helped initiate the project. "The project has been shaped through a series of partnerships beyond UC Riverside and California State Parks. Those partnerships include community groups, other universities, and other nonprofit organizations. The project at large aims to produce new research to include student participation, community story collection, outreach events, exhibits, and site-based artistic interventions. We've been highlighting the work through community festivals and a co-created exhibition."

In the earliest phases of the project, Gudis worked with public history graduate students and several undergraduate classes at UC Riverside to conduct the research. Graduate students Megan Suster and Steve Moreno-Terrill also served as Public Humanities Fellows to the project, and have since been hired by the park as full-time interpretive staff. Undergraduate classes at California State University, San Bernardino, and California State University, Fullerton also contributed. "I taught an undergraduate research seminar focused on public

histories of immigration and we studied the park and citrus history in the region," Gudis says. "Students were invited to do research on immigrant groups in the area."

Gudis and her students worked very closely with the community to conduct this research. "For us, research interlocks with community engagement," Gudis explains. "Collecting oral histories requires being out in the world. Public talks and volunteering at events held by other organizations become a central part of data collection. Every time we presented, someone else would come out of the woodwork with a story." Research also involved community collection days at public libraries, where the team met with people to interview them and digitize their photographs. Because of the centrality of citrus in Inland Southern California, everyone had a story to tell. These interviews and open-to-all meetings hosted by the Relevancy & History Project often became discussions of what the community members would like to see at the California Citrus State Historic Park.

The students and other faculty at UC Riverside, CSU San Bernardino, and CSU Fullerton also helped chart the project's direction.

"They were our study group in a way," Gudis continues. "What were their responses to the park as the younger and demographically diverse generation of stakeholders? What would they want to see? Why had they never been there? So they had to take a hand in trying to both explain how they felt about the place and to envision the project."

Building on these ideas, the project team developed a festival, exhibition, and placemaking installations. "As we talked to docents and other people at the park and as we brought community folks through, they were interested in having more moments when history told through personal experiences could be acknowledged," Gudis explains.

These came to include two stereographic viewers created by Arnold Martin that highlight the people who work in the citrus groves and in the packing house. They offer a three-dimensional visualization that reinscribes citrus workers into the landscape of the park.

The workers' stories are also integrated into interpretive signage that combines photographs of contemporary laborers by Thomas McGovern and poetry by Juan Delgado, and the exhibition "Finding Ourselves in the Groves: Stories and Storytellers of Citrus in Inland Southern California." The exhibition in the park's visitor's center features the portraits and stories of California's migrant and immigrant citrus workers, including youth and Braceros. "We imagined this as a portrait gallery that would represent people and stories that have not been represented elsewhere and who are not usually found even in traditional archives," Gudis notes. It contextualizes the park, highlighting the people that made it possible.

The project also involved public events, including Sweet N Sour Family Festivals. "We augmented what the park already does, which are tastings during harvest season," Gudis says. Activities included a citrus packing competition and a series of student-led tours focusing on Native creation stories, labor issues, and the preservation of the region's agricultural past. There were tables for collecting oral histories from visitors, which included memories of citrus from as far away as Afghanistan and the Philippines.

A highlight of the festival was "Sour Puss," a photo series and exhibition by Kate Alexandrite. "It's staged portrait photography," Gudis explains. The photographer gives visitors a citrus fruit, "the sourest of the sour … you taste the fruit and we capture your expression when you've tasted it," Gudis recalls. "People loved it."

Helping Individuals and Communities Navigate Difficult Experiences

Humanities scholars and students are also engaged in a variety of efforts that use humanities pedagogies, methodologies, and content to support individuals and communities as they navigate difficult experiences. These efforts include programs that engage and support veterans as well as justice impacted individuals. Another approach to supporting individuals and communities draws on the intercultural and language expertise developed through the humanities, often to connect with immigrant or refugee populations and offer them support in a variety of ways.

Study and Struggle

PUBLISHED
September 2021

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Garrett Felber; Cam Calisch

Screen capture from Study and Struggle's fourth Critical Conversation webinar of the Fall 2020 season featuring Angela Y. Davis, Medhin Paolos, Lorgia García Peña, and Makani Themba.

Through Study and Struggle, reading groups inside and outside of prisons build connections across the cavernous divides created and maintained by the prison industrial complex.

The idea for the study program emerged out of conversations during the 2019 Making and Unmaking Mass Incarceration conference at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Mississippi organized by Garrett Felber. Responding to the widespread Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids of undocumented communities in the state during the summer leading up to the conference—and the rising death toll within the

Mississippi Department of Corrections immediately following it—the Mississippi-based political education initiative organizes and supports study groups that explore the connections between mass incarceration and immigrant detention. The program uses deep engagement with humanities sources as a tool to transcend the barriers created by the carceral state.

With its first installment in the fall of 2020, Study and Struggle offered a bilingual Spanish and English open access curriculum with discussion questions and reading materials for study groups meeting inside Mississippi prisons, outside in local Mississippi communities, and virtually across the nation. The curriculum is shaped collaboratively by a non-hierarchical team of academics, organizers, currently and formerly incarcerated people, and community members and made available online for use outside the bounds of the study semester. Weekly discussion topics frame the readings, prompting participants with questions such as "Why is intersectionality important for building abolitionist movements?" or "What is mutual aid? What has it looked like in your life? What can you imagine it as?" or "What is the relationship between settler colonialism and the prison industrial complex?"

Woven throughout the curriculum are several "critical conversation" webinars supported by Haymarket Books. These conversations anticipate the month's themes by placing the texts alongside the voices of prominent prison abolitionists and scholars such as Dean Spade, Kelly Lytle Hernández, Angela Y. Davis, and Lorgia García Peña. While bilingual transcriptions of the critical conversations are sent to inside groups, the webinars also operate as donation-based fundraisers, with collected funds from each call given to one of Study and Struggle's organizing partners in Mississippi. In 2021, Study and Struggle adjusted the format of these conversations to put outside organizers in conversation with those inside, raising money from the events for commissary and mutual aid funds.

Funds raised from these events, mutual aid grant support from the Southern Power Fund, and other outside grants allow Study and Struggle to subsidize the participation of over 100 participants inside and outside prisons in Mississippi. Funds raised pay equal "flat" wage payments for a few organizers and cover books, photocopies, and mailings by 1977 Books, an abolitionist bookstore in Montgomery, Alabama. A significant portion of the annual budget goes toward putting money on incarcerated participants' commissary for emergency support as well as the purchase of food, notebooks, and other study materials with the intention of supporting and cultivating group camaraderie.

For Felber, a co-organizer of Study and Struggle and current visiting fellow in American Studies at Yale University, political education is a core component of a larger ecosystem of social movements. "Study isn't instead of action, it's not standing in for it. It's not an end in itself, study is itself an action and an ongoing practice within any radical social movement." Noting a long tradition of combining political education with mutual aid and direct action in line with the work of the Black Panther Party and the Third World Women's Alliance, Study and Struggle organizers emphasized the collective nature of studying as a building block toward collective consciousness raising. "Study is a very collaborative, collective thing," Felber says, "We all think different things about how we got here. We think different things about our capacities to affect change in that system. And we think different things about what we're even trying to achieve. To move forward, those things have to be sharpened and we have to figure out where those points of connection are. Study is an occasion to do all of that." Another co-organizer of Study and Struggle, Cam Calisch, emphasizes the power of education through reading. "[T]hrough sharing these texts, it's created a lot of intimacy and shared language," Calisch notes. "So as we're articulating strategies together, inside and outside we can reference these books that we've read."

To emphasize community building across borders and barriers, participants on the inside and outside are encouraged to take part in a pen pal program, where students can exchange letters discussing their views on the

readings and support one another. Even after the first season of the study program ended, some of the participants continued to exchange letters, a testament to how a collective approach to studying can lead to stronger interpersonal relationships, friendship, and prisoner solidarity and support.

Through anonymous surveys created by the National Humanities Alliance in collaboration with Study and Struggle and circulated to study group participants on the inside, respondents reflected on the positive experience of having a space to come together, discuss, and debate around issues related to incarceration and immigrant detention. "I saw it as a way to get educated and be able to educate someone else," said one participant. On the pen pal program, another respondent noted that the correspondence "helped me to understand the issues in depth. It was the first time in life taking a look at some of the areas in society that need addressing. My pen pal's thoughts and ideas gave me the opportunity to look at my thoughts and ideas and find a happy median from a trusted stranger." One respondent was particularly moved by the collective effort of prison abolition, noting "at first I was skeptical about prison abolition, until I put some thought into the abolition of the death penalty in some states, and the abolition of slavery world-wide. Study and Struggle has given my family and friends a boost of encouragement by learning that there are people all over the world fighting for my release."

Overall, Calisch notes that many participants in the Study and Struggle program have expressed how valuable the study space was for their understanding of abolition work. "The biggest takeaway was definitely people saying things like 'we have not had a space like this before. We are learning so much about each other. And we're learning so much about how to articulate that these things that have happened to us are not our fault, that this is a part of a bigger system.' That created intimacy with the group and relationships that didn't exist before."

While impactful and continuing to grow in its mission and scale, the Study and Struggle initiative was met with resistance from its institutional home at the University of Mississippi (UM). Felber, who at the time of the initiative's creation was an Assistant Professor of History at UM, received several substantial grants to be administered through the University's foundation. Despite signing an amended memorandum of understanding regarding the project, Felber's department chair rejected a $42,000 grant because it constituted "mostly contemporary, political activism rather than public history work." Felber publicly criticized the rejection and his tenure-track contract was terminated. The Center for Economic Research and Social Change, which operates as an independent, nonprofit book publisher based in Chicago, offered a new fiscal home for Study and Struggle that more closely aligned with the ongoing work and mission of the program.

Though Study and Struggle's transition from being housed under UM to being taken on by a nonprofit represents a familiar trajectory for many publicly engaged projects that begin at universities, Felber sees the University of Mississippi's resistance to the initiative as indicative of an entrenched resistance to doing horizontal publicly-engaged, political education work in academia writ large. "The way the university even thinks about what's possible within it, it becomes illegible to them once you stop seeing people in fundamentally hierarchical terms. If you see people as either students or professors that's legible to them, but the second you start talking in non-hierarchical organizing terms of like, 'we're building this together, we're co-organizers, these people aren't just participants' it just becomes out of their scope of possibility." Felber notes how isolating doing public-facing work can be as a result. "A lot of people find themselves in universities lost trying to do this work ... Ultimately what the university offers us are the people who are in the community that are doing this work."

As Study and Struggle continues to grow both locally and nationally, the team is working to build out several programs that will complement the more intensive fall study curriculum. For those study groups that wanted to

continue from the fall semester, the Study and Struggle team created a bridge program from January to August 2021 that facilitated these groups in reading one book a month with discussion questions. The initiative also hopes to create a youth abolition summer camp for high school-age students, having helped to support and fund four high school students through the Mississippi-based Immigrant Alliance for Justice and Equity during the summer of 2021. At the core of this work is an understanding of study as a collective enterprise and necessary component of any transformative social change.

I'm Still Surviving: A Women's History of HIV

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Jennifer Brier; Matthew Wizinsky

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Illinois-Chicago; University of Cincinnati

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
The Women of the Chicago Women's Interagency HIV Study (WIHS)

I'm Still Surviving led to the production of these books about Chicago, as well as a short documentary and traveling exhibition on Chicago history, funded by the Nathan Cummings Foundation. History Moves is in the process of producing two additional books, one on Brooklyn and one on North Carolina. Image courtesy of History Moves.

I'm Still Surviving is an oral and public history and design project that documents, interprets, and presents women's experiences in the history of HIV/AIDS in the United States. Led by historian Jennifer Brier at the University of Illinois at Chicago and designer Matthew Wizinsky at the University of Cincinnati as a part of the History Moves initiative, the I'm Still Surviving project is an innovative partnership with women living with HIV/AIDS in Brooklyn, NY, Chicago, IL and Raleigh-Durham, NC. Almost all of these women have been a part of the Women's Interagency HIV Study (WIHS)—a longitudinal medical research project established in 1993. With "I'm Still Surviving," the women become the researchers. Together with their university-based partners, they collect and analyze oral history interviews to produce books and traveling exhibitions on their experiences as women living with HIV. Through this collaborative work, I'm Still Surviving is broadening historical understanding of HIV/AIDS and breaking new ground in oral and public history practice.

Women—especially women of color—have often been excluded from the history of HIV/AIDS in the United States, Brier explains in an article in *The Oral History Review*. "HIV/AIDS is not, and has never been, an exclusively white gay male disease," Brier notes. "While the first reported cases in 1981 were of white homosexual men, there were likely thousands of people—men and women, queer and straight, people living in poverty and those who were comfortably middle class—who were sick but not counted among the earliest cases."

I'm Still Surviving represents an attempt to work with women living with HIV to tell their stories through collaborative oral and public history.

"In I'm Still Surviving, women living with HIV/AIDS make and take space for themselves to tell their stories, and collectively and collaboratively interpret them through dialogue with one another. These stakeholders work together to intervene in the process of collection, curation, and interpretation of the history of HIV/AIDS," Brier continues. "The public history component consists of three different public displays: a book featuring the oral histories and photographs from the fourteen [women living with HIV/AIDS], a short film with photographs and

audio excerpts from the oral histories, and a pop-up exhibition, "In Plain Sight," that displayed examples of all the materials (sound, image, text) and was installed at public libraries and art centers around Chicago in 2016."

The foundation of this work was a workshop for the participants on how and why to conduct oral histories. After the workshop, participants got to work interviewing each other. "We paired the women so that they could interview one another. One of the History Moves team members attended each interview session, serving as technical assistant and second interviewer. Each interview unfolded differently," Brier explains. "When women had known each other for decades, they were able to dig deeper into shared memories; when they met through the project, the interviews served as a place to build connections with other women living with HIV."

Participants "held little back," Brier notes."More often than not, women who had spoken up about having HIV found support from the people they told."

The women of I'm Still Surviving continued to be involved in the analysis of interview transcripts.

"We had the interviews professionally transcribed and returned printed versions to the women, not just with the intention that they would edit the transcripts, but also with the idea that they would begin to analyze them," Brier continues. "Seeing their experiences on paper gave interpretive power to women who were not writers and who had not previously thought of themselves as narrators of written stories. The spoken words became text, while still retaining their unique voice."

Participants vetted selections from the interviews and provided images for inclusion in the exhibition and media projects, collectively determining the narrative. "We all—historians, designers, and women narrators—sorted the selected texts and images into four thematic areas: early life, crisis, diagnosis, and still surviving," Brier notes. The book and the exhibition were key outlets for the research, developed collaboratively by Wizinsky and the participants.

For example, the exhibition itself was designed by Wizinsky's undergraduate students at the University of Cincinnati. The students worked together with the oral history materials and the women themselves, Brier explains: "It was really a challenge for them to think about the physical analog exhibition display, the narrative and the mechanisms that were included, and the social media component." After the class produced their initial designs, Brier notes that the women of I'm Still Surviving helped shape the exhibition's direction: "The [class] did a design review with the women in Chicago. We did a Webex and the women in Chicago looked at their initial designs and shared very pointed and excellent critiques of the work, which really helped them advance the work and think about [their] audience."

The book and the exhibition are portable and have been used to bring the story of these women and HIV to their communities in Chicago. With funding from the MAC AIDS Fund, the project is ongoing and has been expanded to Brooklyn, NY, and Raleigh, NC.

Community Veterans History Project

PUBLISHED
July 2021

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Barbara Gannon; Tiffany Rivera

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Central Florida-Orlando

The VHP Team visits the Florida Masonic Homes in St. Petersburg, Florida to conduct interviews with disabled veterans in coordination with UCF alumnus Rex Cain. Image courtesy of VHP.

The Community Veterans History Project (VHP) is an oral history project based in the University of Central Florida's history department that is digitally preserving the stories of Florida veterans for future generations and connecting students, veterans, and the local community through programming.

VHP is led by Associate Professor of History Barbara Gannon and Tiffany Rivera, program coordinator of educational and training programs for the history department. With UCF's large student veteran population of nearly 1,500 and the history department's strong emphasis on military history, the program came out of a desire to respect the local and campus communities' service and sacrifices. Gannon, herself a veteran, began collecting oral histories of veterans in 2011 with a team of student interns. With valuable funding support from the Anne J. Caudal Foundation—whose mission is to fund projects that benefit disabled veterans—and key technical support from the department of history and UCF's Regional Initiative for Collecting the Histories, Experiences, and Stories program (RICHES), VHP has collected nearly 700 interviews and continues to increase in size and scope. Over time, the project has not only collected veterans' stories but has trained students in oral history methods and created affirming spaces for the region's veteran population through a range of programming.

Classes in oral history methods and veterans histories help students connect with the nation's history with war. "Many of my students were born a year or two before 9/11. So it's all history to them. And one of the things they take away through both talking and research is a profound understanding that there's a whole lot more going on than they covered in their textbooks," says Gannon. Through connecting with veterans' stories, students also learn how to shape narratives of their own lives and families, with some students drawing parallels between histories of service and histories of immigration and migration. Learning how to conduct oral history interviews also provides students with valuable skills, including how to navigate difficult conversations and honor the language and specifics of a veteran's time in service. "Oral history to me is an ultimate part of a humanities education. It is a phenomenal way of understanding human beings in all their diversity and commonalities," Gannon offers.

Student interns working on the project, some with a background in military service and others without, understand that their role is integral to promoting trust and familiarity with participating veterans. "A lot of students walk away with this being a memorable experience because they've spent time talking to someone about

their experiences and that's new to them. Their eyes are big and they feel like they've made a difference," Rivera notes. Rivera remembers one student intern in particular who conducted an interview with a veteran who passed away two weeks later. "He was so touched and honored that he had that last conversation, that he was a part of capturing those memories for the family."

Gannon and Rivera note the diversity of stories represented by VHP's collection. "All of our interviews are so different and that's honestly what we want," Rivera notes. "Our goal is to capture different stories because service is not just one thing." Some veterans interviewed made a career out of service, some never saw combat, and some only served for short periods of time. Gannon remarks that despite coming from a range of backgrounds, the collected interviews often illuminate the immense pride veterans take in their service. "Veterans understand that they don't have to forget their diversity and their challenges. Women for example understand that they may have had a very difficult time in service because of their gender, but they all come out very proud of their service. Despite racial or gender issues, there are very few cases where it didn't bring them a certain unity and connection with the nation and the nation at its best, at its best ideals."

VHP has provided opportunities for veterans and community members to gather together to discuss shared experiences. Seeing the public as equal members in the process of story collection, VHP has hosted regular peer-to-peer training programs that provide community members with the skills to conduct oral history interviews. In addition, what started as a VHP-led week honoring Veterans across UCF's campus has over the years expanded to a Veterans Month, a campus-wide effort that has included speaker series, symposia, and a play that sourced material from the VHP's oral history collection. Through a collaboration with the Central Florida Yellow Ribbon Project during Veterans Month, in 2018 VHP hosted the Yellow Ribbon Project on campus with the help of a local artist. Using yellow ribbon, students macramed thirty trees lining UCF's Memory Mall in an effort to raise funds from departments and centers on campus toward a "school supply vault" for the school's student veteran population of over 1500 students.

Given the sensitivity that veterans' stories can require, Rivera has worked hard to cultivate a sense of trust with the Central Florida veteran community. In order to build trust with UCF's student veteran population, the VHP employs student veteran interns involved with the project to encourage their veteran classmates to participate in the project. A number of programs and centers on campus have joined in these efforts, including the Veterans Academic Resource Center, the Air Force and Army ROTC, and off campus at the Orlando VA Medical Center at Lake Nona. Collaborating with these specialized hubs on campus not only demonstrates a commitment to veterans' specific needs, but also helps spread the word about support services across UCF's community. A key part of this trust work is also taking the project off campus, and traveling with student interns to senior living facilities in the region to do "History Days" with the veterans living in the community. History Days with defense contractors such as Lockheed Martin and Raytheon offer veteran employees a chance to share their stories. A recently launched collaboration with Florida's Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will highlight the stories of veterans working in agriculture, as many in the armed forces welcome employment that requires laboring with their hands after their time in service. To keep up to date on issues impacting local veterans and build partnerships across the region, Rivera also attends monthly meetings with the Orange County Veterans Advisory Council.

The far-reaching nature of this project, Rivera ultimately notes, is its key strength. "The heart of this project always comes back to the humanity found in it. It's taking the time to connect in a way that's unique and important from a scholarly perspective, but also connecting in a way that's meaningful for families, veterans, and students."

Literature and Film Discussions for Veterans and Their Caregivers

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Amber Jensen; Jason McEntee; Charles Woodard

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
South Dakota State University

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
South Dakota Humanities Council; Maine Humanities Council; Sioux Falls Veterans Affairs Medical Center

South Dakota State University English faculty lead student veterans in a discussion Dario DiBattista's *Retire the Colors,* a collection of stories reflecting on the impact of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Image courtesy of University Marketing & Communications, South Dakota State University.

Through guided discussions of literature and films about war, South Dakota State University (SDSU) English faculty are helping support veterans and their caregivers. Founded as a program for staff members at the Sioux Falls Veterans Affairs Medical Center, programming has now expanded to support veterans at the medical center in Sioux Falls and on the SDSU campus in Brookings.

SDSU Professor Jason McEntee believes in "the power of narrative" to help veterans, families, and communities affected by war. "Narratives, be they literature or film, fiction or non-fiction, blogs, paintings, poems, and so forth—narratives have for centuries chronicled our wars," McEntee explains.

"But what they also do is help us understand the soldier, help us honor him or her and the sacrifices they've made. To help us understand the families affected by war, and to help us understand the communities affected by war."

Literature and films about the experience of war articulate these difficult narratives, enabling veterans to share and discuss their experiences. McEntee notes that good war literature explores the question of what veterans do with their experiences in wartime—and more importantly "how can we use those experiences to help, first of all create a conversation about what's going on, and second of all to create a larger understanding of the awfulness of war."

By mobilizing the power of narrative, SDSU faculty have supported staff members at VA hospitals and veterans themselves both at the hospital and on campus—ultimately contributing to the reconfiguration of veterans' services at SDSU.

For Veterans at the VA

In 2010, the Maine Humanities Council (MHC) brought the Literature and Medicine program to Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers around the US.

In South Dakota, MHC worked with the South Dakota Humanities Council and SDSU English faculty at the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center. Meeting after work at the VA, people who work in the same building become colleagues. They learn from each other. They learn about their patients and the experience of coming home from war. They develop a greater appreciation for the different roles played by all hospital staff.

While some participants may be veterans or connected with veterans, a nationwide study of the Literature & Medicine program's VA initiative demonstrated that all are impacted.

In the 2011 University of Southern Maine study, participants reported medium or great increases in empathy for patients (82%), interpersonal skills (62%), communication skills (51%), job satisfaction (61%), and cultural awareness (59%). Increases in these areas improve quality of care for veterans. The program measurably enriches hospital work environments, which improves the quality of health care both directly and indirectly for the Medical Center's veteran patients.

For Veterans on Campus

SDSU serves a community of over 500 students connected with the United States Armed Forces, including veterans, service members, and dependents. "We have a very high population of veterans, in particular National Guard soldiers," McEntee explains. With the success of the Literature & Medicine program at the Sioux Falls VA, extending programming to veterans themselves on campus and at the medical center represented a natural next step.

On campus, this work has taken the form of the Veterans' Writing Workshop/Book Club. With the support of the South Dakota Humanities Council and the SDSU Veterans Affairs Center, SDSU English faculty work directly with veterans to facilitate reflection on the experience of war through creative writing and the discussion of literature and film.

Meetings harness the power of narrative to enable reflection on military experiences. Whether it is through the creation of narratives or responses to existing literary and film narratives, programming helps members of the armed forces community express themselves. "Each meeting provides connection with other students, faculty, and community members with a military background," the program website explains.

Participating SDSU students find the experience helpful beyond the pages of the text they are discussing.

Undergraduate aviation major Paul McKnelly recalls that a simple conversation about an essay "turned into a conversation about life. I really recognized it right away as therapeutic to everybody that was there. It could be used as a tool for checks and balances—hey, how are you doing; how's life; it was a great experience for me."

The program helps veterans build a community among themselves, building on experiences that are often very different than their fellow students.

This programming has affected not only the students, but the university itself. It forms a part of SDSU's outreach to veteran students, for which the University has been named to the top 10 "Best for Vets" among four-year colleges by the *Military Times*.

Humanities in Focus

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Jeff Metcalf; Craig Wirth

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Utah

Diego's Dream is an award-winning "Humanities in Focus" documentary directed by Peter C. Davidson. The film tells the story of Diego, a young man who immigrated to the United States from Mexico as a child. Screenshot from YouTube courtesy of *Humanities for All*.

"Humanities in Focus" is a yearlong course at the University of Utah that connects undergraduate honors students with community members from marginalized populations to produce groundbreaking documentary films. Led by Jeff Metcalf and Craig Wirth, the program builds community, fosters a commitment to social justice, and allows all involved to develop confidence and a range of skills.

"'Humanities in Focus' is a documentary-based community program designed to create access for people who have never had the opportunity to go to a university," Metcalf explains. "We focus on social justice films. All of the films focus on community members … on the poverty level. It's absolutely free to them and it's taught in English and Spanish. They learn everything from taking off the lens of a camera to how to film, how to interview, how to edit, how to use Adobe Premiere. And then they make documentary films."

It Starts With Dinner

Each weekly class meeting begins with dinner, which comes at no cost to participants.

"Breaking bread together is the great equalizer," Metcalf observes. Over the meal, honors students and community members have an opportunity to connect and to discuss their work informally.

In the "Humanities in Focus" documentary about the class, *Voices of Film*, participant and documentarian Nadia Rivera explains: "We get together, we eat together, we talk to each other about our documentaries, and most of our documentaries have to do with our personal lives so we get to share our personal stories and we become kind of like a family."

Participants work in mixed teams of students and community members, each of which produces a film over the course of the year. The process begins with brainstorming and debating potential documentary subjects.

"Humanities in Focus" participants learn approaches to narrative and storytelling, documentary techniques, and computer skills. Participants operate cameras and lights, and conduct, log, and capture interviews. Working with film editing software, they create and edit the documentary film and add music.

Both honors students and community members earn university credit and acquire valued skills, but something fundamental also develops in "Humanities in Focus."

"Humanities in Focus" participants from marginalized populations report improved confidence and a deep sense of satisfaction. While honors students are often from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, they often report that the opportunity to build relationships with people of different backgrounds has broadened their horizons and their understanding of community. "There is a beautiful exchange," Metcalf observes.

In March, the community comes together to screen the year's documentaries. "That's the payoff, members of community and honors students show up with their families and their extended families," Metcalf explains. "Now it's kind of a big deal, something one doesn't want to miss."

All films are available for free on the "Humanities in Focus" YouTube channel.

Films created in "Humanities in Focus" have also screened at festivals, including the Martha's Vineyard Documentary Film Festival and the Sundance Film Festival.

In 2017, *Diego's Dream* premiered in the FiRe Films Panel at the Sundance Film Festival. Directed and edited by participant Peter C. Davidson, the film tells the story of DACA recipient and undergraduate student Diego Joaquin Catalan's border crossing from Mexico into the United States.

"Many people, including powerful political figures, are quick to judge and condemn others based on their race or country of origin. I believe that this judgment comes primarily from a lack of understanding that these people are human beings, with hopes, fears, and dreams," Davidson explains on the film's Vimeo page. "It is my hope that sharing *Diego's Dream* will begin to eliminate this lack of understanding and help those who might be inclined to hold prejudices to instead feel sincere concern for people like Diego."

War Stories: West Texans and the Experience of War

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai; Christine Lamberson

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Angelo State University

War Stories co-directors Christine Lamberson and Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai speak with Toby Soto, a veteran who brought material related to his family members' service. Image courtesy of Angelo State University.

West Texas has deep and longstanding connections to the United States Armed Forces. War Stories: West Texans Experience War is an archiving project at Angelo State University led by Christine Lamberson and Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai. Supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, this project creates opportunities for history students and student veterans to interview veterans and their families and to collect, preserve, and analyze items that represent their experiences in the military from World War I to the present.

War Stories emphasizes the importance of military families, Lamberson explains: "Our project is designed to preserve and tell the stories of West Texas veterans and their family members. We think of their family members as being an important part of the military experience. You know, they served in their own ways alongside the military members, so we talked to mothers, wives, fathers, brothers, etc. of people who were on active duty or deployed about their own experiences as well."

The project connects with people who have had a variety of experiences with the military. "We have really tried to emphasize in this project the extent to which there's incredible diversity of experiences and participation," Lamberson notes. "One of the things that we try to do is to get as many people, whether they were building the barracks or they were in combat or whatever their contribution was, whether they stayed in the United States or served overseas. We hope that will provide a little bit more texture to thinking about the relationship between the military and the United States and what the military experience is like and a broad vision of what that means."

The project is driven by the contributions of students and student veterans in history classes that explore aspects of the experience of war. "We are primarily a teaching institution. We are a regional, public university, and it's really important to us to have this project as something that students are working with," Lamberson explains. "More or less every semester, we have a class that participates in the project in some way. Different classes participate in different ways, but typically the students will do an oral history interview. Because it is a regional institution and the region does have a lot of ties to the military, many of those students actually know someone themselves who is a veteran."

Other efforts to recruit participants involved outreach to local media and "history harvests" around West Texas.

"This project and projects like this serve a lot of people," Lamberson notes. "It has been striking to me the extent to which this project has touched, interacted with, and gotten people involved who don't normally get to think about or participate in the making of academic history."

A Culture Carried: Bosnians in Bowling Green, Kentucky

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Brent Björkman; Virginia Siegel

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Kentucky Folklife Program at Western Kentucky University

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Kentucky Museum)

mage from the 2017 Walk to Remember Srebrenica. Photo by Nicole Musgrave. Image courtesy of the Kentucky Folklife Program.

A Culture Carried: Bosnians in Bowling Green and the Bowling Green Bosnia Oral History Project document and present the traditional arts and cultural heritage of Bosnian Americans in South Central Kentucky. Bowling Green, Kentucky is home to nearly 5,000 Bosnian-Americans, many of whom came in the 1990s fleeing war and ethnic cleansing. Working with Brent Björkman of the Kentucky Folklife Program and Kentucky Museum and colleagues in the Department of Folk Studies and Anthropology at Western Kentucky University, Bosnian community members and institutions are sharing their history and culture and beginning important interfaith and intercultural conversations with their neighbors.

"The mission of the Kentucky Folklife Program is to document, present, and conserve the traditional arts and cultural heritage of the Commonwealth," Björkman explains. "Whether your family has been here for two weeks or 200 years, we're all Kentuckians and we all have something to share."

The project developed out of a chance encounter between Björkman and Denis Hodžić, a member of the Bosnian community in Bowling Green. As Björkman and Hodžić spoke, Björkman learned that around 7.5 percent of Bowling Green is Bosnian American.

"So I said, 'Is your story being told?' and he said, 'No, our story isn't being told,'" Bjorkman recalls. "We talked for twenty minutes and we left the conversation saying this was meant to be. We were meant to meet today. I told him about ethnography. I told him about deep listening, open-ended questions, and we made an appointment."

Björkman brought three of his colleagues from the university. Hodžić brought four or five of his friends. In monthly meetings after that, they conducted interviews and learned techniques and technologies of oral history collection. From there the group began to go deeper into the Bosnian American community to interview elders and business owners.

These conversations focused on life in Bowling Green and before, including experiences of ethnic cleansing and the broader tapestry of their lives in Bosnia. The oral history research is ongoing and has already led to an exhibition at the Kentucky Museum.

"We shared their stories. We do talk about the genocide and ethnic cleansing, but we do it through their stories," Bjorkman says. "There are small vignettes about physical objects they've brought with them. Everything from a young girl's Backstreet Boys scrapbook—because that was what was important to her when she was 11—to a woman's husband's watch that came out of a mass grave when they finally found him. But then we bring in their traditions they brought with them: their food traditions, their recreational traditions, creating textiles, and things you do in the home."

The exhibition is available in full online, which, together with the physical exhibition has proven to be a fruitful recruiting ground for collecting oral histories. Both solicit community members to share their stories in Bosnian and English.

Relationship building has enriched this project at every level. For Björkman, it was crucial to build a foundation of trust by participating in community events and memorial walks, visiting with community members, and listening carefully to their stories. The memories participants are sharing in the oral history interviews and in the exhibition are personal and difficult, often involving the loss of loved ones. That kind of trust takes time.

At an early stage, Björkman also reached out to Bowling Green's imams. The four mosques saw the project as an opportunity to build relationships with the broader community. "The imams were very enthused, because they try to work with interfaith groups, with the Presbyterians, with the Baptists," Björkman says. "They all get along, but [they wanted] to really share with the rest of the [6]0,000 people in this town."

The project had a profound effect on Western Kentucky University, as well. The university prides itself on being a student-centered applied research institution. This project embodies this identity in a number of ways. Students' assignments have been built around the exhibition in folk studies and anthropology, for example involving the organization of traditional Bosnian food demonstrations in a foodways graduate course. And for the 2017–2018 academic year, the university organized extensive programming around Bosnia and Herzegovina through their "International Year of" series, making the exhibition and the region a touchstone for events, conversations, and applied research and learning all year.

Boom or Bust: A Collection and Study of Energy Narratives

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Rebecca Babcock; Jason Lagapa

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Texas Permian Basin

Boom or Bust participants gather at Barnes and Noble in Midland, Texas to discuss Ian McEwan's Solar. Image courtesy of Boom or Bust.

Through writing workshops, book clubs, and a series of public lectures, Boom or Bust: A Collection and Study of Energy Narratives explores the impact of the energy economy on life in West Texas' oil-rich Permian Basin. Led by Rebecca Day Babcock and Jason Lagapa of the University of Texas Permian Basin, the project encourages local residents to consider their experiences of economic growth cycles and downturns in and around the region's oil fields.

Booms and busts affect everyone in the Permian Basin. "It's pretty palpable," Lagapa says. In times of economic growth, the energy of the city changes profoundly. The population increases; pickup trucks and four-by-fours with out-of-state license plates become more common, and their owners fill stores and tighten the housing market. Big rigs delivering sand, water, and other materials cut through town. Money flows in the service industry. Families become better able to afford things. In economic downturns, all of this reverses.

The writing workshops, book clubs, and public lectures represent three related ways of exploring this experience, Lagapa says: "Having the three approaches accomplishes this by giving people an outlet to convey their own stories, to read the fiction and non-fiction about the economic situation of boom and busts and about the energy industry, and to hear what established scholars might say about the energy industry."

"Ideally, the three [approaches] fit together to offer an understanding of our community's role within the energy economy, as consumers, as producers, and as citizens of the region," Lagapa adds. "It is through the lens of the humanities that this role becomes particularly legible."

Lagapa usually begins writing workshops with a ten- or fifteen-minute writing session, where he prompts participants to recall their personal experiences of booms and busts.

"I usually start by offering them one standard question that stays the same," Lagapa explains. "Please describe a scene or experience from work in whatever field—oil industry, food service, banking, wind turbines, education, etc.—that captures the mood of either a boom or bust cycle. How were your working or living conditions impacted directly or indirectly?"

Participants then workshop their writing with Lagapa, reading aloud and commenting on each other's work. The results have been featured on *West Texas Talk*, a program on KRTS 93.5 FM Marfa Public Radio.

Book clubs focus on books that discuss the oil industry or booms and busts in the economy, like Upton Sinclair's *Oil!* and John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*.

Another novel, Deborah Moggach's *Tulip Fever*, prompted a particularly insightful discussion."It's about the tulip market in the Netherlands in the 17th century. For me, it was really interesting to talk about parallels between different markets," Lagapa says. "Tulips and oil are completely opposite. The thing that I learned from the discussion is that whatever the market is, there is something infectious or contagious about speculation."

Over two years, the public-facing speaker series has brought scholars Stephanie LeMenager, Dominic Boyer, and Cymene Howe to campus to discuss energy and environmental challenges from a humanistic perspective, complementing and adding perspective to Boom or Bust's exploration of the energy economy's profound role in economic, social, and cultural life in the Permian Basin.

Making the West Side: Community Conversations on Neighborhood Change

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Scott Jennifer

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Jane Addams Hull-House Museum at the University of Illinois-Chicago

Richard Steele (back), Chicago radio host, moderated discussion "West Side/South Side: Bridging the Divide," April 13, 2017, with panelists (L-R): Lee Bey, former city official, photographer, writer and South Side native; Valerie Leonard, a community development consultant in North Lawndale; Natalie Y. Moore, South Side bureau reporter for WBEZ and author of *The Southside: A Portrait of Chicago* (2016); and Jennifer Scott, Director and Chief Curator, Jane Addams Hull House Museum & Project Director of Making the West Side (not pictured). Photo by Jennifer Scott. Image courtesy of Jane Addams Hull-House Museum.

Making the West Side uses local history to facilitate conversations about neighborhood change on Chicago's West Side. Led by Jennifer Scott at the University of Illinois at Chicago's Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, the project brings diverse neighborhood stakeholders together to explore the past, present, and future of this changing—but sometimes overlooked—part of Chicago.

Jane Addams Hull-House Museum is an ideal venue for this important conversation. It occupies two of the original historic Hull-House Settlement buildings. The Hull-House Settlement was founded in 1889 by social reformers Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr. It served as the headquarters of a community of primarily women who lived and worked together to create educational, social, and cultural opportunity for the neighborhood's predominantly low-income immigrant population. "Hull-House was once a powerful neighborhood force that transformed the surrounding community and sparked a national movement," Scott says.

The Hull-House Settlement was closed in 1963, when the campus of the University of Illinois at Chicago on which the museum stands expanded into a downtown location on the Near West Side as a part of "urban renewal" in Chicago. Development on and around the campus, including new expressways and the destruction of public housing, profoundly changed neighborhood life. "These changes displaced a number of communities," Scott says—leveling once vibrant areas and designating them as "blight." Repercussions are still felt today.

Through a variety of programs, Making the West Side explores the first and final decades of Hull-House Settlement and facilitates conversations about neighborhood change among residents, activists, and scholars. Programs range from days during which adult and youth community members share memories, images, and objects in storytelling, oral history, and mapping sessions, to public forums featuring historians, journalists, and public policy and social services professionals engaged in active audience participation.

"History gives people a longer view of social patterns and policies that have impacted their neighborhoods," Scott

observes. "It becomes a useful tool in helping people to explore the systematic and root causes of contemporary social issues. Learning about the development of neighborhoods and the histories of urban planning and its missteps helps to inform residents of their current options and strategies for change."

Partnerships—central to Making the West Side's programming—were developed through monthly meetings with a range of cultural institutions and social services organizations across the West Side.

"The monthly meetings became mini-community conversations, where partners were introduced to one another and to different West Side neighborhoods," Scott explains. "In these meetings, they talked about issues that were of major concern in their neighborhoods: displacement and disinvestment, the history and resurgence of racist housing policies, and equitable access to public health, employment, and education."

West Side/South Side: Bridging the Divide

One especially memorable panel conversation focused on divisions between Chicago's South and West Sides. "For decades, the two predominantly black areas often have been separated by politics, culture, history, and convention," the event website notes—inviting people for a "lively conversation" to "assess this divide and find ways to bridge it." The moderated panel featured two West Siders and two South Siders, including South Side journalist Natalie Moore.

The panel discussion explored issues that both divide and unite South and West Side communities. Scott notes that participants ultimately agreed in this session that they want to coalesce around shared concerns. Moore dedicated her column in the *Chicago Sun-Times* to the conversation. "We have more in common than we think—economic devastation, city neglect, disinvestment, and battles over real estate through the decades," Moore writes.

But as a Chicagoan from the South Side and a journalist, she concedes that she and other residents have been complicit. In "I Want To Hear Chicago's West Side Stories," she calls on Chicagoans to "do better":

"One of the toxic effects of segregation in our region is the inability to experience other neighborhoods and as a result falling back on stereotypes ... As the borders of the West Side fade into the ever-encroaching West Loop, the stories and history of West Siders are at risk of being erased and forgotten."

Building on this program, Making the West Side organized follow-up programming focusing on working together around school closures: a pressing issue with which the West and South Sides struggle.

The Making the West Side program is ongoing at Jane Addams Hull-House Museum. In addition to monthly conversations, Hull-House launched two concurrent exhibitions that focus on the West Side: "Claiming Space: Creative Grounds and Freedom Summer School"—a collaborative exhibition with artists, educators, and students that explores the "transformation of public school space amidst the backdrop of depopulation, divestment and school closures on Chicago's West Side"; and "The Best Side: The Art and Soul of Jackie Hetherington"—an exhibition that features works of a local, West Side artist who co-founded Art and Soul on the West Side, a unique neighborhood center, just seven months after the 1968 uprising.

Refugee Student Mentor Program

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Kathryn Aslan

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Texas at Austin Center for Middle East Studies

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Austin Independent School District

The University of Texas at Austin's Refugee Student Mentor Program connects university students studying Middle Eastern languages with K–12 students who are refugees from the Middle East. Roughly 70 undergraduate and graduate students serve as mentors in Austin Independent School District (AISD) schools each year, supporting existing "English as a Second Language" programs for Arabic, Persian, Pashto, and Dari speaking students and their families.

The program was created by faculty member Jonathan Kaplan, who noticed an influx of recent refugees from the Middle East in his children's school. The program has since received AISD support and is led by Center for Middle Eastern Studies staff member Katie Aslan and co-coordinators Rama Hamarneh and Thomas Leddy-Cecere—both PhD candidates at UT-Austin.

"The program was created based on a need in the community and a surplus of talented students," Aslan says. "It's been growing every year since we started."

Working in 16 AISD schools, UT-Austin volunteers typically mentor one to three students. Following an on-campus orientation focusing on regional dialects, cultures, and how to respond to some of the typical experiences of refugees, Aslan explains, the UT-Austin students help in any way they can.

"They go according to their schedule and meet with students as mentors and tutors. Sometimes they are in classes helping students to understand assignments," Aslan says. "They are also a social support. Occasionally, they will have lunch with students. They're just there as a friendly face, someone who understands their background and their culture. A lot of work is sitting with students and helping with specific assignments. But they also work with teachers. If a teacher has a particular task that they think their student might need help with, they might talk to one of the mentors and have them help out with that."

A Mutually Beneficial Experience

The social support UT students can offer the K–12 students who came to the U.S. as refugees is critical, Hamarneh explains.

"They come here and they're asked to completely integrate into a culture that's foreign for them," Hamarneh says. "To have someone even once a week who has shown an interest, who is trying to learn the language that they speak, who is showing an investment in their culture and where they come from—that is really important."

The experience is also beneficial for the student volunteers and the graduate student co-coordinators. First, the experience offers students an opportunity to learn and practice Arabic dialects that are not otherwise available. "It exposes our students to a wide variety of spoken Arabic that they would not get in the classroom and they would probably not get studying abroad," Aslan notes. "We can't send students to Iraq. We can't send students to Sudan."

The volunteers commit to two to four hours per week. "That means that they're getting two to four hours a week of language practice," Hamarneh says—working with uniquely challenging language partners. "Kids can expose you to a whole different set of vocabulary. And they don't hold back. It's a lot more similar to what they'd experience if they went over to the Middle East than [practicing with] a traditional language partner. They're going to have to work around things with kids, if they don't understand what they mean. There's no switching to English. It's very much the kind of situation that I think gives them extra language practice, exposes them to new dialects of Arabic, and also gives them an experience that would be more similar to what they would get if they traveled abroad."

Through the language practice, the volunteers also gain a deeper understanding of the students' culture. "That sort of real world interaction is really tremendous preparation," Leddy-Cecere adds. "It's more than there being just more time in the week devoted to Arabic. It's also the kinds of things you learn. I've learned more about games, how to play games; what the word is for ball; how you tell somebody to pass you the ball; how you tell somebody to shoot. I've learned more from eight-year-olds in an elementary school in Austin than I did from a year-and-a-half in Egypt. It's really a beneficial experience for everybody."

Both co-coordinators have been encouraged and enriched by their experience with the Refugee Student Mentor Program, which they would be interested in continuing after graduation.

"I absolutely plan to take this kind of activity wherever I wind up. I don't think the success we are seeing here will only happen at UT-Austin," Leddy-Cecere says. "I think this is a replicable model. I think this is something that could work in a lot of different settings in a lot of different universities."

Expanding Educational Access

A number of publicly engaged humanities projects work to broaden access to college-level humanities pedagogy, recognizing that the study of the humanities engenders lifelong benefits but is inaccessible to many. Several programs are modeled on the Clemente Course in the Humanities, which offers college-level humanities courses to people facing economic hardship. Faculty members at colleges and universities across the country tailor the Clemente model to meet particular local needs. Other projects make particular humanities disciplines more accessible to K–12 students: fields like philosophy and anthropology are not available to the vast majority of pre-collegiate students, and access to these fields introduces them to new ways of thinking and opportunities for academic engagement. Efforts to broaden access are often designed for teachers. Other efforts involve direct engagement between scholars, college students, and K–12 students, either in the classroom or through extra-curricular activities.

National High School Ethics Bowl

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Alex Richardson

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Parr Center for Ethics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
High Schools Nationwide

Students engaging with complex ethical dilemmas at the 2015 National High School Ethics Bowl in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Image courtesy of the Parr Center for Ethics.

Headquartered at the Parr Center for Ethics at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, the National High School Ethics Bowl brings high school students together to discuss complex ethical dilemmas after school and in regional and national competitions. The National High School Ethics Bowl focuses on a new set of cases each year, ranging from what to do when you don't get along with your best friend's girlfriend to the ethical considerations involved in the use of an anti-opioid drug.

Unlike in traditional high school debating, students do not have to disagree in the National High School Ethics Bowl. While the issues under discussion are likely to spark disagreement, participating students are free to take whatever position they believe to be most ethical. Director Dominique Dery says that students are scored on their ability to collaborate, to think deeply, and to speak clearly about complex subjects as full community members.

"The National High School Ethics Bowl prioritizes high school students' own opinions, own thoughts, and importance as citizens of our democratic community, prioritizing their agency as thinkers and community members," Dery notes. "That's what makes the National High School Ethics Bowl really special. I think it's really fun and challenging to get together with a diverse group of high school students to talk about controversial issues in a way that's productive and collaborative, when there might be really deep disagreements. It's both an essential skill in a democratic community and in high school and I think it can be really engaging in a way that is meaningful and lively and vibrant and fun."

Participating high school students meet throughout the year with coaches from the community and local universities, colleges, and high schools, discussing cases produced at the UNC Parr Center for Ethics in preparation for regional and national competitions.

In the regional and national competitions, two teams meet before panels of judges from the community and local universities, colleges, and high schools. The teams are presented with different cases, usually drawn from the set produced by the Parr Center for Ethics. Each team gets an opportunity to engage with their case in a structured dialog with the judges and the opposing team—during which they are free to agree or disagree.

"The idea in the competition is we prioritize clarity and comprehensiveness of answers to important questions in the cases," Dery explains. "We also reward students for their sense of collaboration in the events themselves, their ability to empathize with many different viewpoints, and to speak kindly and productively to each of those viewpoints in their responses."

Based on the judges' scoring, teams win, lose, or tie. Teams advance through a series of rounds, meeting other teams in competition until one team wins the day.

Cases are both timeless and timely, often ripped from the front page of the newspaper. One sample case used in 2016–2017 explores the ethics of naloxone, a medication that reverses opioid overdoses.

"In 2015, the FDA approved a pocket-sized naloxone auto-injector, making the antidote even more accessible for use in a nonmedical environment," the case notes. "As the prevalence of opioid addiction and overdoses continues to rise, questions about naloxone's availability and distribution are made even more significant. Many wonder: Is naloxone enabling opioid addicts, and if so, do the harms outweigh the benefits?"

In the 2017 national competition, students were asked to consider the morally relevant similarities and differences between providing opiate users easy access to naloxone and providing epinephrine to anaphylactic patients.

"It's a great question," Dery explains. "It speaks directly to the issue, but it also brings in an interesting comparison that hopefully both challenges the students and makes their response more concrete."

While competition is a draw for participants, the National High School Ethics Bowl places more emphasis on the cultivation of critical thinking and democratic engagement. This is not lost on the students.

"We have survey data about how this helps students with thinking, writing, and especially public speaking, and has changed their thinking about future careers," Dery explains. "It helps students find skills or interests that they never had before and pushes them to challenge their comfort with being a public voice."

"I loved that the National High School Ethics Bowl made me think critically, engage in discussion, learn new ethical theories, and make new friends," one student reported.

Another praised the diversity of the group: "I loved getting to hear the stances of other teams from around the country. It challenged me to continually form my opinions on the cases. It was encouraging to see other students who also deeply cared about ethical issues. I am definitely more confident in sharing my views and having respectful dialogue thanks to National High School Ethics Bowl."

Regional and national competitions create opportunities for meaningful exchange between students from different places and backgrounds.

"The schools that come to the nationals are extremely diverse in geographic location, but also there are public schools and private schools with a lot of socio-economic diversity and a wide variety of viewpoints on ethical dilemmas and moral and political issues," Dery explains. "That's something that really excites students. It's especially engaging because the focus on the collaborative, productive, and empathetic tone stretches students to put themselves in the position of the kinds of students they may not encounter in their everyday life."

Wherever you live in the United States, there are many ways to become involved in the National High School Ethics Bowl. If you are a high school teacher or student, you can start a team. If you are a faculty member or graduate student at a university or college, you can support or start a new regional competition.

Pressing Matters

PUBLISHED
September 2022

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Erin Benay; Jackie Feldman

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Case Western Reserve University

An image from the final print event for the teen summer workshop 2022. Image source: Erin Benay

Pressing Matters is a public humanities project that facilitates participatory printmaking, visual literacy, and self advocacy for a range of participants in Cleveland, Ohio. Consisting primarily of two components, an art history course at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) and a teen printmaking workshop held in the predominantly Latinx Clark-Fulton neighborhood on Cleveland's west side, the project is collaboratively run by CWRU Art History professor, Erin Benay, and staff members of Zygote Press, a nonprofit printmaking studio and education facility in Cleveland.

Pressing Matters is organized thematically around printmaking as a medium of collective social activism and includes hands-on instruction in printmaking together with academic instruction in art historical analysis. With support from a Social and Racial Justice Grant from the Expanding Horizons Initiative at CWRU, the first Pressing Matters art history course at CWRU took place in Spring 2022, and the first summer workshop for teens took place over seven weeks from June to July 2022.

After years of academic research about printmaking and years of her own printmaking practice, Benay conceived of Pressing Matters as a way to bring artistic practice and humanistic inquiry together.

"The general initiative brings interpretation and artistic practices into dialogue, aiming to use the history of printmaking in conjunction with the making of prints, to think about creative paths for self advocacy."

Benay developed the project in collaboration with Zygote Press' Executive Director Jackie Feldman and Senior Program Manager Brittany Hudak and designed the CWRU course to introduce students to the history of printmaking and provide them with hands-on experience in both printmaking and public humanities programming. Open to advanced undergraduates and graduate students and cross-listed in art history and the public humanities, the Spring 2022 Pressing Matters course led students through exercises that helped them to develop the curriculum for the Summer 2022 Pressing Matters printmaking and social action workshop for teens that took place at Cleveland Museum of Art's Community Art Center in the Clark-Fulton neighborhood.

Benay, Feldman, and Hudak envisioned Pressing Matters as an introduction to the political power and democratic potential that printmaking holds for those of varying ages, experiences, and demographics in the context of Cleveland's social and cultural arts landscape. They thought carefully about how to engage both the college students at CWRU and high school students with ideas of social change through participatory art. One important aspect of this was to put Cleveland's own history with printmaking, especially as it intersected with race and political action, in conversation with more recent printmaking trends in Cleveland. In the 1930s and 1940s a number of Black printmakers involved with Cleveland's Karamu House—a Black performing and community arts

center—rose to national prominence for their vivid depictions of local issues, both positive and negative, affecting their communities. Yet after the 1940s, this history of printmaking in Cleveland was obscured by the mostly white Euroamerican printmakers and collectors who came to dominate printmaking in Cleveland. The longer history of Kamaru house printmaking helped to ground Pressing Matters in the politics of its locale.

In comparison to most art history classes, which do not typically incorporate studio time, one third of the CWRU Pressing Matters class meetings took place at Zygote Press where undergraduate and graduate students gained hands-on experience using the printmaking presses and learned first-hand what it means to work in an arts nonprofit environment. In addition to the academic components of the class, this hands-on training at Zygote had a great impact on how the CWRU students thought about what to include in the summer workshop curriculum for teens. "When they got into the studio and got 'inky' as we say, they said 'wow, this is very different from what we imagined! This is much more time consuming. This is much more challenging. How are we going to talk about the history of print and its connection to social justice and self-advocacy in a way that will be engaging and relevant to teens from under-resourced communities?"

"How do we create a curriculum that is realistic and implementable in its scope, while also being replicable and fluid? And what is the impact that participants will walk away with, after this experience?"

As their final project for the Pressing Matters course, CWRU students produced a 72-page book that included an introductory essay contextualizing the project and the curriculum they had developed for teens.

In developing the curriculum and related materials for the teens, Benay, the Zygote team, and the college students also recognized and tried to work against the negative consequences that can come from arts-based campaigns in urban neighborhoods. Revitalization in the form of arts programs can often lead to residential displacement and gentrification, and Benay, the Zygote team, and the college students who developed the summer workshop curriculum for teens, carefully considered how to launch the workshop at the Community Arts Center in a way that would most benefit long time residents of the Clark Fulton neighborhood, a predominantly Puerto Rican neighborhood. Feldman says that the students had a number of thoughtful discussions with Zygote staff members on what it means to work with communities. "Students were interested in how to actually engage with a community, not as a white savior, creating a program to hand it to the community and saying, 'This is what you need, here you are, you're welcome,'" Feldman recalls. "They wanted to understand how to intentionally take the time to meet a community first, to invite a community to take ownership of a project, and let the project evolve from there."

In the summer of 2022, Benay and the Zygote team implemented the CWRU students' curriculum in the workshop for teens at the Community Arts Center. Like the CWRU course, this seven-week workshop combined the history of printmaking in America with hands-on printmaking skillbuilding to encourage participants to think about how printmaking can be used for social change. However, rather than teaching the historical significance of printmaking through lectures—as Benay had done in the CWRU course—the instructors of the workshop taught this history by weaving important historical events into their hands-on training in printmaking. Participants met once every week for a three-hour session during which they simultaneously learned how to operate the presses, how printmaking has been used for social change throughout the twentieth century, and how to explore ways it can continue to serve as an effective tool for social change.

To further demonstrate to students the relationship between printmaking and social activism, and to root this

connection in the contemporary moment, the workshop also included visiting guest artists who spoke about how they use art in their own practice to effect social change. One visiting artist, Zygote resident artist Amanda King, brought her experience as a photographer and director of Shooting Without Bullets—a Cleveland-based nonprofit that provides teens with cameras—to the workshop. From this perspective, King talked with students about the role of art in spurring connections and how personal identity can intersect and inform community identity.

Throughout the teen workshop, students conceived of and created prints with images and words that depicted issues of importance to them. Print themes varied widely as students chose any topic that they found personally significant. Feldman explains that this is one area where teens may differ from college students in how they engage with printmaking. "We don't want to be politically heavy handed, because sometimes those are not the issues that students are concerned with, or they don't think of them as explicitly political," Feldman says. "So we don't want to dictate what constitutes social justice art." Teens in the program made prints that focused on a diverse range of issues, including "Protecting Our Pollinators!" and offering equal access to information and knowledge. As a culmination of the workshop, Zygote hosted a print sale of the posters created by the participants, with the proceeds donated to different nonprofits of the participants' choosing.

While Pressing Matters has completed the work funded by the Racial and Social Justice grant, Benay and Zygote are committed to expanding the Pressing Matters workshops to work with other neighborhoods in Cleveland. They imagine that future iterations will share a careful attention to place and the dynamics of neighborhoods and therefore vary depending on their location and the demographics of the participants. Nonetheless, they hope that the model of combining the history of printmaking with hands-on experience in printmaking will remain the same, as will the notion that printmaking can build academic, artistic, and advocacy skills.

As Feldman points out, printmaking is uniquely well suited for a public humanities project because it encourages both personal and political expression, and it can be more accessible than other art forms: "Printmaking allows artists to make their work accessible to a multitude of people by creating multiples of a single design and making them available at a lower cost," Feldman states. Additionally, printmaking engenders sophisticated layering of material and textual forms by bringing literature, visual form, and advocacy together in different registers. "It allows artists to express themselves in ways that are unique in terms of being able to marry tactile, visual, and literary forms of expression," Feldman elaborates. "Printmaking allows artists to work in a cross-disciplinary spectrum, giving life to messages that speak literally in words, while also communicating in images and even textures."

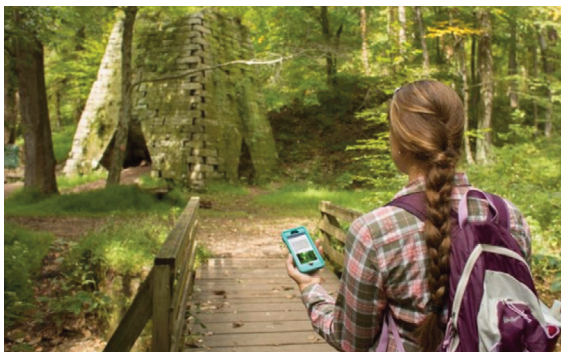
Clio: Your Guide to the History Around You

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
David Trowbridge

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Marshall University

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
The Clio Foundation; Historical Societies Nationwide; Higher Education Institutions Nationwide



Students using Clio to discover archival materials relating to the world around them. Image courtesy of Clio.

Clio is a free mobile app and website that uses GPS to share local knowledge about historic and cultural sites around the United States. Created by David Trowbridge of Marshall University, Clio is driven by a nationwide network of contributors from communities and institutions—including classes at universities and colleges—who know their history and want to share it with the world.

As of January 2018, Clio has nearly 30,000 entries and over 200 walking tours from across the country including historical and cultural landmarks, monuments, and museums.

Clio is above all accessible, with an intuitive and user-friendly interface.

"The first thing you'll notice when you open up Clio are the 20 sites nearest you," Trowbridge explains. Each entry contains a short introduction to the site and its history, with images, media, and links to further information including scholarly articles and books.

"People and organizations all over the country are creating new entries and improving them each and every day," Trowbridge explains. With these entries, the project brings the museum experience to the outside world.

"I try to think like a museum," Trowbridge says. "Museums are fun, and you can experience them at your own pace. Each entry gives the 'museum label' introduction; history is more than names, dates, and places, but you have to establish that first. If you want to read on, the second section gives the rest of the story. Once we've 'hooked' them, we say, here is an article or book on the topic or a primary source. We try to meet curiosity with expertise."

Clio is able to share such a diverse collection of resources because it draws on local expertise around the country, including community members and contributors in higher education classes and at museums, libraries, and historical societies.

When presented with such a range of options, Clio finds that people are naturally curious.

"What we've found is people click on everything," Trowbridge says. "My specialty is African American history. I know when people download Clio, they aren't downloading a Black history app—but they … click on Black history sites. They click on the books and they click on the articles and they click on everything."

Anyone can contribute to Clio, creating and updating entries. When community members contribute, their entries are reviewed by administrators. Clio gives institutional accounts to libraries, historical societies, and museums, enabling them to directly develop entries.

"For most people, Clio is a website and an app," Trowbridge explains. "It's a product. And it is—but the process is probably more valuable than the final product."

Clio enables collaboration between people who have never met.

"If you were creating an entry for the ballpark where the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro League used to play, the scholar has information and can craft a concise narrative," Trowbridge says. "But the librarian or the archivist has an oral history of Buck O'Neil that they can add to Clio; and the local people can add their memories and what it meant to them to watch the Kansas City Monarchs beat the Kansas City Blues. All of that is happening on this platform between people who don't know each other."

Clio in the Classroom

Clio is specially calibrated for use in education, with built in systems to make incorporating Clio for assignments easy for instructors and students.

Educators are given special accounts, enabling their students to easily plug in. To begin, students need only to find their professors on a drop down menu and enter a shared password—then they are ready to review Clio's instructional videos and get to work creating entries and walking tours. Their professors can then review drafts of their students' entries.

"Professors can easily create entries with their students, evaluate them, provide feedback, and publish them," Trowbridge explains. "Each entry has the name of the organization and the author—the name of the professor, the university, and the student, so that there is mutual accountability."

As easy as the interface is, the work is challenging and Trowbridge recommends ongoing student support and curricular scaffolding throughout the semester.

"You're asking your students to do publishable work and that requires one-on-one time with students. I meet with students three times throughout the semester to talk about their work," Trowbridge says. "But if you do that, if you show them what a good entry is, if you tell them why they're doing the work, if you talk about the skills they're developing, if you give them the freedom to explore topics that interest them, and if you encourage them to match up with a librarian or a writing center, it really is a joy."

Professor Ed Ayers, of the University of Richmond, has used Clio in his classroom. "When sixteen first-year students in my seminar interpreted the University of Richmond's landscape last year they saw not only their campus but history itself in a new way," Ayers noted to Marshall Magazine, "Thanks to Clio, their work benefits everyone who lives, works, studies, and visits here."

Clio is Not for Profit

Clio is now run out of the nonprofit Clio Foundation. Working out of a higher ed institution and an independent nonprofit enabled Trowbridge and the Clio team to not be concerned with keeping users in the app or on the website.

"Clio is designed to drive traffic away from Clio, to books, articles, digitized primary sources, oral histories," Trowbridge explains. "I want people to buy books, to leave Clio and to go to a library site and go to a library and to realize how important libraries and archives are. It's a mobile app designed to get people off their phones. … It's

respecting what people are interested in, their curiosity—and offering authentic good information connecting curiosity to expertise and letting them explore."

The Clio Foundation also helps ensure the sustainability of Clio as a platform for engaging with the past. "When we talk about sustainability in digital projects we often speak only of technological and financial matters," Trowbridge explains, "Creating a nonprofit foundation was not simply a way to handle donations and offer sustainability should something happen to me, but also about finding a core group of people who would sustain the mission."

2023 Project Director Update

> I enjoyed the chance to look back at the profile from 2018, partly because so much has changed while the core of the project remains—research, writing, and thinking about how we might use technology to reach the public. We've added a host of new accessibility features in partnership with the American Foundation for the Blind, including the option to be guided by a very large arrow as you listen. Each Clio entry can hold up to two audio files which creates opportunities to embed oral history clips and local narrators. We have also added geofencing-based notifications to the mobile apps so that instead of following a preset route, people can simply walk or drive and listen. One of the other major additions is the option of adding what we call contributing entries within a tour or trail. While individual Clio entries that appear on the map need to be tied to landmarks, contributing entries allow for layers of interpretation within a walking or driving tour. They also make it possible to embed stories along a walk, multiple thematic tours, and digital story maps. Thanks to over 500 organizations that have used Clio, the number of walking tours and trails has increased from 200 when the original profile was written to nearly 1600. We have also created a dozen immersive 360-degree virtual tours of museums that embed videos of museum staff.
>
> —David Trowbridge, Marshall University

John Steinbeck: Social Critic and Ecologist

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Susan Shillinglaw; William Gilly

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
San Jose State University; Hopkins Marine Station of Stanford University

K–12 schoolteachers from across the U.S. learn about Monterey Bay and the Pacific Ocean, which figure prominently in the literature of John Steinbeck. Image courtesy of Susan Shillinglaw.

At the Hopkins Marine Station of Stanford University in Pacific Grove, California, K–12 teachers are exploring the connections between the humanities and sciences through the work of John Steinbeck. The three-week National Endowment for the Humanities-funded institute for school teachers established in 2007 explores Steinbeck as a social critic and ecologist. The dual focus of the institute reflects the backgrounds of the Institute's leaders, an English professor, Karen Shillinglaw of San Jose State University and the National Steinbeck Center, and a biology professor, William Giddy of Stanford University. Participants from all over the country and from a variety of specialties and types of schools gather in Pacific Grove for lectures, seminars, and site visits, exploring connections between Steinbeck's literature and scientific thought.

The schedule is divided in two. The first half explores Steinbeck's fiction set in California, including *The Long Valley*, *Of Mice and Men*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, and *East of Eden*. The second half focuses attention on Steinbeck's work on the Pacific and the natural world, putting *Sea of Cortez* and *Cannery Row* into conversation with works by other environmental thinkers and writers.

Steinbeck's fiction and nonfiction express deeply connected "moral and ecological sensibilities" that extend beyond California and the Pacific, Shillinglaw and Giddy explain in a letter introducing their institute: "John Steinbeck was a social protest novelist, an ecological visionary and an incisive commentator on American values and ideals—one who spent most of his career exploring what 'the common good' really meant."

While much of Steinbeck's work focuses on California and the Pacific, it addresses issues of national concern—"the common good"—and is informed by his long-standing friendship with Biologist Ed Ricketts, Shillinglaw and Giddy explain: "Steinbeck's sense of place and history was enriched by a long-standing interest in science. His friendship with marine biologist Edward F. Ricketts from 1930–1948 had a deep and lasting impact on his work, evident in the book that was his personal favorite, *Sea of Cortez*."

Being on the Monterey Peninsula enables participants to explore the land and environment in which Steinbeck formed his social and ecological vision. The program includes tours and site visits, including of Salinas and the agricultural fields of the Salinas Valley that inspired *East of Eden*.

Throughout, the Institute focuses on what the teachers can bring back to their schools. Directors and staff meet individually and in small groups with participants to discuss how to incorporate what they learn into their

curricula. At the end of the program, participants contribute a lesson plan or other resource to the project website. For all participants, the payoff is clear and is helping to show the deep connections between the humanities and the sciences. Shillinglaw and Giddy's view is that the "institute's holistic approach to Steinbeck's work will help bridge the divides between humanities and sciences, between literary analysis and historical contexts, between historical and contemporary perspectives, and between fiction and nonfiction."

Graduate Institute on Engagement and the Academy

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Teresa Mangum; Jennifer New

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Obermann Center for Advanced Studies at the University of Iowa

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
The 1855 Johnson County Asylum and Poor Farm; Iowa Youth Writing Project

Fellows learn about the history and mission of the mobile Antelope Lending Library, part of the Iowa Youth Writing Project. Image courtesy of the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies.

The Graduate Institute on Engagement and the Academy is training the next generation of engaged scholars at the University of Iowa. For one week every year, a select group of graduate students gather to explore the potential of public scholarship to advance their research, teaching, and creative work. Participants discuss the philosophy and practice of public scholarship through seminars, workshops, and site visits. These activities help graduate students develop critical skills and build community with others who share their interest in producing work with community partners that enriches scholarship and the public good.

Director of the Obermann Center Teresa Mangum explains that the Graduate Institute emphasizes that publicly engaged scholarship is co-created with community partners and mutually beneficial, leading to a public good and humanities, arts, or design output. "The best partnerships I've seen are ones where everybody walks away feeling really good and that the partnership was worth everyone's time," Mangum notes. For academics, this often means the production of a publication or digital project to document the knowledge their engaged work produced. For community partners, the benefit should be clear: "Something they can point to," Mangum says: "a new educational program is in place or we have a new set of resources for our curatorial program or we have a new junior high arts festival."

Modeling and practicing this approach is built into the Graduate Institute program through partnerships with community organizations and institutions. The Graduate Institute initially invited the partners over for a meal and a discussion of engagement from their perspective, Mangum explains. "This was really productive, we begged them to be really honest with us about the benefits and liabilities," Mangum explains. "We learned a lot about how you prepare yourself and your students to go into a site and the importance of education and orientation and the need to work with partners to develop what was happening in the site rather than assuming you could just step in and drop them off."

The Graduate Institute has now formed multi-year partnerships with the Johnson County Historic Poor Farm (2016–2017) and the Iowa Youth Writing Project (2018–Present). During their week of intensive seminars and

workshops, Graduate Institute participants spend one day with the partner to learn about their approach and their organizational needs and objectives.

"Then the students, in small groups across the week of the institute, would come up with brief proposals of projects that they think could really work for the partner," Mangum explains. Should the partner be interested, the University of Iowa Office of Outreach and Engagement created a funding line that up to two groups of students can co-apply for with the community partner. That is not necessarily the objective of this exercise, though. The exercise aims to provide partners with a variety of student perspectives, enriched by their disciplinary training and interdisciplinary collaboration. The project also benefited the students, Mangum continues. "The students would benefit by getting the feedback from the community partners about how [their proposals] would work for them and the resources that would demand in terms of time and money. And so the students learned a lot about how to pitch a project, but also how to take critique and how to do further research to really learn how to make a project a collaboration instead of just a premise, but then inevitably one or two of the groups would end up moving forward."

Graduate Institute participants Aiden Bettine and John Jepsen, both PhD candidates in History, received a grant to create an oral history project with the Iowa Youth Writing Program. With this funding from the Associate Provost for Outreach and Engagement, they purchased 60 audio recorders and taught local teens to gather community stories at an oral history summer camp they organized. To build a sustainable project, their next step is to design a curriculum for other IYWP facilitators to use. Jennifer New, co-founder of the Graduate Institute notes that "The project has turned out to be especially valuable for kids who are not native speakers. After struggling to succeed as writers, these students realize that they, too, have access to storytelling." Mangum adds: "Our graduate students were able to work with the community partners on site to figure out how to do the research, to put the materials together, and to make meaning from their lives. Our graduate students have seen the power of research put into practice and our community partner has an invaluable new toolkit. That's the best of all possible worlds."

Seminar on Public Engagement and Collaborative Research

PUBLISHED
March 2021

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Kendra Sullivan

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
The Center for the Humanities at the CUNY Graduate School and University Center; CUNY Graduate School and University Center

From left to right: DeeArah Wright, Jaime Shearn Coan and panelists in the event "Solidarity Economy in the Performing Arts: What's Reparations Got to Do With It?," September 17, 2018. Image courtesy of the Center for the Humanities at CUNY Graduate Center.

The CUNY Graduate Center's Seminar on Public Engagement and Collaborative Research has helped foster a robust public humanities infrastructure across CUNY's 25 campuses. The seminar leverages CUNY's long-standing role as an incubator for activist scholarship, its diverse student body, and its reach into communities to support public humanities programming committed to social justice.

Created with funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 2015, the seminar began as a two-year initiative in the CUNY Graduate Center's Center for the Humanities that aimed to inspire community engaged research through the production of creative and activist works. Now in its third cycle since its original Mellon grant, the seminar has supported the creation of engaged courses, stipends for community partners, a public humanities press, grants for working groups, professional development workshops, paid internships and research assistantships, and independent studies for undergraduate and graduate students to pursue public humanities projects. When applying to join the seminar, graduate students can apply to be public humanities teaching fellows, digital publics fellows, or a provost's fellow in the public humanities, with each position aiming to support students to integrate public engagement with their ongoing humanities training.

The program is built around cohorts of roughly forty faculty, graduate students, and community partners who gather regularly to share skills and hard resources, collaborate on overlapping projects, create a shared vocabulary, and discuss relevant ideas like community accountability, reciprocity, compensation structures, and what it means to be an activist scholar. The seminar offers funding, course releases for faculty, staff support and space for events, and media outreach to promote public engagement.

The seminar brings together participants from across the university, including graduate students, adjunct lecturers, early tenure track faculty, and senior faculty, with each participant showing up as subject experts in their own right. Importantly, community members from partner organizations also fully participate in the seminar. This nonhierarchical relationship to knowledge production fosters a shared learning environment that reflects the social justice and access-oriented aims of the funded projects. A democratic commitment extends even to monetary concerns; members of each cohort are charged with making decisions collectively on how to allocate funds to

support projects. With a nod to the words of Shari Davis, a pioneer of participatory budgeting practices, seminar director Kendra Sullivan hopes that this shared knowledge production and agency "opens the doors to public, higher education so wide that you can't help but walk through them. And I want to be sure that once people do walk through, we're there to help prepare folks to be more efficaciously, energetically, and ethically engaged in public knowledge practices and democratic decision-making, from how resources are distributed, to the role of cultural production in greater social flourishing, to the ways we plan for climate mitigation."

Importantly, the seminar does not treat these social issues as only happening outside the university, instead seeing the potential for public humanities work to address issues of access and equity within the CUNY system itself. "What we really want to do is use the architecture of CUNY to work with, learn from, and contribute to the efforts of key allies on the outside," Sullivan notes. While acknowledging that many of the problems facing CUNY are endemic to higher education as a whole, Sullivan hopes that through the seminar "We can work together to push the pendulum in the right direction of a more just, more equitable, more democratically engaged, and more abundant university." Sullivan sees the impacts of the seminar rippling outward, as fellows trained in the seminar space go on to lead creative and activist projects, obtain substantial grants to support public work, get good jobs in academic and extra-academic fields, and teach undergraduate classes across the CUNY system.

The seminar has supported many publicly engaged projects, many of which are featured in the *Humanities for All* database, including the following examples.

The City Amplified: Oral Histories and Radical Archives Project

Participation in the seminar enabled Bronx Community College Associate Professor of History Prithi Kanakamedala to undertake The City Amplified research project, a public humanities project that brings together oral history practitioners, artists, archivists, and scholars to examine how archiving practices based on reciprocity and accessibility can amplify the rich range of oral history and place-based research projects occurring across New York City. The working group includes local organizations such as The Laundromat Project, South Asian American Digital Archive, the Bronx Music Heritage Center, and City Lore to launch a series of city-wide public events around archiving and public history practices. As a public historian, Kanakamedala notes how invaluable it was to have the seminar's support. "It was really important to me that we open up the public humanities to CUNY community college students who are often left out of opportunities, and the Center provided the capability to offer paid internships. They understand that amplifying the interdisciplinary work that CUNY faculty and our city's cultural organizations are already doing, and providing the resources for us to deepen our connections and relationships on- and off-campus is community building and public humanities at its best."

The Impact of Listening and Being Heard: Oral History, Archives, & Advocacy

CUNY English Phd and former Digital Publics Fellow Jaime Shearn Coan used the seminar to create a range of public programming and publicly engaged classes based on his scholarly interests in HIV/AIDS and dance. Initially entering the space as a member of the seminar-funded Mediating the Archives research team, Coan created "Writing About Performance," an undergraduate course in partnership with the CUNY Dance Initiative (CDI). This work also led to the development of programming with the Brooklyn performance space JACK and a publication around the theme of reparations and solidarity economies. As a Digital Publics Fellow he created Metamorphosis Theater: An Oral History Project on the Performance Work of Assotto Saint, a digital archive

inspired by his participation in the City Amplified and VHS Archives working groups supported by the seminar. Coan, who is now a Mellon/ACLS Publics Fellow at ONE Archives Foundation speaks to how the seminar prepared him for a career in the public humanities. "Over the course of my time with the seminar, I was able to try on many roles in my position: editor, facilitator, event planner, digital creator, content producer. My scholarship became more capacious as a result, as I attempted to widen the frame of what research looks and feels like. The digital archive that I produced alongside my dissertation reflects my commitment to extending my research into the public sphere, so that it may seed many projects in the future."

Rackham Program in Public Scholarship

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Matthew J. Countryman; Joseph Cialdella

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor

Rackham Program in Public Scholarship Faculty Director Matthew Countryman talks with students during a visit to the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn, Michigan as part of the 2015 Institute for Social Change.

The Rackham Program in Public Scholarship supports publicly engaged research, teaching, and programming in the University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School. Working with graduate students in all fields, the program offers a range of professional development resources, including a summer institute on public scholarship, a yearlong series of workshops on engaged teaching, and financial support in the form of grants and fellowships.

These offerings are complementary and share a core commitment to creating scholarship with community partners that benefits all involved, Program Manager Joseph Cialdella explains. "Whether that's an exhibit for one of our fellows at the Wright Museum or a course that might benefit a community partner in addition to undergraduate students, it is all connected by a sense of wanting students to see their education as serving a broader public good since we are a public university."

The Institute for Social Change and the Engaged Pedagogy Initiative

The Institute for Social Change is a four-day intensive summer program for 25 graduate students from across the university, in which they come together to explore publicly engaged scholarship. The program features site visits and workshops with diverse stakeholders, including faculty and community members. Participants build their capacity to create engaged scholarship, working together in teams to address a community partner's need rather than developing individual projects.

"The Institute is meant to be an introduction to doing publicly engaged scholarship. We focus a lot on process and how you work together collaboratively with a team that might be interdisciplinary, both within the humanities and in this case with students outside the humanities," Cialdella explains. "This year they all worked on the same dilemma, which is a cooperative space called Cass Corridor Commons in Detroit that houses several social justice-focused nonprofits. They have been grappling with their vision for the space within the neighborhood and within the larger city of Detroit."

Students met with the partner on the first day of the program. In five teams over the course of the week, they worked around this central dilemma. On the last day of the Institute, each team presented different suggestions for how their own disciplines might offer productive ways forward. For example, one team presented oral history as a tool to start conversations within this community of organizations about their future.

The Engaged Pedagogy Initiative is a yearlong program of seminars for ten graduate students exploring the theory and practice of community-based learning. Participants meet twice a month for seminars, leading to the production of syllabi for engaged courses.

Public Scholarship Grants and Public Engagement Fellowships

The Rackham Program in Public Scholarship offers two kinds of financial support: Public Scholarship Grants and Public Engagement Fellowships. Both provide opportunities for graduate students to advance scholarship and public interests together with non-academic partners.

Public Scholarship Grants offer up to $8,000 to fund mutually beneficial and collaboratively designed research projects between graduate students and non-academic partner organizations, which have in the past included K–12 schools, government agencies, and cultural and community organizations.

Public Engagement Fellowships support graduate student internships with cultural, nonprofit, and educational organizations on and off campus, offering the opportunity to develop mutually beneficial projects and to explore career directions that utilize their academic training.

Jana Wilbricht's "Words Flying Through the Air"

The Rackham Program in Public Scholarship has supported many projects since its inception in 2008, many of which are included in the *Humanities for All* database.

In 2016, funding from the Program for Public Scholarship enabled Jana Wilbricht to undertake a research project in partnership with two tribal radio stations: KUYI Hopi Radio in Arizona and KYUK in Alaska. The project formed a part of Wilbricht's dissertation research in the Department of Communication Studies.

"[It] explores and supports the role of tribal radio in providing access to accurate, culturally relevant health information for residents of rural American Indian reservations in the U.S.," Wilbricht explains in her report. "American Indians and Alaska Natives are disproportionately affected by digital divides and health inequities, and the local, tribally owned and operated radio stations are a key health information resource in many tribal communities."

"Through interviews with station leaders, content analyses of health-related content, and focus groups with listeners, I aim to understand how tribal radio contributes to improved health awareness and outcomes in this population," Wilbricht continues. "Through a set of direct community outcomes, the project directly contributes to the missions of the partnering radio stations."

The funding from the Rackham Program made a big impact, Wilbricht explains. "I would not have been able to do community-based, truly participatory research for my dissertation with these communities." Funding supported travel and fair payment to the stations for use of their space and their time, Wilbricht continues. "As a graduate student I would not have had access to that kind of funding, that kind of support, without a program that specifically funds this sort of research."

The Humanities Ladder Program

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Aaron Cowan; Lia Paradis

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
The Stone House Center for Public Humanities at Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Aliquippa Jr./Sr. High School; Union Area Middle/Senior High School

Sean Macmillan, faculty member at Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania, teaches Aliquippa High School students about metalworking as a part of the Humanities Ladder Program. Image Courtesy of the Stone House Center for Public Humanities, Slippery Rock University.

In the Western Pennsylvania towns of Aliquippa and New Castle, faculty and undergraduate students from Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania are facilitating university-style humanities courses at local high schools. These courses build awareness of the benefits of studying the humanities among students who might not otherwise have access to humanities programming.

The Humanities Ladder Program is creating opportunities for these high school students by introducing them to pedagogical and cultural aspects of higher education, Project Director Aaron Cowan explains.

"The project really is trying to address a couple of key social problems. One of those is that the statistics on the graduation rates for first-generation, low-income, and minority college students are very sobering," Cowan notes. "A lot of the research suggests that it's not necessarily always about money and definitely not necessarily about academic ability; a lot of these students have gotten scholarships and grants and that sort of thing, but that there's this kind of a specific issue of culture, of feeling uncomfortable."

The initiative is inspired by the Clemente Course in the Humanities' approach and overall philosophy. The Clemente Course in the Humanities offers college-level humanities courses to people in economic distress. "We've adapted the assessment that we do from the Clemente Course. They do a reflective survey and interviews with [participating] students. We do the same thing," Cowan says. "But I think it drew on the Clemente Course on a much deeper level in terms of overall philosophy: the very democratic idea that the humanities aren't luxuries and that they are essential resources for a good life and for democratic society." Students in these culturally and economically isolated communities are often encouraged to study other disciplines, Cowan continues. The Humanities Ladder Program emphasizes the utility and applicability of the humanities to everyday life, Cowan says: "How do we begin to apply questions about ethics or about justice to our actual community? How would that apply within the town of Aliquippa or the town of New Castle?"

These questions drive sessions, which are led by a Slippery Rock University faculty member with an undergraduate as a student mentor. Undergraduate students were not initially involved, Cowan explains. "What we realized is we were missing an opportunity for our undergraduate students to gain experience and to learn about the education system."

The roles the undergraduate students play vary by instructor, Cowan continues. "Very often when I've taught in the program, my student mentor has been a really nice bridge," Cowan says. "High school students will ask questions of the student mentor that they wouldn't ask of me if we have a discussion going, because they aren't sure if they're supposed to ask a college professor that. In some of the sessions, when we've covered the concepts that we want to cover, the high school students will want to know what college life is like. They want to know as much about the student's experience as they do about the humanities discipline and the lesson that we're doing for the day."

Students have responded well to the challenge of a university-style discussion. The stakes are low, in part, Cowan suggests, because the Humanities Ladder sessions are not for credit. "The students in the high school seem much freer and more willing to speak their mind and respond to questions, often just sort of cut through a lot of the safe answers and see the big picture or the things that really mattered in the little text." These are skills that will help in life, in college and after, Cowan concludes. "That's how you learn. It was very fun to work with high school students in that way."

Humanities Responders

PUBLISHED
October 2020

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Aaron Fai

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Wisconsin–Madison Center for the Humanities

Kate MacCrimmon from Satellite Family Child Care kicking off a professional development workshop via Zoom.

How can public humanities projects respond to moments of crisis? At the University of Wisconsin's Center for the Humanities, undergraduate and graduate humanities responders are bringing the tools of the public humanities to the unique challenges presented by COVID-19. By adapting the longstanding programmatic structure of their Graduate Public Humanities Exchange (HEX) program—a grant program that financially supports innovative public humanities projects between community organizations and students—the Center was able to quickly and creatively promote high impact projects in a time of high uncertainty.

Like many faced with a feeling of hopelessness at the opening moments of the pandemic, Assistant Director of Public Humanities Aaron Fai and Humanities Center Director Russ Castronovo, reimagined how the aims of HEX could meet the needs of students and the community. To ensure that it is easy for students to apply for funding, project submissions are accepted on a rolling basis and projects can be proposed through video application or through an informal pitch. Fai saw these measures as a way of immediately and creatively rising to the occasion of the crisis at hand. "It's empowering to hear that phrase 'humanities responder,' Fai noted, "to put yourself in those shoes and feel that what you're doing is worthwhile and could have an impact in the same way that a first responder has."

Through the Humanities Responders program, ten graduate and twelve undergraduate students have begun remote projects that serve and bolster the current work of community organizations, nonprofits, cultural institutions, and public agencies. Two graduate humanities responders, Alexandra Lakind and Orion Lee Risk, have worked to turn the connectivity challenges the pandemic poses into opportunities to create programming that addresses the particular binds that community members and organizations are facing.

Lakind, who is a doctoral candidate in Curriculum & Instruction and Environmental Studies at UW-Wisconsin, is working as part of an ongoing partnership with Kate MacCrimmon at Satellite Family Child Care to restore a professional development series for childcare providers at the Madison Public Library that was canceled due to COVID-19. Lakind, who previously worked in child care herself, started this collaboration in 2015 in response to what she saw as a lack of professional development spaces that treated child care providers, and particularly Spanish-speaking providers, as advanced professionals with years of expertise. With women of color making up 40% of childcare providers and one in five providers being immigrants (a portion of whom are undocumented),

Lakind and MacCrimmon bring feminist frameworks of care to their events and emphasize full bilingual access and participation for Spanish-speakers. Recent workshops such as "WI Model Early Learning Standards and the Natural World" and "Conscious Communication and Non-violent Communication," bring humanities skill sets to foster a space for childcare providers to reflect on their role providing essential childcare, teaching, and crisis management services on the frontline of the pandemic. In the "Natural World" workshop, providers learned about activities they could do with children outdoors that encouraged both safe COVID protocols and creative engagement with the environment. In previous workshops, participants—modeling classroom discussion and collective humanistic analysis—have engaged in conversations around changing state policies, funding, and regulations that impact their work as childcare providers and as people with variously marginalized social identities. As Lakind notes, "professionalization doesn't just mean showing that this job deserves money, which it does, and resources, which it does, but it also means creating the space for shared collective analysis and support. And I think that's what we really felt was missing in the lives of family child care providers."

Child care as a kind of labor has become more visible (and more strenuous) as a result of stay-at-home orders; providers are tasked with providing care with uneven access to personal protective equipment while simultaneously navigating new remote learning for children who normally would be at school. While the switch to a virtual platform made the more intrinsic pieces of in-person connection more difficult (and for many full access to technology is still limited), MacCrimmon also cited an increase in participation in their workshops by fourfold due to the accessibility that Zoom affords and the increased support needs of the moment. Leaning on established relationships with local translators and their long-standing working relationship with the Madison Public Library was essential to the short-term success of the series, and Lakind is hopeful that they will continue to incorporate this remote infrastructure into the library's offerings beyond the pandemic moment.

Humanities Responder Orion Lee Risk, who is a master's student in Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies at Wisconsin, also saw the turn toward virtual engagement during quarantine as an opportunity to provide a less visible community with a space to gather. "There was a lot that was rough about that shift," Risk reminisces about the stay-at-home transition, "but I also found myself with unexpected positives I was experiencing. I'm transgender and I didn't have to go out into the streets and carry the consciousness of what other people might be saying, and what they might be thinking about me. I just had this whole open space inside myself where normally there might be that concern. I was like, I wonder what other people in my community or other people with diverse genders are experiencing right now?"

As a result, Risk facilitated a series of online dialogues between trans, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming folks in Dane County, Wisconsin, and Black Hawk County, Iowa—an epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak in the U.S.—to discuss their experiences with gender during the pandemic. These dialogues then turned into *GenderTalks*, a piece of documentary theater directed by Finch Moore and produced in partnership with Iowa-based Rising Fire Theatre in which an audience of any gender listened in as "invited eavesdroppers." Risk particularly embraced how Zoom as a platform brought with it a specific opportunity for vulnerability and connection. "There's an intimacy to the zoom space that is different from the intimacy of a live space. We were able to have face-to-face conversations between people who live in different states, and in some cases are immunocompromised and are seeing basically no one in person." Risk is also thinking through how this kind of virtual piece allows *GenderTalks* to be used as a teaching tool, and can be adapted and performed for high schoolers as a way of engaging conversations around gender and identity.

Tying this project to their academic work, Risk saw the public humanities as a way of continuing to engage and produce work in a meaningful way during the pandemic. "In the field I work in academically there's the whole concept of practice as research. That this theater thing that we are doing simultaneously creates research knowledge. So I can do a thing that is academically exciting that's also socially and publicly exciting and valuable and do it in the middle of a moment of crisis. These things don't have to be separate."

Great World Texts in Wisconsin

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Sara Guyer; Emily Clark

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Wisconsin–Madison Center for the Humanities

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
High Schools across Wisconsin

Student shares a board game interpreting the 16th century Chinese novel *Journey to the West* at Great World Texts in Wisconsin's Annual Student Conference in 2016. Image courtesy of the University of Wisconsin Center for the Humanities.

Great World Texts in Wisconsin is a yearlong program at the University of Wisconsin–Madison Center for the Humanities that brings contemporary and historical literature from around the world to life in Wisconsin high schools. Focusing on different texts each year, UW–Madison scholars produce an educators' guide and a series of on-campus programs for high school teachers and their classes.

Great World Texts in Wisconsin is diverse by design, both in terms of its participants and the texts on which it focuses. The program draws in classes from around the state.

"This is not a program that's only for Advanced Placement students or the most college-ready students," Humanities Center Director Sara Guyer notes in introducing the program. "Great works of literature are for everybody and we believe, I believe, and the program demonstrates, that that diversity is precisely what literature is good for."

The choice of texts each year reflects this commitment to diversity. "We like to reflect geographic and historical range," Guyer says. "There are so many places and parts of the world that we want to think about and explore with these students." With these considerations in mind, the Center tends to select texts that are not usually taught but that offer opportunities for learning close reading, discussion, and analysis.

The program begins with the educators' guide, which is produced through a collaboration between a graduate student and faculty advisor at UW–Madison. Available for free on the program website, the educators' guide contains all the materials that students will need to explore the year's text.

The 2017–2018 academic program centers on Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring.* This groundbreaking work of scientific writing for a general audience showcases the impact of pesticides on the environment and public health in the years after World War II, drawing attention to the roles humans play in a complex ecosystem. These questions are at least as pressing today as they were in 1962, especially in a state as agriculturally and ecologically rich as Wisconsin.

Teachers are encouraged to adapt the guide's modules in any way that they wish, enabling them to meet the unique interests, needs, and concerns of their classes across the state. In introducing *Silent Spring,* the 2017–2018

educators' guide emphasizes this flexibility. Teachers are encouraged to tailor discussion points, assignments, and activities to their classes and their unique scheduling needs.

Other recent years have focused on equally compelling and relevant literature from further afield, including 16th-century China, ancient Greece, and contemporary Turkey, Nigeria, and Colombia.

The program provides participating teachers with the books themselves and everything that they will need to tailor the educators' guide to their classes' needs. The UW–Madison Library assists with the acquisition of texts for participating teachers, minimizing financial barriers to participation.

Teachers come to campus three times throughout the year, twice for colloquia and once with their students for the annual conference.

The colloquia bring teachers together to UW–Madison, to learn about the year's great world text as a group. Run by the Center, these sessions offer teachers support in the preparation of Great World Texts course materials for their classrooms. As the semester continues, teachers stay in touch with the Center, engaging with a full-time staff member hired for this purpose.

The annual conference features a plenary session where students share creative interpretations of the year's text with each other and participate in workshops with UW–Madison faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates.

There are no limits placed on students, who are encouraged to present critical analyses through essays and visual, performing, and culinary arts. The conference culminates with a keynote address, structured as a town hall to offer representatives from each participating class the opportunity to interact personally with a well-known author—either the author of that year's text or an author otherwise connected with that year's text.

When the program focused on Nobel Laureate Orhan Pahmuk's Snow in 2013, UW–Madison brought Pahmuk to campus. Pahmuk was impressed with the students' responses to his work. Before fielding questions from representatives of each class, Pahmuk reflected that "there are prominent critics in Europe and in other countries who read the novel as you do and who don't get as much as you do."

Great World Texts' engagement with the broader Wisconsin public has deep roots in the UW System, as expressed in the "Wisconsin Idea." In 1905, University of Wisconsin President Charles Van Hise articulated the principle that forms the core of the concept: "I shall never be content until the beneficent influence of the University reaches every family of the state." One hundred years later, the UW–Madison Center for the Humanities' Great World Texts in Wisconsin has helped realize Van Hise's vision.

The Language Pod

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Laura Wagner

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
The Ohio State University

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Center of Science and Industry (COSI)

The Ohio State University Language Pod at Columbus, Ohio's Center of Science and Industry. Image courtesy of the Buckeye Language Network.

In a glass enclosure called the Language Pod at Columbus, Ohio's Center of Science and Industry (COSI), Ohio State University faculty and students are working together across disciplines to advance—and to demystify—language research. Led by Laura Wagner, the Language Pod is both an active research lab and a forum for engaging the museum's diverse visitors. Inside the Pod, visitors can contribute to faculty and student research. Outside the Pod, visitors can watch and participate in student-led engagement activities that explain what is happening inside the Pod and introduce diverse topics in language research: learning about everything from the mechanics of language production to English morphology—the study of the forms of words.

The Language Pod is an initiative of the interdisciplinary Buckeye Language Network, which brings together faculty, scholars, and students from the sciences and the humanities. It engages approximately 3,000 visitors every year as participants contributing to language research. Wagner estimates that outreach activities on the floor outside the Pod reach 30,000–40,000 visitors per year.

Research in the Language Pod

Research in the Pod encompasses a range of work in humanistic, social scientific, and scientific linguistics, highlighting the complementarity of diverse approaches to language.

"One study that I have been involved in looks at how children learn to develop a range of skills about regional dialects," Wagner explains. "When can they actually tell that someone is not from here? How well can they understand the words that [speakers] say and how do we judge them?"

"Our number one goal for all of this is that people should walk away thinking language is cool"

"In the English Department, one of our faculty members spent last summer doing a study looking at teenagers and how they use their cellphones to communicate," Wagner explains. "It's interesting work into how technology shifts the way people are interacting in a social communicative sense."

To recruit participants, all the Pod researchers have to do is ask.

"We have our glass enclosed space, people can see us," Wagner explains. "We send students out onto the floor of the museum. They go just outside of the lab area and they walk up to people and say, 'Hi, I'm from Ohio State. We're doing a research study, would you like to participate?' And people say 'yes.'"

Outreach in the Language Pod

Outside the Language Pod, Wagner explains that undergraduate students interact with visitors.

"One of the things we realized early on is COSI is a museum and we are an exhibit. In their ideal world, we would be open for business and doing things every moment that the museum is open. That's a lot of research. It's more research than we can handle, even with a dozen faculty members doing projects."

To address this need, Wagner and the Buckeye Language Network developed an undergraduate course that trains students to do informal science outreach. "Then we put students on the floor doing interactive activities with the public," Wagner explains. The class's capstone involves the development of new language outreach activities for the Language Pod—games or educational slides—some of which come to be incorporated into its regular programming.

Impact on Students and Visitors

This experience is beneficial for students and visitors. Students gain experience in public speaking and a genuine appreciation for the importance of engaging the public.

"They have to talk to parents, children, and grandparents," Wagner explains. "They have to talk about something sort of technical. It's not just chatting, it's … about what morphology in English looks like. That's what the course is really about, training students to be able to talk about complicated stuff with the public."

Visitors learn about language and about language research, demystifying what might otherwise seem complex and out of reach.

"Our number one goal for all of this is that people should walk away thinking language is cool," Wagner explains. "We want to engage and promote excitement and interest in a general sense."

Johann Sebastian Bach and the Music of the Reformation Churches

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Hilde Marga Binford

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Moravian College

K–12 school teachers from around the country come to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania to explore the music of Bach. Image courtesy of Hilde Binford.

The musical traditions of Johann Sebastian Bach and Reformation churches are deeply rooted in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Moravian College has shared the region's rich musical heritage with K–12 teachers from around the country through a longstanding National Endowment for the Humanities Institute for School Teachers. The four-week institute brings together 25 school teachers from across the country in Bethlehem to learn from experts and from each other, infusing elementary, middle, and high school curricula with Bach and the musical, religious, and cultural history of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Music has been a part of Bethlehem's cultural life from the very beginning. Bach's music was brought to American shores by the Moravians, members of a reformation church from what is now Germany, who settled Bethlehem in 1741. America's first Bach choir was founded in Bethlehem in 1898 and has continued to perform in Bethlehem and around the country. The Bethlehem area is also home to a number of Reformation churches in addition to the Moravian Church, all of which have significant musical traditions.

Institute Director Hilde Binford of Moravian College explains that participants take full advantage of being in Bethlehem through site visits, lectures, and workshops that feature local resources.

"We went to the Moravian Archives. We also worked with the Bach Choir of Bethlehem. The director Greg Funfgeld was able to join our institute and to present materials to our teachers about teaching Bach to children," Binford explains. The institute also visited Moravian and other Anabaptist and Pietist historic sites and communities in the Bethlehem region like the Schwenkfelder Library and Heritage Center and the Ephrata Cloister. "We spent time with an Old Order Amish family and had a meal with them and visited one of their schools," Binford continues. These groups would have been known to Bach and together with the study of their music traditions, offering participants a window into a time of great cultural and religious change in Europe and its profound impact on American life.

In sponsoring the program, the NEH defrays the cost of travel and attendance for the teachers who participate. The institute strives for diversity, including teachers from different regions, schools, and disciplines. Recent years

have included teachers of German, religion, English as a Second Language, and visual and performing arts. It helps all of these teachers incorporate music into their K–12 curricula.

Lectures and workshops led by field leaders illuminate and contextualize Bach's work and illustrate how studying Bach offers opportunities to learn about the Enlightenment.

Binford recalls one lecture from faculty member Michael Marissen of Swarthmore College, which focused on the integration of religious ideas in Bach's music. Marissen demonstrated that Bach's Brandenburg Concerto #1 conveys the New Testament idea that hierarchies are to be inverted by reversing the roles of instrumentalists in the Concerto. "So in a concerto that's written for the court, he actually has the instruments play in different roles than you would normally expect, and it evokes the upside down world," Binford explains.

Through lectures, workshops, and site visits, participating teachers develop expertise that they can contribute to their home schools. "The only obligation in fact is to prepare a lesson and bring it back to their schools," Binford explains. "The lessons varied tremendously because of the different grade levels and what would be appropriate to the different schools. In the last two days, they signed up for 10-minute slots and they presented their ideas and their lesson plans. Then there was time to give them suggestions, feedback, and other ideas."

Columbus Community Geography Center

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Amanda Rees

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Columbus State University

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Pasaquan Preservation Society; Girls Inc.; Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce; Feeding the Valley

Students and community members mark up a map of Marion County, Georgia, indicating places they believe should be highlighted in a heritage map. Photo by David Anderson. Image courtesy of Columbus State University Archives.

At Columbus State University, the Columbus Community Geography Center is advancing student learning and sparking local economic revitalization. Coordinated by Amanda Rees, the Center's classes are built around student research projects run by, with, and for diverse community partners. Community geography uses the tools of geography, like GIS and mapping, while drawing knowledge and direction from the community, Rees explains. "We bring the [field's] ways of doing things, but they bring content or we're discovering content that they know is out there, they just don't know how to get to it."

The Center's projects have included the creation of lesson plans on spatial reasoning and urban planning with Girls, Inc., a nonprofit organization focusing on the empowerment of young females; a report on food pantries and food accessibility with Feeding the Valley, a Columbus, Georgia-based food bank; and a community-sourced map and place-making project focusing on Buena Vista and Marion County, Georgia with the Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce.

Reese explains that collaborations with local partners have sustained the interest of the university's diverse student population. "If students can't see an application for what they're doing, it can be a little dry and not very engaging," Rees says. "Together, we've found that mixing community engagement and reflection can really be important to help students be energized and connected and feel useful."

Building and strengthening these partnerships requires ongoing engagement throughout the course. "Managing that buy-in is quite important," Rees explains. "Very early on in our pedagogical process, our community partners need to connect with the students directly. They come in to give a talk to the students. I'm very clear in what I need, which is: What is your mission? What is the project? How is this going to help you do what you do in the future? What's the meaning? Why are we bothering? We see them in the process. At the end of the courses, the goal is to meet again with the partner to present our findings."

The project in Buena Vista and Marion County, Georgia is illustrative.

"There is a small county, probably about three-quarters of an hour away from Columbus. Small, rural, lost a chicken processing plant about 3 or 4 years ago which meant 200 jobs which was a massive impact to this small community," Rees recalls. "At the same time, there is a 'visionary art environment' in this community." The environment, called Pasaquan, was created by Eddie Owens Martin, who died in the 1980s. "The Pasaquan Preservation Society kept it going by hook and crook," Rees states. When the Kohler Foundation came in to conserve it in 2014, the State of Georgia recommended that the Chamber of Commerce develop a heritage tour and trail to leverage the foundation's investment.

Rees' students stepped in to help by creating maps of the city and the county with local residents in collaboration with a graphic arts class at the university.

"We interviewed lots of people. We had a workshop one Thursday in the spring and invited people from the community to come," Rees explains. "My students stood at stations with these large city maps and county maps and asked people to share places that they thought would be of interest and important to people from the outside. … A few places were more legend than fact. We had to treat that language a little differently, but it was important for folks to share that, and it gave a really particular sense of place." With community input, the geography students made the final decisions on content and then the graphic design students got to work.

The maps were for visitors, but created by, with, and for the community. "Even though the audience is the visitor, we are always mindful that we are helping a community tell its own story to itself," Rees notes. "We're mindful of making sure we're representing difference and not reiterating histories that aren't inclusive. We bring our professional sensibility to our practice." With this in mind, the community came together to launch the maps. One thousand five hundred maps were distributed that day, impacting the community's sense of its own place and creating opportunities for tourism and economic development. The mapping and place-making efforts have paid off in garnering outside attention: in 2016, CNN named Pasaquan one of "16 Intriguing Things to See and Do in the U.S. in 2016."

The Rochester Reform Trail

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Jose R. Torre

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
SUNY College at Brockport

It is no coincidence that 19th-century Rochester, New York was home to Susan B. Anthony, Frederick Douglass, and a large community of religious innovators like the Hicksite Quakers. The College at Brockport hosts the Rochester Reform Trail, a National Endowment for the Humanities Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshop that has brought roughly 400 K–12 teachers from across the country together to explore the history of women's rights, religion, and abolition at the juncture of the Genesee River and the Erie Canal. The workshop focuses on the power of place to change history, sending participants back to their schools with a keen appreciation for the significance of Western New York in American and world history.

The workshop has historically been run in two one-week blocks, during which participants learn together from local faculty members who specialize in the region's history. Participants are selected from every region of the country and a wide variety of schools, and they are given text to read before arriving in Western New York. When in Rochester, they are encouraged but not required to stay in the same hotel, for which the NEH provides a stipend.

Organizer Jose R. Torre of the College at Brockport, State University of New York emphasizes that Rochester made a disproportionate impact on American reform movements. "Rochester became this hotbed of reform organizations in a way that was just not consistent with its population base," Torre explains. "It's really a brand new city; there's exponential growth from the 1820s to the 1850s. And the question that comes up is why. Why did it come to rival something like Boston or even New York City?"

Torre stresses the importance of place for understanding the past, of being there and understanding the social and economic contexts that gave rise to the tradition of innovation. "The NEH Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshop is structured around the idea of place," Torre explains. "The idea that place matters, that historical change doesn't happen in abstract space—it happens at particular times and spaces for particular reasons. So why did all these people end up in this place at a very specific point in time? The broad story that I tell the NEH summer scholars is that it's about the transportation revolution and the industrial revolution."

Through lectures, seminars, and engagement with primary documents and sites in the region, the workshop explores how Rochester becomes an industrial and transportation hub because of the two waterways: the Genesee River and the Erie Canal. Mills sparked industrial growth along the Genesee River, which flows northward into Lake Ontario. The construction of the Erie Canal changed mobility and the economics of American life, initiating a transportation revolution.

These revolutions brought both social change and new residents, who worked in factories and were not connected with local kinship units. "It's my sense that the reform movement is there because there's a perception that this new society needs new forms of social control," Torre says. The religious and cultural reformist spirit in Rochester that these economic forces helped incubate grew to have a global impact.

"These people tried to change structures of power," Torre notes. "You have in the middle of this kind of hick boomtown these efforts to fundamentally restructure society along more egalitarian principles. It's really mind-

blowing. And they sort of went at it with full vigor, as Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass dedicated their lives to it. It's a national story and it's really an international story in many ways. Susan B. Anthony has as much to say to the struggle of women in Saudi Arabia as she does to the struggle of women in America in 1855."

The lessons from the workshop in Rochester have impacted schools around the country, as one anonymous participant indicates: "I feel like a lot of the information could be translated directly into my classroom. Fantastic! We covered the variety of reform movements that occurred in Rochester and influenced our nation. My school was actively considering dropping Women's suffrage from our curriculum—no more after this."

The Encounters Series

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Brendan Kane; Dana Miranda

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Connecticut Humanities Institute

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Hartford Public Library Hartford History Center; Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art; The Amistad Center for Art & Culture; Hartford History Center of the Hartford Public Library

Participants discuss wealth inequality in an Encounters Series event at the Hartford History Center at the Hartford Public Library in 2017. Image courtesy of the Encounters Series.

The Encounters Series is facilitating important conversations in Connecticut. Programs in the Encounters Series bring University of Connecticut (UConn) humanities faculty into dialogue with community members about diverse issues like Gothic art, citizenship, and wealth inequality in the U.S. The Encounters Series is a collaboration between the UConn Humanities Institute and the Hartford Public Library, the Wadsworth Atheneum, and the Amistad Center for Art & Culture, creating space for conversations that draw on expertise at the university and have the potential to effect change.

The Encounters Series grew out of a desire to build connections between a land-grant university and its state, Brendan Kane of UConn explains. "We wanted to move beyond the kind of typical mode of interaction, which is the lecture or the panel," Kane says. "I love lectures and panels, but we wanted to do things that were more active. We wanted to get UConn faculty more out into the world, making a research university that's state supported more accessible to the people in the communities that we serve." With this in mind, Kane began exploring models of conflict resolution and public conversations.

The Encounters Series draws on methodologies of the traditional lecture model, as well as those of conflict resolution and public conversation projects. "On the one hand you have the lecture, which is about content. On the other hand you have conflict resolution and public conversation projects, which are really about process. Can we find the middle way that combines some of the best of both worlds? This is what the Encounters Series came out to be."

Programs in the Encounters Series are open to the public and free, Kane explains. "We provide food because that's what all of the community building conflict resolution people said: you have to bring people together around the table to break bread." Drawing on methods of conflict resolution and community conversation programming, Kane and the Encounters team developed and tested a dialogue model.

Participants engage with some kind of "text," be it a piece of music, an image, a writing, or something else. They sit around tables in small groups with a member of the Encounters team or a UConn faculty member. "You bring people in and have small table conversations around a particular topic and the text," Kane explains. "You start from timed engagements where everybody has two minutes. You try to build the experience of actively participating and actively listening, then you go to more open conversation." At the end of these sorts of events, tables typically share what they've discussed. This is where Encounters departs from traditional models, Kane continues. "Instead of just sharing out to your table, we ask each table to think about some questions relating to where they are in terms of their collective thinking and wondering about the subject. What would they want to ask somebody who is an expert in that area?"

When each table is primed with questions, the Encounters team brings in an expert in the subject area from UConn or the community. "This is a way of getting [university and community] people's content expertise into the world. They'll stand up and be the experts," Kane notes. "So the final session is a conversation Q and A based upon the conversations that people have had." The model builds confidence among participants and facilitates a more equal exchange, Kane continues: "People who may otherwise feel uncomfortable asking a professor a question, they've now just had an hour and a half or more where they've engaged with the text … and listened to their neighbors. Their confidence has risen a lot. And then on the other hand, the confidence of the professors who stand up there is lowered, because they have to answer a Q and A session where they've had no control over determining the information on the day."

The community partners, listed above, play co-equal roles in determining the subjects of the conversation and planning the event, as well as building connections with the community. Encounters is a fully collaborative and collective endeavor.

The Encounters Series is specifically designed to create institutionalized engagement opportunities for faculty that draw upon their research even if their work might not initially seem like a natural fit. "I'm a Renaissance-Reformation historian. I do 16th- and 17th-century England and Ireland," Kane explains. "One of the things I wanted to demonstrate is that I have expertise that is useful in a public conversation. It's not only what you teach and research, it's also the modes in which you think that can be incredibly useful, and, you know what, you're going to learn something in return for that. That's really one of the keys."

World Masterpieces Seminar at the South Bend Center for the Homeless

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Steve Fallon; Clark Power

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Notre Dame

Residents of the South Bend Center for the Homeless participate in the University of Notre Dame World Masterpieces Seminar, reading and discussing great works of literature. Image courtesy of the World Masterpieces Seminar.

Since 1998, University of Notre Dame faculty have led the World Masterpieces Seminar at the South Bend Center for the Homeless. Inspired by the Clemente Courses in the Humanities, which offer college-level humanities courses to people in economic distress around the country, Notre Dame's program offers a version of the undergraduate Great Books seminars offered in the Program of Liberal Studies. It focuses on the reading and discussion of great works of literature, creating learning opportunities for residents to earn Notre Dame credit and to build community, self-confidence, and all the critical life skills that learning in the humanities endows.

Enrollment is open to all the Center's homeless residents. To enable parents to participate, Notre Dame undergraduates provide free on-site childcare.

Classes are built around readings drawn from the on-campus Great Books curriculum, including Sophocles' *Antigone* and selections from the *Odyssey*, *Paradise Lost*, and *Dialogues of Plato*. They are operated as interactive undergraduate seminars, a format that helps build enthusiasm among participants.

"We require students to do the reading and to be active participants in class discussion, which is the way we run Great Books seminars on campus," co-founder Stephen Fallon explains. "The leaders see themselves not as lecturers or those who give the meaning of texts under discussion, but as those who read the text more carefully and more often and those who are more experienced as readers."

The project is driven by the conviction that the humanities effect positive change.

"We have a strong belief that humanities are important politically speaking. Not in terms of right or left, but in terms of enfranchising people to join the public conversation," Fallon notes. "We believe that students who are empowered by reading classic texts will gain more of a voice and confidence to address issues in the public. We have found that students report growing in self-confidence and in the sense of belonging to a larger intellectual community."

Students come from a range of educational backgrounds: some have earned college degrees, others have taken some college courses; some have diplomas or GEDs, and some possess 12th-grade reading skills but do not yet have GEDs. With this group, Fallon reports considerable progress.

"Often we have students who have no experience reading classic texts at all," Fallon says. "Again and again, we have had the experience of students both surprised and delighted and growing in self-confidence because they can read these texts with comprehension and can talk about them with interested peers and professors."

"Notre Dame is highly selective," Fallon continues. "We're used to having very, very smart students, our undergraduates especially. We have found that we have had students at the Homeless Center who are every bit as up to the challenge of reading and discussing intelligently highly complex texts."

As in on-campus seminars, participation involves both discussing the text as an object of study and connecting the texts to lived experience.

"The Homeless Center classes have life experiences which are entirely unlike the life experiences of our undergrads," Fallon explains. "The students who we have at the Homeless Center have all sort of washed up on the shore after a tempestuous period. That has been particularly interesting for texts like the *Odyssey* … There is a strong sense of homelessness and searching in the *Odyssey* … Their experiences are in some ways more easily connectable to the texts than the experiences our traditional undergraduates have had."

Fallon believes that engagement with marginalized and low-income communities is important for all universities, especially wealthy private Catholic universities like Notre Dame. "We have a strong undergraduate sense of service here, which is tied here to Catholic social teaching and the preferential option for the poor," Fallon notes. He understands his teaching at the Homeless Center as an expression of these commitments. "Another reason is that teaching a variety of students is invigorating and instructive for faculty," Fallon adds. "Going to the Center and teaching is a way of recharging our batteries; reminding us of our passion for teaching; thinking about the kinds of strategies we need to work with students in the Homeless Center and on campus. It's a way of not only serving the outside but keeping the interior life of the university alive and fresh and passionate."

Walden, a Game

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Tracy J. Fullerton

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Southern California Game Innovation Lab

Screenshot from *Walden, a Game*.

Walden, a Game is many things. It is a video game. It is an interpretation of Henry David Thoreau's classic work of American transcendental philosophy, *Walden*. It is the product of ten years of work by Tracy Fullerton and the Game Innovation Lab at the University of Southern California. Above all, *Walden* is a humanities experience offering players the opportunity to reflect, to imagine, and to consider Thoreau's philosophy and the grandeur of the natural world from your PC or PS4.

"You play as Henry David Thoreau during his time in the woods at Walden," Fullerton says. "The goal of the game is to live simply in nature and to discover a balance between the basic needs of surviving in the woods and the search for inspiration and a relationship to nature."

Walden is a first-person game. It takes six hours to play, during which players become Thoreau. While excerpts from the book prompt players to explore the book's storylines from the beginning, they are not bound to the book's narrative.

"You are set down into the woods in the summer of 1845, when [Thoreau] began his time there," Fullerton says. "You can finish building your cabin. You can wander the woods and start exploring right away. It's what's called an open world game. By that, I just mean that we don't tell you what to do. It's suggested by its placement and the half-finished state of your cabin. But since it is summer, it's not imperative that you do so. You can just get down to exploring the woods and discovering what's there. And there are many other things you can do. You can go fishing. You can start planting your bean field."

Whatever players choose, they are operating in a universe deliberately constructed to channel Thoreau's Walden. Fullerton built the world of *Walden, a Game* to evoke Thoreau's thought. To understand the game's message, players need to play deliberately.

"We try very hard to make the rules [of the game] such that if you actually sat down to consider them, they would prove true to Thoreau's philosophy," Fullerton notes. "The way that the world functions, the rules that you are engaging in in the game actually are drawn from the things that [Thoreau] discusses in the book. For example, when he says the four basic necessities of life are food, fuel, shelter, and clothing, those become the four things you have to care-take for your survival in the game."

By integrating these thoughts into the structure of the game, *Walden, a Game* encourages players to play critically and deliberately: to ask how Thoreau believes the world works—and *why*.

Fullerton was moved to create *Walden, a Game* by a desire to slow down.

"Every time I read *Walden*, I found it reflected something back at me that was different," Fullerton recalls. "Especially as an adult, I started to realize how much the book dealt with how we spend our time and the importance of choosing wisely how we spend our time. I saw the connection to his need to slow down life, if you will; to go out to the woods and get a perspective on life and our own state where we are today. I thought it was really topical and interesting. I felt that I would like to make a game that would follow his rules, so to speak, the rules that he set for himself when he went out to the woods, and allow people to experience that kind of perspective themselves."

Fullerton hopes that the game encourages players to love *Walden* and nature as she does.

"I would like [people] to play the game and then read Thoreau and then go out into nature, and by a series of interactions with the game become lovers of literature and have an understanding of how the literature can be topical and interesting today. That would be a wonderful impact."

Walden, a Game is available to download on PC or PS4.

2023 Project Director Update

> Since the launch of *Walden, a Game,* we've heard from teachers and scholars about the many ways they have used [it] in their classrooms from middle and high school to the university level. Based on their requests, we created a new set of flexible and free web-based modules with integrated lesson plans that extend the usefulness of the game into a number of curricular domains from English Language Arts, to History and Civics, Geography, Social and Emotional Learning, and Environmental Science. We've worked with hundreds of teachers to test these games, making the development versions available throughout COVID to support online and hybrid learning, and gathering feedback to improve the experience for teachers and students. The response to these new modules has been just terrific, with tens of thousands of play-throughs of the games every semester.
>
> —Tracy Fullerton, University of Southern California

Preserving Culture in Times of Crisis and Change

In times of crisis and change, humanities faculty and students have partnered with community members to preserve culture in the U.S. and around the world. Partnerships with communities can often enhance preservation efforts, building trust and resources and creating channels for ongoing engagement with cultural heritage including Native languages and at-risk archeological sites in conflict zones.

Behind the Big House

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Chelius Carter; Jenifer Eggleston; Jodi Skipper

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Preserve Marshall County & Holly Springs; University of Mississippi

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Mississippi Humanities Council; Mississippi Development Authority/Tourism Division; The Slave Dwelling Project; Gracing the Table

Members of the Burton Family tour the Kitchen Quarters at Burton Place, the home where their ancestors were enslaved. Image courtesy of Jodi Skipper.

Behind the Big House is a community-driven tour and programming series that illuminates the African American history of grand historic homes in Holly Springs, Mississippi. Behind the Big House was created in 2012 by Chelius Carter and Jenifer Eggleston to coincide with the Holly Springs Pilgrimage, an annual tour and celebration of the city's antebellum homes. Behind the Big House broadens this narrative, preserving, interpreting, and educating about the legacy of the enslaved people and their quarters that are often overlooked in programming that focuses on the grandeur of the Big House.

Carter and Eggelston were inspired to create Behind the Big House after purchasing the Hugh Craft House, a historic home built in 1843 in Holly Springs. When Carter, an architect who works in historic preservation, toured the house and its grounds, he says he noticed an older renovated outbuilding that, at least initially, appeared to be a shed.

"I opened the door and recognized that it was a timber framed structure," Carter says. Climbing the stairs to the attic, Carter noticed that it had a solid floor. "I said, 'Why is there a solid floor in the attic space of this shed?'" Carter recalls, "Then it kind of hit me, this is where they slept. It began to dawn on me that this structure here is far more culturally and historically important than the main house and far more rare."

Beginning in 2012, Jodi Skipper of the University of Mississippi has supported this grassroots project's preservation, interpretation, and education efforts. In addition to producing content and curricular materials, Skipper has integrated Behind the Big House into University of Mississippi coursework in Southern studies, African diaspora studies, and archaeology.

By integrating Behind the Big House into her teaching, Skipper enriches the learning experience with experiential and service learning.

"Students in my heritage tourism and African diaspora courses work as program guides each year. For them, it is an experiential and service-learning project. Several are repeat volunteers and have used the program as a stepping stool to doing other forms of public work in the state," Skipper notes. "My colleague, Dr. Carolyn Freiwald, and I began an excavation at one of the slave dwelling sites several years ago and that project continues. It has given our anthropology students opportunities to excavate, as well as interpret the recovered information to program visitors."

Involvement with Behind the Big House has helped Skipper address a gap she identifies in Southern public history. "I was inspired to work collaboratively with them, in an effort to remedy the paucity of sites [where] slavery [is] visible on the Mississippi landscape," Skipper explains.

In addition to offering important practical learning experiences and showing the impact of slavery on the South, the project can begin important and difficult conversations, Skipper notes: "I have also observed that students have taken this as an opportunity to talk about race, with other students and the broader community, in a relatively safe space."

This capacity to start conversations about race has spread to the broader community, as well.

"The Behind the Big House program led to the founding of Gracing the Table, a multiracial organization established to promote community development in Holly Springs through dialogue, candid communication, and ultimately, healing of the residuals of the institution of slavery," Skipper explains. Led cooperatively by local residents and faculty and students of Rust College and the University of Mississippi, this group meets for monthly discussions around its motto: "community healing through communication."

Baltimore Traces: Communities in Transition

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Nicole King; Bill Shewbridge

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Maryland, Baltimore County

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Center for Emerging Media; WEAA; Lexington Market; Baltimore American Indian Center; Baltimore Museum of Industry

Patrons at Andy's Best in Lexington Market. Photo by Kimberly Zerfas. Image courtesy of Baltimore Traces.

Baltimore Traces: Communities in Transition is a project-based interdisciplinary teaching initiative at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), bringing faculty, students, and community members together to create media and public programming on Baltimore's residents and changing neighborhoods. Baltimore Traces courses have been taught by a number of UMBC faculty members including Nicole King and Bill Shewbridge, bringing different disciplinary perspectives to explore place-based social history in Baltimore.

Through Baltimore Traces courses, students explore a different neighborhood in Baltimore each semester, creative inclusive media including short films, digital maps, podcasts, and a radio series produced in partnership with the Center for Emerging Media—a Baltimore nonprofit founded by radio host Marc Steiner. These materials are archived on the project website and have typically been featured in public programming with community partners at the end of the semester.

The effect on students—some of whom have come back after graduation to serve as Baltimore Traces Fellows—is profound.

"The Baltimore Traces courses have allowed me to do things I never thought were possible with my academic career," Christina Kwegan, Baltimore Traces fellow and UMBC alumna, writes in a zine produced in the fall of 2017. "I am able to combine the love I have for my city with my passion to capture meaningful stories from the city's residents and visitors. This has opened up new doors for me and given me a different perspective on parts of the city I've known my whole life."

Learning from Lexington: Baltimore Traces Explores the Lexington Market in 2017

In the Fall of 2017, King taught a Baltimore Traces class focused on the historic Lexington Market and its community of customers, vendors, and management.

With a history that began in 1782, the Lexington Market has deep roots in Westside Baltimore. The current building dates to 1953, featuring local vendors producing and selling carryout food, baked goods, merchandise, and fresh meat, fish, and produce.

In 2016, the city announced a $40 million plan to raze and redevelop the public market. In the press release announcing the plan, Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake emphasized her personal connection with Lexington Market.

"Some of my earliest memories are visiting Lexington Market with my mother and grandmother," Mayor Rawlings-Blake recalled in a press release. "We would purchase a bag of nuts or some candies just to see the vendors in action. It truly was a great family experience. With a renovated Lexington Market, we hope to create a new destination, ensuring that we retain those vendors that people have depended on for years but also provide opportunities for new vendors to thrive."

Current customers, vendors, and management share the Mayor's connection with the Lexington Market, though their enthusiasm for change is more varied and nuanced.

This complexity animated the Fall 2017 Baltimore Traces class, which explored how the market has changed with the city, reflecting upon its importance to its community as preparations for its redevelopment move forward.

Over the course of the semester, King's class and a team of Baltimore Traces fellows researched the Market's history and created media and programming: two public history zines, one ten-minute podcast, and a public event to share student research and celebrate Lexington Market.

The first zine covered the history of the market, highlighting notable vendors from the past and explaining the plans for its redevelopment. The zine ends with a question, "What do you think about the future of Lexington?"

Cooperating with market management, King's class met at the market and used the zine to start and record conversations with the market's customers, vendors, and staff members that led to the production of the podcast, the second zine, and the public program.

The podcast and second zine amplified the voices of the market community, projecting the complex feelings that exist for the building. While there was interest in improvements to the building and its surrounding area, there was concern about what would be lost.

To illustrate this tension, King shared a conversation she had with Thurston Jennings, a young man at the Lexington Market eating a breakfast sandwich at Joy's.

"We showed [Jennings] the plans for the future market and he said, 'I'm kind of concerned, I'm very concerned. I don't want it to lose its soul. Oftentimes, when you come across any business, really, you have to consider whether or not it has its natural origins and original personality. As time goes forward, you lose a lot out of the homestyle feeling that you would have. It goes commercial. But who cares about homestyle when dollars are concerned?'"

At the core of Baltimore Traces, is a basic commitment to the common good and to listening to the community.

"Getting out, showing up, listening to people, and meeting people where they are is so important to building the Baltimore Traces project," King explains. "It's something that organically grows to educate students ... to do work that matters on the ground. I kept saying, we're not trying to save the Lexington Market, we're not trying to fight the development. What we're trying to do is get a sense of the pulse of how people feel about that, because that's beneficial for the people running the market and making these decisions. It's also beneficial that people know what's going on with the market that has been in this same spot for hundreds of years."

The zines and podcasts are available on the Baltimore Traces webpage. The Baltimore Traces project is ongoing. The Lexington Market is open for business as plans for its redevelopment move forward.

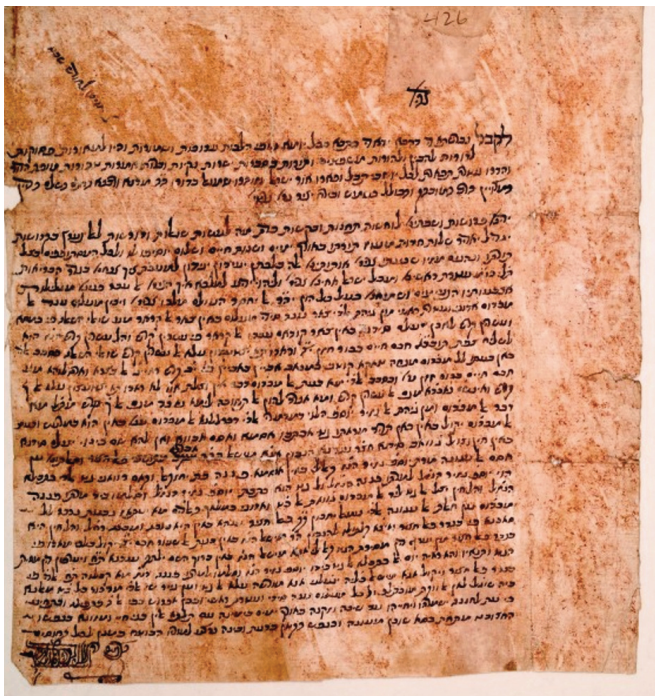
Scribes of the Cairo Geniza

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Arthur Kiron; Laura Newman Eckstein; Samantha Blickhan

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Pennsylvania Libraries

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Princeton University; Zooniverse; Cambridge University; Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary; University of Haifa; Oxford University; The John Rylands Library (The University of Manchester Library)



Scribes of the Cairo Geniza mobilizes volunteer humanists to identify, decipher, and transcribe this physically dispersed but digitally reunited collection of Geniza texts, like this 17th-century letter from the Cairo Geniza Collection, Library at the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania. Image courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania.

How do you transcribe 300,000 historic documents in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic from the Cairo Geniza, a Synagogue storage area containing worn-out Jewish texts? According to a group of academic libraries and centers led by the University of Pennsylvania, you leverage the collective wisdom of crowds.

The Cairo Geniza's diverse texts offer an unparalleled window into Jewish and non-Jewish cultural and commercial history in the region, especially during the 10–13th centuries. Though the Cairo Geniza has been studied since the 19th century, its documents are largely uncatalogued and are scattered in libraries around the world. In partnership with libraries that hold Geniza materials and the online crowdsourcing platform Zooniverse, Scribes of the Cairo Geniza mobilizes volunteer humanists to identify, decipher, and transcribe this physically dispersed but digitally reunited collection of Geniza texts.

With a sample size this large, dispersed, and diverse, Samantha Blickhan, IMLS Postdoctoral Fellow at the Adler Planetarium and Zooniverse humanities lead, suggests that crowdsourcing presents a fruitful way forward for research and public access.

"This data is used in ... science, social science, or humanities investigations and should, ideally, lead to publication," Blickhan says. Crowdsourcing also allows projects to connect with interested publics all over the world. "Online volunteering, enabled by crowdsourcing platforms such as Zooniverse.org, offer[s] an alternative or complementary form of engagement that has many benefits," Blickhan continues. "Online projects can reach a wider range of individuals, including those who are less able-bodied or geographically remote from the institution in which they want to volunteer and/or unable to travel. This is particularly useful for a dataset like the Geniza fragments, due to their wide range of geographic locations across institutions. Similarly, online crowdsourcing allows these institutions to open up rare collections to the public without concern for their material safety and security."

The first phase of the project recently concluded with 3,406 volunteers identifying languages and categories for 186,124 texts. To make these tasks feasible for those with no knowledge of the source languages, Scribes of the

Geniza simply asked volunteers to identify characteristics of manuscripts by comparing them to reference samples.

"Scribes of the Cairo Geniza is a project with the ultimate goal of transcribing Cairo Geniza fragments," Laura Newman Eckstein, Judaica digital humanities coordinator at the University of Pennsylvania, explains. "Before we could ask our volunteers to transcribe, we needed more information about the fragments themselves. … [W]e asked our community of volunteer humanists and historians to sort Cairo Geniza fragments into groups based on whether they were in Hebrew, Arabic, or both types of scripts. We also asked whether the scripts were written in an informal or formal style and about a few other visual characteristics that hinted at whether the fragment was religious or non-religious in genre."

The second phase of the project will involve deciphering and transcribing the fragments. This phase has three goals, Newman Eckstein explains: to "provide our community of volunteer humanists and historians opportunities to view and decipher Cairo Geniza fragments; contribute to the classification of fragments by script-type and content; produce transcriptions of the material that will help in the work of historians, linguists, and other scholars of this material." The transcribed material will be available in Penn's open-access collection OPenn and as open data through other sources.

With this in mind, Arthur Kiron, Schottenstein-Jesselson curator of Judaica collections at the University of Pennsylvania Libraries, hopes that Scribes of the Cairo Geniza will serve both academics and the broader public. "My hope is that the Scribes of the Cairo Geniza project will not only serve the cause of research and discovery but will also provide unprecedented opportunities for people to learn to read seemingly illegible texts and to give everyone the opportunity to unlock and access this great chamber of handwritten medieval manuscript documents."

Standing Rock Lakota/Dakota Language Project

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Michael Moore; Mark Holman; Gabe Black Moon

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Sitting Bull College

Elders Gabe Black Moon (left) and Ole Little Eagle (right) speaking with each other in Lakota and recording for the Standing Rock Dakota/Lakota Language Project. Image courtesy of Standing Rock Dakota/Lakota Language Project.

With funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Sitting Bull College is invigorating the endangered Dakota/Lakota language on the Standing Rock Reservation in North and South Dakota. In partnership with the last generation of fluent speakers, the Standing Rock Dakota/Lakota Language Project is creating original language resources by collecting traditional texts and recording conversations between Elders with the goal of inspiring new Dakota/Lakota learners.

The project is led by Michael Moore, Mark Holman, and Elder and language instructor Gabe Black Moon of Sitting Bull College on the Standing Rock Reservation, who see the project's preservation of Dakota/Lakota language and culture as more pressing than ever.

"We're losing Native speakers at a very rapid rate," Moore says. "This project is creating and preserving the knowledge of the Elders—the way the Elders spoke, the idioms that they used, and so on—in order to provide a base for these younger people."

Lakota and Dakota are two mutually intelligible but traditionally distinct dialects of the Siouan language family from North and South Dakota.

"On most reservations here you have one or the other, but Standing Rock, just because of its history, ended up having both dialects spoken here," Moore says. "When the reservation was created, you ended up having speakers of both of these dialects forced into one confined geographical area."

The presence of speakers of both Dakota and Lakota dialects makes Standing Rock an ideal center for the preservation of the language, as its population of fluent speakers declines.

To address this need, Sitting Bull College offers a range of instructional programming in Dakota/Lakota, including for-credit courses, a language immersion program for children aged 3 to 5, and a summer institute for language teachers and learners who come from as far away as Germany.

The recordings and transcripts enliven and enrich these language programs.

"When you learn a language in the classroom, it's often very simplified and tends to be focused on basic grammar and vocabulary," Moore says. "Our project is to help provide a richer database for language revitalization so that as people learn more of the language, to be able to go back to these sources, recordings, and transcripts that we produce to expand their knowledge and use of the language."

These recordings convey aspects of Dakota/Lakota thought and culture, including humor, that would not otherwise be accessible to students.

"An important part of the recording was to have all these different kinds of uses of the language," Moore explains. "Whether it's joking or talking about shopping, care of horses, fixing cars, or whatever it is—just recording all of these different uses that are not necessarily the typical kinds of things that a student is going to get in the classroom."

Impact Across Generations

The project has the potential to impact all in the community, especially Elders and younger language learners.

For the Elders, it offers an opportunity to share traditional knowledge. Project directors give Elders the opportunity to share their expertise, whether it's humor or knowledge of customs and ceremonies.

"We're not sharing knowledge the way we used to," Holman explains. "This is all of American culture. Everybody's on their cell phones or their devices, they don't sit around telling stories or passing this information on from one generation to another. So recording that is important."

With this in mind, the project records structured and free-flowing conversations between tribal elders on Standing Rock reservation.

"Sometimes it's just getting somebody to talk and just say what they want to say," Homan explains. "You don't know what you don't know. These are the knowledge keepers."

The project also has a strong impact on the younger members of the community who did not grow up speaking Dakota/Lakota, Moore adds. "Particularly for the younger generation, it's so much a part of their identity wanting to be able to understand their grandparents or their parents, and be able to able to interact with them and to become speakers themselves"

When the recordings are used in language and Native American studies classes, they enrich learning, allowing access to language and culture as they are expressed every day. In addition, the materials collected will be preserved in the Sitting Bull College Library to inspire future generations of language learners.

ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Michael D. Danti; Scott Branting; Susan Kane; Andrew G. Vaughn

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
American Schools of Oriental Research; University of California San Diego's Center for Cyber-Archaeology and Sustainability

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Community members in the Middle East; U.S. Department of State; TerraWatchers

TerraWatchers Satellite image of damage to cultural heritage in Tell Bander Kahn, Syria, in June, 2015. The image reveals that the archaeological site has been bulldozed into an infantry position and bombed. Image courtesy of TerraWatchers.

Working in the conflict zones of Syria, Northern Iraq, and Libya, the ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (ASOR CHI) documents, protects, and promotes global awareness of at-risk cultural property, including museums, libraries, and archaeological, historic, and religious sites.

ASOR CHI issues monthly reports to the U.S. Department of State, which are redacted and posted online. These reports outline the status of damage and threats to cultural heritage in conflict zones. In addition to the U.S. Department of State, Principal Investigator Michael Danti explains that they have been used by a range of other organizations, including UNESCO, Interpol, and Europol. "We engage in public outreach working to alert the public to what's going on in the conflict zone and to better inform policymakers and decision makers on cultural property protection and potential cultural diplomacy and cultural policy decisions," Danti says.

Protecting Cultural Heritage in the Conflict Zone

Syria, Northern Iraq, and Libya are rich in cultural heritage, including UNESCO World Heritage Sites and a wide range of less famous but no less significant sites, texts, and objects from pre-Islamic, Islamic, Christian, Jewish, and other regional cultural groups.

ASOR CHI works with stakeholders in the Middle East to protect all cultural property from both accidental and deliberate destruction, as the region remains engulfed in conflict.

"We're not obsessed with old stones and bones," Danti says. "We're doing this because we all worked in the conflict zone and we're helping our colleagues. They're risking their lives to do this and this is what we do best, so we're trying to make a difference."

ASOR CHI understands the protection of cultural heritage to be a matter of crucial importance.

"We see what we're doing as a highly integrated and inextricable part of a larger humanitarian effort. It's really integral to that larger humanitarian effort and it moves in lockstep forward with it," Danti says. "We see access to cultural heritage and cultural expression as a fundamental human right that … has been deliberately attacked and/or suppressed through the course of this conflict."

Data-Driven Cultural Heritage Protection

This immense and critical undertaking has three major components: open source, human source, and geospatial data collection.

"On a daily basis, we have a team grabbing up all the data that is out there on this horrific cultural heritage catastrophe—the worst since World War II," Danti explains.

"We do that through the collection of open source information from social media, websites, and traditional media sources. We gather together human source information from people in the conflict zone and expat Syrians, Iraqis, and Libyans."

The collection of geospatial data includes two initiatives.

The first uses the latest available satellite imagery to assemble weekly reports on the state of cultural heritage in the conflict zone.

"We have a team that analyzes high-resolution satellite imagery and other geospatial datasets," Danti explains. "Our program was granted access to a massive database of high-resolution satellite imagery [from the State Department] that is updated on a daily basis. We are also able to task those satellites to specific sites that we need images of."

The process involves frequent analysis of satellite imagery from the Middle East, Project Manager for Geospatial Initiatives Susan Penacho explains.

"We created a large database of sites in each of these countries that we go through to check on their status," Penacho explains. "We prioritize based on coverage we're getting of what's happening on the ground. We follow the military, so we're constantly shifting what we're assessing."

The second initiative involves higher education faculty and students at University of California campuses in Berkeley, Merced, and San Diego.

Through a collaboration with Stephen Savage and the crowdsourcing platform TerraWatchers, faculty at these UC campuses enlist their students in the protection of cultural heritage.

Using an augmented Google Maps interface to analyze publicly available older satellite imagery from Google Maps and DigitalGlobe, students are trained to seek out, identify, and tag signs of damage in areas of the conflict zone that Penacho and her team are not actively monitoring.

When the preliminary assessments identify signs of damage, the student work is vetted internally, and, if confirmed, passed on to human intelligence to be checked against the facts on the ground.

A Mutually Beneficial Partnership With Higher Education

The classroom geospatial work not only contributes to the ASOR CHI mission, but also creates opportunities for training in cultural heritage preservation and protection.

This offers both tactical and longer-term advantages. In the short term, working with students helps the project work through vast fields of data, Danti explains. "Crowdsourcing and bringing in educational institutions to increase capacity and to be scalable is extremely important. They really give us the upper hand. We have to think on our feet and be adaptive. What's happening on the ground is that the non-state actors are highly adaptive themselves. We have to match that. Unfortunately, culture is in the crosshairs, so we have to adapt on the fly."

In the longer term, Danti explains that collaboration with educational institutions builds the capacity to adapt to changes in archaeology and cultural management in the Middle East and North Africa region.

"One of the things that our involvement with education is doing is it serves as a kind of stop-gap measure. Given that it takes a while for people to change curricula, syllabi, get courses approved, and make new hires, it's going to take a while before we gear up for these changes that we're seeing in the cultural sector and higher education. Our public outreach and educational initiatives provide some of that."

Center for Historic Preservation

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Carroll Van West; Antoinette G. van Zelm

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Middle Tennessee State University

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Local governments, state agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community groups in the Mid-South

In Fredonia, Kentucky, staff and students from the Center for Historic Preservation document the Brooks Cemetery—a family cemetery on this Trail of Tears National Historic Trail-certified site. Image courtesy of the Center for Historic Preservation.

The Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) is partnering with local communities to interpret, preserve, and promote the Mid-South's rich cultural heritage. Through this work, the center creates research and project-based learning opportunities for its undergraduate and graduate students in urban and rural areas across the region.

These projects enable students to participate in a wide range of pro bono preservation work, including the creation of historic preservation plans, historic structure reports, and heritage tourism plans. Projects respond to community needs, explains Assistant Director of the Center for Historic Preservation Antoinette G. van Zelm. "Most of the projects that we do originate within the communities themselves, where they come to us and apply for a partnership project."

The wide range of community needs enables the students to build a diverse portfolio of preservation work, which the Center encourages. "There is quite a broad spectrum of projects that we work on," van Zelm notes. "We try to rotate students around so that they get experience in several different areas. They'll do, for example, a historic structure report or preservation plan or national register nomination on a significant structure. But then they'll also work on maybe a driving tour or brochure or an exhibit."

In one recent project, the Center worked with the Brewer-Bernis Community Center, which occupies the structure of Tennessee's oldest Rosenwald School in Jackson, Tennessee. Rosenwald Schools were built across the South for African American children through the initiative of educator Booker T. Washington and businessman Julius Rosenwald.

The Center for Historic Preservation produced a heritage development plan for the Brewer-Bemis Community Center in 2014 and recommended a heritage room with interpretive panels. About four years later, the Brewer-Bernis Community Center applied again for assistance developing the heritage room. Subsequently, a team of staff and graduate and undergraduate students from MTSU worked with the community center to develop the interpretive panels.

The project offered learning opportunities for the students, as the undergraduate intern Tara Salvati explains in a

blog post on the Center for Historic Preservation website: "There aren't many Rosenwald schools left standing, and the old schoolhouse in Jackson is believed to be the oldest one left in the state. While on this project, I was able to speak with the lead project coordinator, Mrs. Lucy Ida Wilbourn, and to offer suggestions about space usage for a planned heritage room at the community center, designed in part for K–12 field trips. I also worked with Dr. Graham to facilitate the installation of several interpretive panels that showcase the community center's rich history."

The group produced four interpretive panels, which are available on the Center for Historic Preservation website along with a database of all their community partnerships.

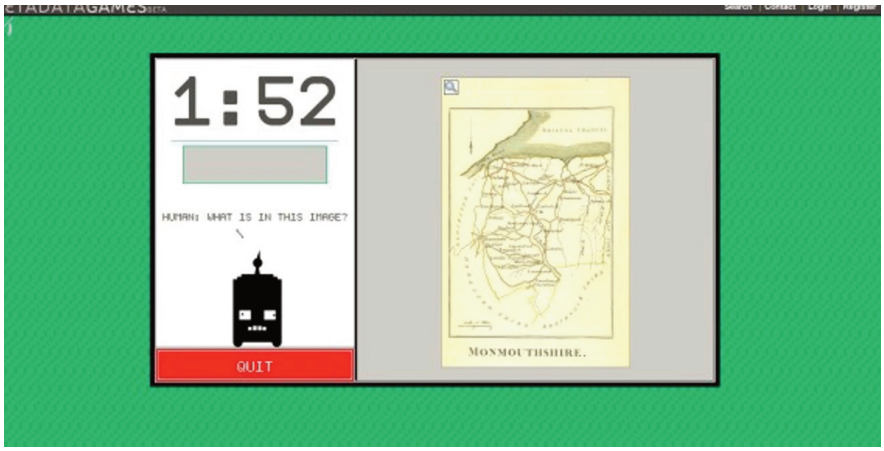
Founded in 1984, the University's Center for Historic Preservation currently also administers three major statewide programs: the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area (in partnership with the National Park Service), the Tennessee Century Farms Program, which has certified over 1,800 farms that have remained in the hands of the same family for over 100 years, and Teaching with Primary Sources—MTSU (in partnership with the Library of Congress).

Metadata Games

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Mary Flanagan

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Tiltfactor at Dartmouth College



Screenshot from *Stupid Robot,* a Metadata Games game.

The push to digitize collections of cultural heritage has increased access to important, diverse, and often remote and delicate materials—but it comes with a risk. Scanned items of cultural heritage can be easily lost when misidentified or when not identified at all. As digital collections grow, it is imperative that every digitized object be tagged with accurate descriptive information known as metadata. This need inspired Tiltfactor to create Metadata Games, a free and open source gaming platform that crowdsources cultural information about diverse digitized historical texts and images.

Metadata Games leverages the power of play and crowdsourcing to help manage digital collections, Tiltfactor Director Mary Flanagan explains.

"Metadata Games is a collection of games that features archival materials in unique ways and that engages the public to play with the materials in order to learn new things about them," Flanagan notes. "As people choose or type or do other kinds of interactions, it becomes part of the history of that image or text file so that we know more about our archives."

When archives contain materials from minority and non-dominant communities, the risk of loss or misidentification of digital objects is especially high.

"There are massive amounts of things being digitized by libraries, archives, and cultural institutions, for which we just don't have information or we have culturally skewed information," Flanagan says.

To ensure the accuracy of the diverse collections that are growing online, it is critical to engage with as broad a spectrum of contributors as possible.

"We really need contributions from the diverse public in order to know more for everybody's sake about what's in our archives," Flanagan continues. "Everybody's voices can be brought into the mix, which is a phenomenal opportunity technology allows to happen. … It's really a chance to expand and to be inclusive about our own history."

In order to leverage the wisdom of diverse crowds, Metadata Games offers multiple game options that will appeal to different types of players.

One Metadata Games game is *Stupid Robot*, which asks players to describe archival images using words of different lengths (four letters, five letters, etc.) to "teach" an avatar of a robot.

"*Stupid Robot* looks at everything but understands nothing," the game instructions explain. "Can you help?"

Players are presented with a picture from a participating archive. Players "teach" the robot by describing what they see in the picture using words of varying lengths. Points are awarded for each character of each word of four to ten letters, but players can use only one word of each length for every picture.

In all Metadata Games, each word players submit becomes a part of the image's metadata—weighted according to the frequency with which it is used by different players. It becomes possible for the image to be searchable by these terms. In doing so, players help to preserve and to make accessible these digitized items of cultural heritage. Metadata Games shows the potential of crowdsourcing to solve this growing difficulty.

For those who prefer contemplation and investigation, there are games such as *Zen Tag*. In *Zen Tag*, players are presented with scanned images from a range of partner cultural institutions. Players earn points for describing the images as accurately as possible, using phrases or individual words separated by commas. Without any restrictions, players are awarded points for detail and get the opportunity to think deeply and explore what they see from the archive.

The project is open source and available for play and use on the project website. If you're interested in helping Metadata Games (and the stupid robot) preserve cultural heritage, visit the Metadata Games website.

Mukurtu CMS: An Indigenous Archive and Publishing Tool

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Kimberly Christen

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Washington State University Center for Digital Scholarship and Curation

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Indigenous individuals and groups

Screenshot from the Plateau Peoples' Web Portal, a collaboratively curated and managed archive of Plateau cultural materials built with Mukurtu CMS.

Mukurtu is a content management system and digital access tool for cultural heritage, built for and in ongoing dialogue with Indigenous communities. Developed and maintained at the Center for Digital Scholarship and Curation at Washington State University, the free and open source platform is designed to meet the particular curatorial and access needs of Indigenous peoples. Mukurtu offers the ability to provide differential access to community members and the general public and to create space for traditional narratives and knowledge labels that foreground Indigenous knowledge in the metadata of digitized cultural heritage materials.

Mukurtu is guided by a commitment to respecting the rights and traditions of the people whose heritage is being represented. Director of the Center for Digital Scholarship and Curation Kimberly Christen explains, "The colonial collecting mission has left a living legacy of cultural materials that are displaced from their home communities and often-times contain wrong, misleading, derogatory, or offensive metadata, that gets continually and endlessly circulated once those collections are digitized, put online, and then scraped up by aggregators."

Mukurtu also offers tools to help Indigenous communities retain control over their digital cultural heritage while also sharing with the world. "Mukurtu allows anyone using the platform to decide how to share materials in very granular and dynamic ways," Christen says. "It also focuses on rich narration and an undoing of standard notions of authority in relation to archives and content management, display, and circulation."

The project has been developed in conversation with Indigenous communities from the beginning, Christen explains: "Mukurtu started from my work in Central Australia with the Warumungu Aboriginal community and has since then relied on a community software development model. Our team continues to add features and functions to Mukurtu based on the needs and feedback from Indigenous communities all over the world and specifically now, our Mukurtu Hubs that are regional centers for Mukurtu support and software development."

The Plateau Peoples' Web Portal

The best way to introduce Mukurtu is through an example, Christen says, pointing to the Plateau Peoples' Web Portal. "[I]t is a collaboration between eight Plateau nations, Washington State University's Center for Digital Scholarship and Curation, and local, national, and regional partners including the Smithsonian Institution and the Library of Congress."

Material in the portal is selected in partnership with tribal members. Christen continues, "In the Portal, material is chosen by tribes to be digitized—no decisions to digitize are made prior to consultation—and once the material is chosen and digitized we engage in what we call collaborative curation which provides a framework for engaging with communities to ensure that the material in the Portal is curated by the tribes. This includes adding specific names, cultural narratives, traditional knowledge and in addition allowing the option of multiple records for any one item."

For example, the metadata for a root gathering bag from Wasco-Confederated Tribes of Warm Spring is described both physically ("Round, twined, cylindrical cornhusk bag. Bird and animal designs.") and with its cultural narrative by tribe members, including by Valerie Switzler who observes: "The weaving is really tight, when we get older and our eyes fade and if we try to do the design by memory it might be a bit off. It looks like double twineing. You start a design and then loop it again. They would always encourage us, my aunt told me my sally bag was beautiful, even if it was cro[o]ked. They were always encouraging us."

Art of the Hunt: Wyoming Traditions

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Andrea Graham; Annie Hatch

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Wyoming

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Wyoming State Museum; Wyoming Arts Council

The "Art of the Hunt: Wyoming Traditions" exhibition at the Wyoming State Museum highlights the state's hunting and fishing culture. Image courtesy of the University of Wyoming American Studies Program.

"Art of the Hunt: Wyoming Traditions" documents and presents Wyoming's hunting and fishing culture, arts, and lore, through a partnership between the University of Wyoming's American Studies Program, the Wyoming Arts Council, and the Wyoming State Museum.

In a state composed of roughly half federal and state lands, it is no surprise that hunting and fishing occupy an important role in Wyoming's family and cultural life.

Over five years of fieldwork leading to a yearlong exhibition at the Wyoming State Museum in 2014–2015, folklife specialist Andrea Graham and UW American studies master's degree students assembled material and oral culture that represent the full significance of hunting and fishing in Wyoming.

"'Art of the Hunt' looks at hunting and fishing traditions in Wyoming as a very important part of the state's culture, history, and heritage," Graham explains. "We were interested in contemporary hunting traditions, looked at as traditional culture and traditional art. We did a lot of fieldwork interviews with gear makers, saddle makers, bamboo fishing rod makers, taxidermists, knife makers, gunsmiths, fly tiers, and tent makers."

UW American studies master's degree students worked with Graham through the production of the exhibition and the planning of auxiliary programming for museum visitors and K–12 students, gaining practical experience and a broader and more inclusive perspective on American life.

Beyond the tools of the trade, "Art of the Hunt" illuminates the cultural contributions of hunting and fishing: their place in family life and their role in the production of folklore, decorative arts, and food.

"Art of the Hunt" highlights the artistry that goes into the production of hunting and fishing material and oral culture, highlighting the creativity of everyday life through the work of local craftspeople.

"There are some incredible craftspeople out there doing beautiful work that is all functional," Graham says. "They are all hunters so they understand how it has to function, but it goes beyond function. There is tooled leather, fancy wraps on fly rods, there is an artistic component. And the way the things were used involves creativity—the way traditions are learned through families and friends, the idea of how traditions are passed on is really important. We wanted people to think about their own traditions in their own lives, whether they were hunters or not."

With this in mind, the exhibition sought to expand the way in which patrons understood folk art.

"You may be surprised to discover handmade tools or weapons as an art form," one exhibition panel explained. "Folk artists often use natural materials—fur, wood, feathers, and minerals—to create useful objects. Folk art surrounds us at gatherings, in our homes, and as we venture outdoors. Traditions pass and change from one generation to another, through a good story and the process of learning by imitation. Folk art teaches us about who we are and how we belong."

Hunting and fishing are family traditions in Wyoming, as fly fisher and fly tier Charles McCall explains in a video produced with the exhibition.

"I started fly fishing when I was just a little kid," McCall recalls. "I used to really enjoy taking my dad's old bamboo fly rod out. He had little short hip waders at the time and I was just a little short kid, so we had to roll 'em over just so I could wear 'em. It seemed that this just made my whole day just to be able to go fly fishing."

While subsistence hunting is less common than it once was, Graham notes that it continues to be a valued and useful survival skill.

"A lot of people historically have depended on the meat. It is not such an issue today, but it is a part of their family heritage. They do eat the meat and they like the meat … Some people still have that heritage of this being a survival skill. For some it probably still is; for some it might not technically be, but still ingrained in how they grew up; that's a reason to keep doing it. They have a freezer full of meat, that's reassuring to them and they quite like elk meat."

In Wyoming there is a rich oral culture surrounding hunting and fishing that has often been passed down within families. Graham and the UW American studies students collected hunting and fishing lore, which they recorded for posterity and inclusion in the exhibition.

The exhibition was created through partnerships with Wyoming's hunters, fishers, and gear makers. In addition to showcasing their art, the exhibition featured a series of gear-making demonstrations funded by the Wyoming Humanities Council.

Research and materials from the "Art of the Hunt" fieldwork and exhibition are archived at the UW American Heritage Center, where they continue to showcase the breadth of Wyoming's hunting and fishing culture.

Crooked Tree, Belize, Museum and Cultural Heritage Center

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Eleanor Harrison-Buck; Sara A. Clarke-Vivier

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of New Hampshire; Washington College

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Local and regional authorities; Kriol community leaders and educators

Kriol craftsman working on a dugout canoe for the Crooked Tree Museum and Cultural Heritage Center. Image courtesy of the Crooked Tree Museum and Cultural Heritage Center.

In Crooked Tree, Belize, Eleanor Harrison-Buck of the University of New Hampshire and Sara Clarke-Vivier of Washington College are working with community members to build an archaeology museum and cultural heritage center dedicated to Belize's Kriol (Creole) culture. Kriol descend from enslaved African and European populations that came together through early logging along the Belize River. While over a third of Belize's population identifies as Kriol, K–12 students tend to be taught primarily about Maya archaeology and colonial history. The museum, which opened in the summer of 2018, will help fill this gap in partnership with the Kriol community of Crooked Tree, creating resources for teachers to integrate Kriol oral histories, material culture, images, and stories into the national curriculum.

Harrison-Buck first came to Belize as an archaeologist studying the ancient Maya culture. Harrison-Buck has directed the Belize River East Archaeology project since 2009, exploring the archaeology of the lower Belize River watershed from the Preclassic to Colonial periods. Over the course of this project, Harrison-Buck and her team became increasingly focused on the country's more recent past.

Kriol culture developed in the Belize River basin, as slave and logwood camps became villages in the mid-to-late 18th century. While many of these villages still exist, community life is changing more rapidly today than ever before. As highways have replaced the river as the primary means of transportation in Crooked Tree and across Belize, nearly all Kriol villages have experienced depopulation through migration to communities closer to the highways.

Amid these changes, Harrison-Buck and her colleagues have been working with community leaders to create museum exhibitions and educational materials in an effort to document and promote Kriol history and cultural heritage.

The museum building in Crooked Tree was donated by the village. It is a locally engaged project on every level.

"The exhibits themselves are being developed in collaboration with community partners including the teachers in schools, with the goal of creating content that augments their existing social studies national curriculum," Harrison-Buck explains. "In a lot of ways, it's co-authorship. I'm listening. I'm not just doing a project that's for them to tell their history, but in fact they are helping to tell their history."

For example, Harrison-Buck commissioned and documented the production of a paddle and dugout canoe, carved from a single trunk of a tree by a local craftsman which is on display in the museum. Visitors not only learn about this traditional practice, but are also encouraged to sit inside the dugout and picture themselves

paddling all the way to Belize City, an arduous journey that took three days downriver and even longer upstream on the way back. Harrison-Buck noted, "When we talked with teachers and community members, one thing we heard over and over again was that young people don't know what life was like in the past and are disconnected from their history." In their discussions with the teachers in Crooked Tree, one of them commented about his students: "When they see things it takes the mind way back." Along these lines, the museum emphasizes material culture and hands-on opportunities as a means of getting school children engaged and excited about their history.

Sharing oral history, local informants tell Harrison-Buck's archaeological team where to dig and they help make sense of what is uncovered.

"Simple stories make a space and a landscape all of a sudden come alive," Harrison-Buck reflects. "It informs where we excavate and it informs how we interpret what we're finding because they're part of the story. In that regard, they're not just recipients but active informants and involved in that reconstruction."

For example, oral history helped the Belize River East Archaeology team understand what they found at the site of the village's old schoolhouse.

"We were able to say more about where we were working because of what our local partners could tell us," Harrison-Buck explains. "The school was operating until the 1940s, so there were a few elders who could describe to me what it was like going into the school … the kinds of inkwells they would use, the slates they would write on. When [students] got older they were allowed to use ink with paper, but when they were little and on the first floor of the school they had to use slates. Sure enough, when we excavated we found tons of slate writing implements."

Over the course of the project, Harrison-Buck found that objects started conversations.

"You take an object which seems static and kind of dead and all of a sudden people start talking about it, they talk around it and you hear all these little stories and vignettes," Harrison-Buck explains. With items like a slate board in the museum, the project hopes that they will continue to have this energizing effect for years to come.

Delta Jewels Oral History Partnership

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Rolando Herts; Alysia Burton Steele

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State University; University of Mississippi

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Clarksdale Coahoma Tourism Commission; Son Edna; CARE; Sunflower County Library System; City of Yazoo City; AARP-Mound Bayou Area Chapter; City of Mound Bayou; Historic Mound Bayou Foundation; Mound Bayou Civic Club; Jackson State University; Southern Cultural Heritage Foundation; Alcorn State University Wesley Foundation; University of Southern Mississippi; St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church; Holmes Community College Department of English; Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center

Mrs. Tennie Self, 89 of Clarksdale, MS, was assertive especially during the Civil Rights Movement. When denied the option of buying a Cadillac in 1949, she drove almost two hours to Memphis, bought the car she wanted and then every day would drive past the local dealership that refused to sell her a car, honked the horn and waved. Photo and caption courtesy of Alysia Burton Steele.

The Delta Jewels Oral History Partnership was an 18-month collaboration between the Delta Center for Culture and Learning at Delta State University and University of Mississippi journalism professor Alysia Burton Steele. This award-winning project created public programming rooted in the Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area around the publication of Steele's 2015 book of photography and oral history, *Delta Jewels: In Search of My Grandmother's Wisdom*.

The Delta Center is a university-based institution with a community-wide mission, to promote and celebrate the region's diverse cultural heritage, Director Rolando Herts explains. "Our goal is to get residents and visitors to understand the value of their cultural heritage here in the Mississippi Delta."

Steele's *Delta Jewels: In Search of My Grandmother's Wisdom* explores a key part of the Mississippi Delta's cultural heritage, "church mothers": Black female church elders who are pillars of communities in which, Steele says, "church is everything." Through portrait photography and oral histories, Steele explores the extraordinary lives of over 50 church mothers in the Mississippi Delta. "Most of the women lived within walking distance or grew up in a home within walking distance of their churches," Steele says. "Churches were the foundation of the communities. And these women are church mothers, which is an honor which means that they're helping the pastors guide the young people [and] helping with baptisms, marriages—marriage counseling—and different holidays."

Church and service to the church helped the church mothers through trying times, including Jim Crow, the Civil Rights Movement, and, in at least one case Steele documents in the book, the aftermath of slavery. "I have a woman in the book who's 106 now, so she's one generation from slavery," Steele says. "I'm sure she saw it as a child with her parents. The church held them together. That was where they could have their relief and they could cry

and rejoice and feel safe. That was the glue that held the communities together where they could be with their neighbors and their friends and their families and feel safe."

The Partnership began when Herts learned that Steele's publisher had not planned any book signings in the Delta communities where the church mothers live. "So we took it upon ourselves to do a series of community gatherings," Herts explains.

Leveraging existing relationships, Herts and Delta Center staff members Lee Aylward and Heather Miller identified communities within which these gatherings could be organized. "We sat around the table here in my office and started identifying communities where the Delta Center could host gatherings where the community could come and hear these stories and these histories." Herts explains that this involved selecting venues and community partners that were inclusive of the diverse communities of the Mississippi Delta, a region spanning 18 counties and roughly 7,000 square miles.

The Delta Center ultimately planned fifteen gatherings around the region that reached over 1,000 community members. Each was organized in collaboration with community partners across the state, which helped engage community members and encourage them to participate. A special gathering commemorating Women's History Month and the National Park Service Centennial was also held at the Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum in Washington, D.C.

The Delta Jewels gatherings typically featured a traveling exhibit of the portraits as well as a presentation and conversation with Steele that gave the church mothers, their family members, and their neighbors the opportunity to engage with the portraits and oral history.

One event took place in the historic Black town of Mound Bayou as a part of the 128th Founders Day celebration, attracting around 300 people, including 32 of the church mothers mentioned in Steele's book.

The experience was often moving, both for Steele and for participants.

"It was a life changing experience for me," Steele says. "As a journalist, we focus on doing the story and sometimes we keep in touch with people. This took that to a whole other level. I didn't understand community engagement, I didn't understand partnerships, and it's become a passion of mine now. It was really a growing experience, a learning experience personally and professionally. It changed my life."

Steele's next project builds on this work. It explores the oral history of cotton farming in Mississippi, a subject Steele's church mothers touched on often in the interviews for *Delta Jewels*.

In the Delta Center's final report on the partnership, participants shared that the events were "inspiring" and "enlightening." "This is amazing. It really changed my perspective of my culture," one reported. In this connection, the Delta Jewels Oral History Partnership exemplifies the Delta Center's work: promoting appreciation for the Delta's cultural heritage and working with the Delta's residents to tell the Delta's story.

Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation

PUBLISHED
July 2018

PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Debra H. Norris

HIGHER ED INSTITUTION(S)
University of Delaware

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)
Winterthur Museum

A student from the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation conserves a photograph damaged in the 2015 Wimberly, Texas flood. Image courtesy of äebra H. Norris.

In the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation (WUDPAC), public engagement is a critical component of graduate education. "The commitment to public engagement and outreach has always been an essential part of the education and training of conservators in our program," explains Debra H. Norris, director of WUDPAC and chair and professor of photograph conservation. WUDPAC MA students build critical skills by working with items from the community, including participation in regular no-cost conservation clinics at the Winterthur Museum and, recently, the treatment of collections of badly damaged photographs salvaged from disasters.

In 2015 and 2016, WUDPAC students helped to stabilize and conserve fire- and flood-damaged photographs—developing skills and advancing the field of art conservation by working with real things that matter to their owners and their communities. In 2015, the group treated a collection salvaged from a deadly fire near Washington Court House, Ohio. In 2016, the group treated photographs salvaged after flash flooding in Waverly, Texas. The treatment project is a piece of a larger curriculum, which covers photography conservation from the daguerreotype to the digital print.

Recovering Damaged Photographs

"After these disasters, it's often photographs that are recovered. Individuals are often unsure how to preserve them," Norris says.

After catastrophic flash flooding in Wimberley, Texas, a group of archivists from Austin, Texas came in to help residents recover. The archivists collected family photographs from the wreckage for treatment at local libraries, drying them out. There was a collection of roughly 200 photographs that were particularly badly damaged, however. They came from different homes and time periods, as early as the 19th century. Unable to do more at the time, the archivists froze them for later preservation and connected with WUDPAC.

"I was confident that we could help in some way," Norris says.

When the photos arrived in Delaware, Norris did some preliminary assessment to ensure that the conservation lab had the necessary supplies on hand. Norris then turned the photos over to the students. The group began by conducting a rigorous assessment of the collection. The students broke into teams and, working together immersively—often into the evening and on weekends—determined what needed to be done.

"The photos had been immersed in water for a long time," Norris recalls. "There was a lot of embedded dirt, grime, and debris, image loss, distortion, and many were stuck together. When you have something wet and you leave it to dry in a plastic enclosure, there will usually be mold growth and other damage. Some of the materials were really difficult to salvage, but most of them could be salvaged."

In addition to giving students hands-on experience, work with the fire- and flood-damaged photographs enabled the class to advance the field of photograph conservation. "We developed new approaches to dealing with very fragile surfaces," Norris says. "How do you clean without damaging those surfaces? We tried different approaches to doing so. In both of these projects we strengthened the body of knowledge of how to do with objects encountered water and fire damage."

When the class finished they passed on the photographs to the archivists working in Wimberley, Texas, who went to work returning them to their owners. Images that did not have known owners were posted on social media, reconnecting individuals and families with some of their most cherished memories.

Conservation in Delaware and Around the World

This engagement fits into WUDPAC's broader work, including outreach around the world. Norris has taught on every continent except Antarctica. Closer to home, Norris explains that the monthly conservation clinic at the Winterthur Museum is one expression of the program's commitment to engagement.

"For decades, we have sponsored a once-a-month free-of-charge conservation clinic," Norris continues. "People can bring their objects to Winterthur Museum, where they will be examined by faculty and graduate students—typically in their second year of study. Faculty and students help individuals assess the condition of these objects and determine what needs to be done to preserve them."

It represents both an important public service and learning experience, according to Norris.

"It is really valuable to have the opportunity to examine and to speak about an object without access to extensive scientific equipment and days and days of research," Norris notes. "Whereas our students have opportunity for in-depth work, this provides an opportunity for connecting with objects in a more immediate way—and more importantly connecting with the owners who care deeply and passionately about the preservation of that object. It is certainly a service to the public, but also a wonderful training opportunity for our students."

Voices From the Field: The *Humanities for All* Blog

In 2020, the National Humanities Alliance launched the *Humanities for All* blog as a space for those involved in the public humanities to reflect on their work in their own words. Through over 80 pieces published from 2020 through 2023, the blog has highlighted perspectives from across the public humanities scholarly landscape.

Contributors shared how they confronted challenges with creativity and tenacity and how they drew upon the humanities to enrich community life—even in pandemic years when face-to-face engagement was largely impossible. The blog served as a space for authors to share insights from their work, lessons learned along the way, and perspectives on the field of the public humanities as a whole.

The selection included here represents a range of public humanities topics and methods. These posts were written by higher ed students and faculty as well as community members from across the humanities ecosystem, including organizers, writers, incarcerated individuals, hospital workers, and museum staff. The posts are organized by five themes:

Trends in the Field

Essays that discuss the public humanities as a method, discipline, or commitment

- Spatial Justice and the Public Humanities by Marisa Angell Brown
- Public Humanities at the WPHL: Towards a New Methodology by Rebecca Friedman and Julio Capó, Jr.

Place-Based Projects

Perspectives attuned to local or regional communities or that take the "where" of the public humanities as a central point of concern

- El Paso Food Voices: A City's Story Lived Through Food by Meredith E. Abarca
- Transforming Connection to Place by Elizabeth Budd, Susannah Ottaway, Kelly Connole
- Archives in Common by Ángeles Donoso Macaya
- Freedom Stories: Unearthing the Black Heritage of Appalachia by Lynnea Salinas

Building Partnerships

Insights into establishing and expanding mutual partnerships, told through the voices of both participants and project directors

- History and Performance Collide: The Peabody Ballroom Experience by Joseph Plaster
- The Power of One: Patient- and Family-Centered Care at MUSC by Caroline DeLongchamps, Lisa Kerr, Kelly Loyd, and Shannon Deeb
- Study and Struggle From the Inside by Anonymous
- The Pandemic Journaling Project by Sarah Willen

Teaching in the Public Humanities

Approaches to bringing the public humanities into the classroom, including ways of using the *Humanities for All* database as a teaching tool

- Teaching with *Humanities for All* (Even Online!) by Matthew Pavesich
- Memoir as a Tool for Action by Susan Scheckel
- Exploring the Carlisle Archive by Leah Milne

Student Voices

Undergraduate students discussing impacts of participating in public humanities projects, including tangible next steps for relationship building, career preparation, and further study

- Student Fellows Share Learnings from Depaul's HumanitiesX Collaborative by Sergio Godinez
- Discovering My Passion for Public Arts and Humanities by Maggie Sardino

Trends in the Field

Spatial Justice and the Public Humanities

By Marisa Angell Brown July 13, 2021

If 2020 was the year of monument removal, 2021 is shaping up to be the year of monument task forces and commissions as cities and states across the country establish processes to review and remove problematic public art from public space. At the same time, calls to return National Park system land to First Nations tribes and to remove highways that obliterated neighborhoods of color in the 1950s and 60s are suddenly on the table as possibilities. We are at the start of a massive reconstruction of public space that could be on par, in terms of scale, with the period of urban renewal, when those highways first went in.

What does this have to do with the public humanities? A lot.

When we use the word "public" in the public humanities, we tend to think first of people and communities. But "public" also signals space, a place that is open and accessible. I'd add equitable too—a place where multiple communities feel welcome and acknowledged. Historically, public history and the public humanities have not always focused on this second definition of the "public." We tend to privilege texts, objects, and oral testimony—but seldom think of space as a crucial agent and arena for the work of public humanities.

The term "spatial justice" comes out of geography and urban studies. The concept is simple: power and privilege are reflected in space, so any move to achieve social justice will have a spatial or geographic element. The fields that have embraced spatial justice as a North Star are architecture, planning, and policy—fields that already think spatially. But this is changing. Spatial justice is making its way into public history, preservation, and public art practice. I recently moderated a roundtable conversation with three social practice artists and when we met on Zoom beforehand to discuss the panel, I shared a few questions I thought I would ask them, following their artist talks. Their eyes lit up when we got into a conversation about what spatial justice means and how monument removal and new commemorative art rupture geographies of power. One artist said that he hadn't previously thought of his work in terms of spatial justice, but that it neatly encapsulated his intent.

Many public humanities practitioners are similarly doing spatial justice work without naming it directly. Monument Lab began in 2015 as a Philadelphia project that invited hundreds of residents to imagine new monuments for the city. They set up shop in a courtyard near City Hall and collected drawings and descriptions that add up to a collectively-built archive revealing a spectrum of feelings and thoughts about public space, ownership, and identity. Many of the maps, interestingly, were deeply critical of monuments, and suggested alternative ways to build community and represent community histories. Since then, Monument Lab has expanded its programs, and now commissions and installs artwork and leads workshops for public agencies and organizations on critical, community-based public art practice. Last year, it was awarded the first grant from the

Mellon Foundation's $250 million Monuments Project, and is now working to create a first-ever audit of the country's monuments. You won't find the phrase "spatial justice" in its mission or program descriptions, but I would argue that spatial justice is at the core of this organization's work.

Another program that is transforming our sense of history through spatial practice is the National Trust's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, which was launched in 2017 to support the preservation of historic places connected to Black history. Now in its fourth awards cycle, the Fund has supported projects at nearly one hundred sites across the country—including the historic Vernon A.M.E. Church in Tulsa, the only remaining Black-owned structure that dates from the Black Wall Street era and escaped destruction in the 1921 race massacre, and While We Are Still Here, a public history project in Harlem that is working on a series of historic markers "to make Harlem's history unavoidable." Many of the organizations that have received funding combine public history and preservation with community activism, providing direct services and supporting justice initiatives at the policy level. Spatial justice, right?

Globally, organizations that are members of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience are doing similar work, engaging the public with traumatic or difficult histories that, often, have been erased, hidden or unacknowledged at historic sites, such as the Maison des Esclaves in Senegal, the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana, and the Srebrenica Memorial Center in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Whether they use the term or not, these organizations are all agents of spatial justice. Public memory work may be most effective when it involves the preservation or creation of sites and spaces that remake the public landscape, redistributing power geographically.

Spatial thinking is already embedded in public humanities theories and practices—it just isn't always explicitly named. But it should be. What are the questions we need to ask ourselves, if we are to think spatially? When we build projects, we are used to thinking socially and thematically, making sure that we invite diverse perspectives into partnership—but we should also be challenging ourselves to do public humanities work in diverse zip codes, not in the same few neighborhoods where our anchor institutions are located. We should consider how to design projects that produce new knowledge and new geographies, and we should ask whether, or to what extent, our public-facing projects enact, expand, or possibly diminish spatial justice. In other words, we need to take spatial impacts into account when we assess public humanities projects.

If you take a look at the key journals, conferences, and departments where theories and practices of spatial justice are developed and discussed, you won't find much crossover with public humanities folks—yet. But it may be that the field of public humanities will come to play as key a role as design, planning, and policy in creating more just and equitable public spaces through public history and public art interventions, radical heritage projects, decolonized museum spaces and practices, and community-owned archives. It already seems to be happening.

Marisa Angell Brown *is the Assistant Director for Programs at the John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage and Adjunct Lecturer in the Public Humanities at Brown University. She is the author of "Preservation's Expanded Field" in* Doing Public Humanities *(Routledge, 2020) and is on Twitter @marisa_angell.*

WPHL Faculty Fellow Dr. Nathaniel Cadle learns about the migration story of Ms. Jacqui Coyler, Chair of the Board of the Historic Hampton House, at the Historic Ward Rooming House Gallery in Overtown. This was part of "Jazz Under a Simple Tree," a WPHL collaboration with Christopher Norwood. Image courtesy of Enrique Rosell.

Public Humanities at the WPHL: Towards a New Methodology

By Rebecca Friedman and Julio Capó, Jr. January 18, 2022

When the novel coronavirus pandemic first disrupted life as we knew it in March 2020, we did not yet have a website. The Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab (WPHL), the hub for the humanities and public-facing and community-engaged work at Florida International University (FIU) in Miami, has been fundamentally and formatively shaped by the digital landscape and by the changes caused by COVID-19. In those first days and weeks the WPHL and its partners began to collect stories of the pandemic and interviewed leaders of cultural institutions about how they were coping. We also threw together a website (since updated, of course!) and got to work. We have not stopped since.

Collecting and preserving stories, in particular, seemed a clever idea at the time. In retrospect, of course, many had the same idea. No matter. Each set of stories complements the other, adding up to a series of layered narratives that reflect the deeply-rooted dual pandemics that exacerbated one another during that long spring, summer, and fall of 2020: COVID-19 and anti-Black violence. Like other venues, the WPHL formulated a multitude of responses, from weekly webinars with leaders of museums and other cultural institutions—both local and from across the nation—and a general call for documenting the process of healing, disruption, and change. With the

help of our colleagues we equipped students with disposable cameras, for example, and invited them to (safely) document aspects of their days and nights under quarantine that they felt comfortable sharing.

Now almost two years later, we have been fortunate enough to secure nearly $6 million in grants from the Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and Florida Humanities, among others, that find us fulfilling and further expanding many of these core ideas and working with our communities in the Greater Miami area in a variety of ways. Themes have emerged from Black Preservation to Art as Social Practice to Community Story Gathering. Projects range from collaborative research to oral history collection, from celebrating and supporting local artists to digitizing long-lost newspapers and resources.

In each instance, and as a central tenet to our modus operandi, we reach outside of the walls of the university in hopes of creating meaningful and sustained relationships in collaborative projects that we hope will have an impact long past grants' reports are turned in and deadlines met.

Herein lies the rub. How do we do that? How can we ensure sustainable, respectful, and equitable relationships with partners outside of the university, when the university itself is such a behemoth, if relatively light on its feet? With the humanities both under attack and so scarcely funded, how do we ensure that the vision, impact, and tenets of these projects can exist in perpetuity? How, too, do we commit to sustaining these non-extractive relationships with our community partners, from galleries to archives to historical sites and museums?

This, we believe, is one of the many reasons that we need the public humanities, which we insist must be understood as a distinct methodology. It can serve as an approach to community engagement; it can help guide us in the facilitating and sharing of knowledge in an equitable, non-exploitative way. It is also, in essence, a vision for the redistribution of resources, making them more readily available and accessible to publics way beyond university walls. Public humanities challenges hierarchies of knowledge that are framed by the Enlightenment-era insistence on power residing in the hands of the few with access to resources and institutions of higher-learning, including public universities embedded within their communities, including FIU, the nation's largest Hispanic-serving institution.

Armed with analytical frameworks committed to decolonizing archives and knowledge production as well as privileging grassroots efforts that begin and center community-borne knowledge, public humanities flips the all-too-familiar script of the role of academies and universities in public life residing in an ivory tower far away from the neighborhoods that structure our lives.

We at the WPHL have been fortunate enough to work on projects that speak to this methodology and permit us to move from theory to practice. Perhaps the best example of this work is *Community Data Curation: Preserving, Creating, and Narrating Everyday Stories*. This three-year Mellon Foundation grant project takes as its starting point the preservation, creation, and narration of stories within a variety of communities in South Florida. The Mellon Foundation's Public Knowledges division values grassroots efforts at knowledge collection. Working with eight community partners based in South Florida, this project utilizes archival digitization, the creation of new archives through oral histories, and training and resource-sharing to better ensure that these initiatives are felt well beyond the duration of the grant. The eight partners with whom we work—from Stonewall National Museum and Archives to the Historic Hampton House, from the Museum of Graffiti to the African American Research Library and Cultural Center—drive the work and direct the stories that will be told and preserved. These efforts are designed to help ensure voices, many of which have been silenced or marginalized for generations, are heard, preserved on their own terms, and made available for and by the community for years to come. Training and

assistance in digital technology are made symbiotically available as we and partner institutions work to reproduce efforts in the future, and new digital archivists and preservations continue the practice beyond the grant period.

The project's approach to working with our community partners reflects fundamental aspects of public humanities' methodology, with community partners taking the lead in defining their needs. In facilitating this network of cultural institutions, we chose to work with institutions small and large, deeply archived and without working archives, in our commitment to center the stories that are too often erased from or marginalized in grand narratives. The engagement of these partners involved a series of considerations on our part. Firstly, we were eager to work with institutions that represented a cross-section of South Florida with an emphasis on communities that have historically been marginalized, whether due to the violence of anti-Blackness, xenophobia, classism, sexism, homophobia, and more, or the (often interrelated) nation-wide underfunded nature of the arts and humanities. Moreover, the grant provides resources for networking among the institutions themselves to share best practices and create collaborations. One of the unexpected joyful outcomes of this Mellon project is that we find ourselves involved in a host of projects that represent and reflect the needs and goals of each institution, even beyond the grant itself. This web of cultural and arts institutions only makes all of our communities in Greater Miami stronger.

The very notion of this grant-funded project, "community data curation," reflects these aspects of public humanities methodology. It inherently acknowledges and takes its cues from the community's expertise and knowledge in a non-extractive way that aims to upend modes of violence, erasure, and unevenness that have long silenced and devalued some forms of knowledge over others. For example, when we first approached the Historic Hampton House to partner in this grant, their leadership's first question was about whether this would be a "one and done" proposition. How would we sustain the partnership and benefit the HHH in the long-run? One of the ways in which we were able to answer that question was through Mellon's generous impulse to allow each partner to purchase equipment that remains with them after the life of the grant. If they so choose, the HHH can continue to collect stories and build their digital archive. Public humanities then is "decolonial" in its approach to undoing the processes and power structures that have created the "unevenness" in knowledge production, the building of archives, and the making of historical narratives. In other words, the process requires actively listening, growing, and adapting in real time to reallocate the resources and platforms that have been historically safeguarded and restrictive to higher learning institutions—even large public universities like FIU, of course. Our discussions have always begun with partners' needs and vision.

Indeed, in relying on relationships with community-focused partners, public humanities as a field imagines and even favors counter-publics that challenge hierarchies of knowledge and power so often created in library carrels or behind locked doors. These counter-publics, so often dismissed as peripheral or marginal to the singular narrative, are rather centered and drive the story. These two commitments—the diffusing of centers of knowledge and the primacy of community-led visions and efforts—when wedded together provide a framework for our research and work, as well as our teaching and learning and our interactions with local, national, and global publics.

Of course, we understand that it is by no means new to suggest that the very structure of archives reflects long-standing institutional and epistemological discursive hierarchies that prioritize white, heteronormative, and resourced narratives. And yet, Community Data Curation—which seeks to go beyond shared authority in its community-sustained vision—represents an important methodological step forward in democratizing what stories are deemed worthy of telling, preserving, and archiving.

Public humanities, as we envision it through this and other projects, is unabashedly rooted in social justice work. This includes the need to follow the lead of partners, and to work with and for them toward the centering of voices long erased and marginalized—especially Black, Brown, and Indigenous lives and experiences.

Public humanities methods insist upon this vision. Public humanities methods, thus, include disrupting past narratives and recontextualizing their meaning. It is this way, of course, that we can move towards a form of community and collective healing. We have so much work to do.

Rebecca Friedman *is Founding Director of the Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab and Associate Professor of History at Florida International University and did her Ph.D. at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She is an expert in the cultural and gender history of modern Russia and the Soviet Union and is author of the first English-language monograph on Russian masculinity. Her recent book,* Modernity, Domesticity and Temporality: Time at Home, *explores modern time and home in twentieth-century Russia (Bloomsbury, 2020). Much of her work at present involves public humanities and community engagement, especially highlighting the cultural and intellectual spirit of the Greater Miami region.*

Julio Capó Jr. *is Associate Professor of History and Deputy Director of the Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab at Florida International University. He researches inter-American histories, with a focus on race, migration, queer, and empire studies. His first book,* Welcome to Fairyland: Queer Miami Before 1940 *(UNC Press, 2017), received six honors, including the Southern Historical Association's Sydnor Award for best book written on the U.S. South. Among his curated exhibitions is "Queer Miami: A History of LGBTQ Communities" for HistoryMiami Museum. His research has appeared in top academic journals and, as a former journalist, he has also written for* Time, *the* Miami Herald, El Nuevo Día *(Puerto Rico), and the* Washington Post, *where he also serves as editor for its Made by History section. He's held fellowships at Yale University and the University of Sydney.*

Place-Based Projects

Image courtesy of Meredith E. Abarca.

El Paso Food Voices

By Meredith E. Abarca August 16, 2023

Food shapes cultures and histories, politics and economics, personal relations and geographical landscapes. El Paso Food Voices (EPFV), an open source digital archive, begins by embracing the fact that food—how it is remembered, experienced, and perceived—speaks of people's migratory patterns, histories, and cultural values that define the culinary flavors of an area. EPFV offers a record of a living history—a kind of "intimate history," as one participant says. This project gives expression to El Paso, Texas, residents' gastronomic ruminations. Many participants share the ways in which food goes beyond nourishing the body; their stories speak of the ways that food either nourishes us or starves us socially, culturally, emotionally, and spiritually. In voicing their culinary experiences, people illustrate how they negotiate the politics of consumption by defining the symbolic and emotional value certain foods and food practices hold for them.

There are three intentions that motivate the creation of EPFV. First, to gather and engage with El Paso's community to record food stories through audio and video. Second, to preserve the community's diverse culinary

knowledge for the benefit of current and future generations interested in learning how ordinary people's food practices shape food systems that impact the history, culture, politics, economics, natural environment, and health of a region. Third, to share this knowledge with a wide range of audiences, from the general public to food scholars and students. To achieve these intentions, EPFV website includes three unique features: first, a series of food stories and recipes videos, all conducted either in peoples' homes or work place; second podcast interviews where often both the host and guest are residents of El Paso area, and a blog series, Epicureans, the general public, partarticularly my own students, can submit their reflections on their relationship with food.

EPFV traces people's living-intimate histories expressed through their food practice by the methodology of food voice. This term, coined by nutritionist Annie Hauck-Lawson, refers to how food and culinary practices in and of themselves serve as a powerful, highly charged, and personalized voice that crystalizes the dynamic, creative, symbolic, and highly individualized ways that food serves as a channel of communication. People's food voice captures the process of negotiating and readjusting culinary practices due to issues of migration, social-economic adaptation, and cultural and natural preservation. In Yolanda Chávez Leyva's story, she values foods, recipes, and cooking tools that reconnect her to an indigenous ancestral past that she now shares with her grandchildren. Roman Wilcox believes food is about responsibility to people and the environment. Antonio Lopez sees cooking as a gift of time integrally linked to the elements of earth: air, water, fire. Machelle Wood looks at food as something that humanizes the past in the currency of the present. Hugo A. Loera makes chiles rellenos in order to keep his mother's memory alive. Chef Raúl Gonzalez creates menus that open up people's palates to welcome the world. EPFV archived food stories challenge us to rethink our relationships with food, to consider what living histories are served on our plates, and how our culinary actions today influence the kinds of living histories future generations will experience.

EPFV stories express cross-cultural connections that define a city's culinary identity that is made up of a diverse population, a past with roots spreading in multiple directions, and a dynamic and ever-changing present. This approach offers a unique opportunity to explore from the intimacy of people's kitchens the cross-cultural connections that brought into existence some of the area's signature dishes and methods of cooking: brisket, chile con queso, and green chile tamales to name but a few. It helps us appreciate why Stöllens (German Christmas bread), Rosca de Reyes (Mexican Three Kings bread), and sweet potato pie are equally integral to the culinary makeup of the area.

As of April 30, 2023, the EPFV website features twenty stories. Each story is presented through its own digital page in order to showcase a person's living culinary history. As EPFV's founder, editor, and curator, I'm responsible for the vision and content of the archive, but as with all digital humanities projects, its creation has been a team effort. The technical elements of web design and programming were executed by the University of Texas at El Paso's Creative Studios and their student assistants. Each digital page contains (or will contain) 8 elements: (1) an opening quote; (2) a photo; (3) a short biography; (4) the audio recording; (5) short videos produced from the audio/video recording; (6) a video recipe; (7) a scholarly reflection on a food topic central to the story; (8) and a list of food scholarly sources. The podcast episodes featured in the EPFV website are limited to those where graduate students in my food digital humanities courses are the host.

As the founder of the EPFV, it is also my responsibility to ensure the longevity of and accessibility to the food practices and memories caring El Pasoans's " intimate histories" with current and future audiences. Therefore, in addition to the EPFV website open-source archive, the audio recording of the food stories are housed at the

Institute of Oral History at the University of Texas at El Paso. All the food story and recipe videos are available through the EPFV YouTube channel. The EPFV podcast, found through a link within the website, can be accessed through Podbean, Spotify, and iTunes. As a digital humanities project, El Paso Food Voices continues to grow and transform without forgetting its mission and motivation: to gather, preserve, and share El Paso residents' food voice to document El Paso's living history through food practices and memories.

Meredith E. Abarca *is a professor of Food Studies and Literature in the Department of English at the University of Texas at El Paso. Her publications include:* Voices in the Kitchen *(2006);* Rethinking Chicana/o Literature Through Food *(2013) and* Latin@s' Presence in the Food Industry *(2016), and numerous other scholarly articles. She has presented her work at the University of Gastronomical Sciences in Parma, Italy; the University of Technology in Sidney, Australia; the University*

U Opavice co-op members celebrating their member's 80th birthday. Image courtesy of Jind ich Štreit.

Transforming Connection to Place

By Elizabeth Budd, Susannah Ottaway, and Kelly Connole August 25, 2020

Note: We wrote this blog post back in February, before the COVID-19 pandemic reached us, before Minnesota and the rest of the world was rocked by George Floyd's murder, before anyone in the U.S. thought much about face masks, let alone thought they were political statements … Now in July 2020, with communications so fraught and human contact so distant, we are all the more aware of the power of community-engaged learning, and the urgent need for scholars to deepen their connections to the places and peoples they study. We need to pay attention to our relationships and tend to our communities, by, in the words of our colleague below, "stay[ing] put, and open, and aware."

Publicly engaged humanities projects that are deeply embedded in a sense of place have the capacity to genuinely connect with partners on their own, local terms. This connection can be one of this work's great rewards, but can also pose challenges for academic scholars, particularly those based at universities far from their collaborators.

At Carleton College, we are supporting faculty who are pursuing these relationships at all distances via a four-year Mellon Foundation-funded initiative, Public Works: Connecting Communities through Arts and Humanities. Now in its third year, the initiative has supported faculty, staff, and students engaged in collaborative, reciprocal partnerships with diverse organizations and communities beyond Carleton.

The *Public Works Initiative* has supported projects that connect Carleton faculty with organizations as close as a block from campus and as far as an ocean away. Each project has demonstrated how engaging with community partners anchors academics to place in ways that deeply enhance traditional scholarship. Importantly, this is true

for scholars who study distant communities as much as those who connect with communities closer to home. Public Works has opened up critical space for our campus to think more about our connections to place from both local and global perspectives.

One of the local projects supported by the initiative is The Wandering House, directed by Cecilia Cornejo, instructor in Cinema and Media Studies at Carleton College. She converted an ice-fishing house into a brightly-painted mobile audio recording studio and invited residents of Northfield, MN (where the College is located) to record their thoughts on "home," a shifting concept as more people around the globe become displaced. Over the course of summer 2019, Professor Cornejo and her student research assistants brought The Wandering House all over town and gathered 225 recordings amounting to nearly 40 hours of audio. An immigrant herself, Professor Cornejo will use the audio collected to continue engaging community members in the creation of multimedia works that speak to the experience of home and belonging in the rural Midwest. By complicating notions of "home" and providing opportunities for reflection and discussion, Professor Cornejo challenges the prevailing representations of rural people and immigrants alike. Cornejo reflected on the project: projects/"Mary Oliver said that attention is the beginning of devotion, to which I would add that paying attention means that you stay put, and open, and aware. And from this place, you cannot fail."

Other projects have highlighted the ways that community-engaged humanities can redefine our understandings of distant places. In the winter of 2019, Elena McGrath, visiting assistant professor of History, taught a course on the history of the U.S.-Mexico border that incorporated an academic civic engagement project. While Minnesota might not obviously lend itself to community engagement related to the U.S.-Mexico border, Professor McGrath centered the project on ideas of borders and borderlands. Students conducted community-based research on local inequalities in housing, healthcare, and education, examining the ways borders and borderlands were present in Northfield, particularly in the Latinx community. In doing so, students transformed their conceptions of the community and their place in it, while exploring ways of understanding borders and borderlands far from campus.

Many faculty members helm projects involving communities further afield. Like projects based closer to Carleton, these community-engaged projects both deepen scholars' connections to place and further their more traditional scholarly work. Iveta Jusová, professor of Women's and Gender Studies, collaborated with the aging residents of a Soviet-era housing bloc in the Czech city of Opava to capture the history of their community. Working with celebrated Czech photographer Jindřich Štreit, Jusová documented residents' memories and perspectives on their cooperative housing in text and images. They created a website and exhibition of their work and published a remarkable book of photographs.

The Constellation of the Commons, directed by Palmar Álvarez-Blanco, professor of Spanish, is a digital repository as well as a community of practice and a tool with the potential to transform traditionally siloed sectors. Documenting anticapitalist grassroots organizations of activists, educators, artists, and researchers, the archive highlights the plurality of their responses to the challenges around them. Conducting research over five years, Professor Álvarez-Blanco forged relationships with organizations deeply embedded in their communities, while building her own synthetic analysis of "the Commons" as a whole. The Public Works initiative was able to help her bring this work to fruition by supporting the creation of the website and a book as well as celebrating the project's influence on Álvarez-Blanco's pedagogical practice.

While each Public Works project advances a collaboration and a faculty member's scholarly agenda, Carleton's mission as a liberal arts college dedicated to teaching is also reflected in these projects. Our community-

engaged projects involve students through coursework, as research partners, and even as conference co-presenters. Student engagement with community partners, no matter the form it takes, deepens their learning both academically and civically. Through publicly engaged humanities work, faculty have transformed their connections to place, fueled "traditional" scholarly work, connected their students to place, and enriched their students' educational experience.

***Elizabeth Budd**, a 2019 graduate of Carleton College, is the Program Associate for Carleton College's Mellon-funded initiative: Public Works: Connecting Communities through Arts and Humanities. **Susannah Ottaway**, Carleton Professor of History co-directs the initiative with **Kelly Connole**, Professor of Art. The Public Works Initiative can be found on Twitter @Carleton_PW.*

Peeling carrots and working on the Mutual Aid Timeline at La Morada. Image courtesy of Ángeles Donoso Macaya.

Archives in Common

By Ángeles Donoso Macaya April 6, 2021

On the table: a laptop with a website editor program page open; two pots, one with peeled carrots, a second one with carrots to be peeled; two peelers. Sitting by the table are Yajaira Saavadra, co-owner of La Morada (an undocumented-owned and family-run Oaxacan restaurant located in the South Bronx), and me, a volunteer of La Morada's Mutual Aid Kitchen for the past year and Faculty Lead of the project "Archives in Common: Migrant Practices / Knowledge / Memory" at The Center for the Humanities, the Graduate Center, CUNY.

Archives in Common was formulated as the pandemic emerged. As a public humanities project, it has different overlapping goals, of which two of the most pressing are: 1) supporting, expanding, and helping to disseminate mutual aid initiatives devised by community activists through their audiovisual and textual documentation; and 2) facilitating spaces that foster the transmission, sharing, and dissemination of Indigenous knowledges, practices, and memories. Conceptually, this project seeks to answer questions such as: How does one create an archive in common that is consistent with the mutual aid ethics? What purpose does this archive serve? Who are its publics? Archives in Common seeks to dismantle the walls that separate the public university from the communities that the university serves, hence the material answers to these questions—a work in progress—attempt to put in practice the notion of "the common." In this sense, the flexibility and openness of the Public Seminar has allowed us to devise activities and events within and outside the university. We have devised public talks, round table discussions, and classroom visits with immigrant activists and artists, as well as free workshops facilitated in a community garden in the South Bronx. We are also building a bilingual website to archive all of these collaborative initiatives.

I begin this post with the image of the table because it conveys the material aspect of this collaboration. While peeling carrots, Yajaira and I talked about a timeline we are developing, which records different mutual aid initiatives and efforts led by La Morada to sustain communities in the South Bronx, East Harlem, and Northern Manhattan. We call it a "timeline" because, in one sense, it is: it describes mutual aid efforts chronologically, from April 2020 to the present, and also provides tallies of all the hot meals and *despensas* (pantry boxes) served and distributed weekly. Yet in another sense, what we are building is more complex and richer than a timeline, because it also accounts for the availability of vegetables, fruits, and herbs, which change by season. The "timeline" is thus represented as a seasonal wheel or cycle—not as a line—because the hot meals prepared by La Morada have also varied each season.

The Mutual Aid Timeline, a work in progress, is one of the collaborative initiatives featured in the Archives in Common website, which will be launched during the Spring. The website will also showcase documentation related to the workshop series Brewing Memories and a syllabus. The Brewing Memories workshops are facilitated by Carolina Saavedra (Yajaira's sister), sous chef at La Morada and educator at Stone Barns Center. At these community workshops, two of which were held in person at the beginning of the Fall semester at Friends of Brooke Park in Mott Haven, participants learned about (or were reminded of) the benefits of seasonal medicinal plants. They also spent time drawing a special memory using dried herbs and honey, which afterward they drank as tea while sharing recollections. As with the timeline, the idea for this hands-on workshop materialized in a conversation Carolina and I had during a trip we took north of the city to collect donations from farmers.

The third project featured on the website is a syllabus created by activist, poet and painter Marco Saavedra, who also works at La Morada along with his sisters and parents (Natalia and Antonio). Marco's syllabus, tentatively titled "Constellation of Influences," was instigated in part by a series of questions I asked him when we began collaborating last Fall (What had motivated him to become involved in direct action organizing and immigrant rights activism? In what ways the reading of Black thinkers and writers had influenced his own activism and writing? Could he share how these readings had helped him to draw connections between the "Black experience" and the "Immigrant experience" in the US?). The syllabus will include readings and offer interpretations of visual and textual works by artists, filmmakers, and writers from W.E.B. Du Bois to Langston Hughes to Zora Neale Hurston, and more.

"When activists work with or create archives, they do so with an eye toward preventing them from becoming a dead memorial, and they make them come alive by connecting them to the needs of the present," says Ann Cvetkovich, a scholar of queer archives. I evoke this passage because it eloquently condenses our collective aim. With Archives in Common, we seek to build an archive that is both alive and able to serve different purposes: helping neighbors to find information about medicinal plants in different media (photo, video, audio, text); allowing activists to record and keep track of mutual aid efforts; inviting visitors to find inspiration by learning about different authors, filmmakers and artists. All of this is shared in both Spanish and English.

Archives in Common defines the archive not only as a place or as a series of operations, but also as a practice—one that allows us to create and imagine collaboratively, strengthening solidarity and mutual aid networks within our communities.

Ángeles Donoso Macaya *is an immigrant professor, researcher and community organizer from Santiago, Chile, based in New York City. She is an Associate Professor of Spanish at the Borough of Manhattan Community College/CUNY. Her research centers on Latin American photography, counter-archival production, human rights activism, documentary film, and Southern Cone feminisms. She is author of* The Insubordination of Photography: Documentary Practices under Chile's Dictatorship *(University Press of Florida, 2020) /* La insubordinación de la fotografía *(Metales Pesados, 2021).*

Mama Linda Goss, National Heritage Fellow, Co-Founder and President Emeritus of the National Association of Black Storytellers, and Freedom Stories teller. Image courtesy of the International Storytelling Center.

Freedom Stories: Unearthing the Black Heritage of Appalachia

By Lynnea Salinas March 15, 2022

In the heart of Central Appalachia, the International Storytelling Center (ISC) spent two years working to unearth the neglected stories of the nation's past through their Freedom Stories initiative. The project, supported by funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, focused on unearthing the Black heritage of Appalachia by bringing storytelling performance and humanities scholarship into direct dialogue with each other through public programs and the development of educational resources. ISC's goal was to support ongoing collaboration between storytellers and scholars to lead to a deeper public appreciation of the role stories and storytelling play in the struggles for freedom, equality, and justice. After all, in the words of author Alex Haley, "Without storytelling, we'd have no roots."

"Storytelling is as American as apple pie, and very much a part of African American and Appalachian life, culture and community," says Dr. Alicestyne Turley, Freedom Stories project director. "We purposefully didn't want to make this a series of academic talks. I wanted to aim toward young people, the everyday mom and pop, and Joe Blow, who don't know this history because we don't teach it in schools. … The goal, then, was to say: 'There are some stories out here that you haven't heard. Wouldn't you like to hear them?'"

Public events featured well-known African American artists and scholars, and touched on topics ranging from Africans' first arrivals in the region, to slavery, the abolitionist movement, emancipation, Jim Crow, the Great

Migration, the Civil Rights Movement, and Black Lives Matter. Through folktales, personal narratives, music, and scholarly research in twelve performances and dialogues, Freedom Stories touched on over 400 years of history in an effort to engage more fully with the complete narrative of America.

Although focused largely on past stories, Freedom Stories topics were nonetheless very timely. "It was almost as though we were tuned into the consciousness of the country," says Dr. Turley. "Many of the topics that we thought were historical turned into conversations about current conditions."

This timeliness was also evident in participant feedback. Data compiled by the National Humanities Alliance showed that, as a result of participating in Freedom Stories discussions, 93% of survey respondents felt motivated to "listen to the stories of people whose backgrounds are different from [their] own." Seventy percent felt motivated to "be a part of dialogues around racial justice," and 98% agreed that "humanities programs like this one enrich our society."

Kiran Singh Sirah, ISC President, says these discussions are important to the region and the nation in context of our national identity. "Storytelling is certainly entertaining," he says, "but storytelling is also a means of cultural preservation. Just like our nation, Appalachia is a tapestry of stories, and programs like this can help us listen more closely and celebrate the rich diversity of our narratives."

Along with nationally and internationally acclaimed story artists, Dr. Turley partnered with a wide variety of humanities scholars including speakers from Berea College, East Tennessee State University, Marietta College, Simmons College of Kentucky, Southern Illinois University, Southern Maryland University, the University of Kentucky, and the University of North Carolina-Asheville. Dr. Turley is also currently working on publishing Freedom Stories as a higher education resource in partnership with the University of Kentucky Press.

"Education is for the public," says Dr. Turley. "But in academia, sometimes we're talking to each other. If education is to be useful, the public has to benefit from whatever the discussion is." To that end, all twelve of the Freedom Stories public events are available free of charge in the Freedom Stories Toolkit. The toolkit includes these recordings, along with an interactive multimedia story map, discussion PowerPoints, information about each contributor, mini-documentary style extension videos, and curriculum guides. Freedom Stories was also presented as part of a Congressional briefing to key Members of Congress from Appalachia as well as members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

"The International Storytelling Center … has offered up a groundbreaking work based on solid research and carefully written texts, producing richly-textured episodes featuring extraordinary storytellers, scholars, and musicians, using all manner of historical elements, graphics and social media," says Dr. William Turner, retired distinguished professor of Black and Appalachian Studies at Berea College. "Freedom Stories unfolds in a manner that both integrates Black Appalachia into the quilt-like fabric of America, but also emphasizes its distinctiveness. Alex Haley beams, as should we all."

Lynnea Salinas *serves as Assistant to the President at the International Storytelling Center and served as the Technical Coordinator for the Freedom Stories initiative. With a background in arts and education she has served as a middle school teacher, fine arts academic standards and curriculum specialist, professional development trainer, and even a high ropes course instructor. She has a Bachelor's degree in Outdoor Experiential Education from Appalachian State University and a Master of Arts in Teaching from East Tennessee State University.*

Building Partnerships

Icon Marquis Clanton and Peabody BFA Dance students perform at the April 15 "Baltimore Beautiful Symbols" ball at the George Peabody Library. Image courtesy of Saskia Kahn.

History and Performance Collide: The Peabody Ballroom Experience

By Joseph Plaster July 19, 2023

The ballroom scene is a nearly century-old performance-based culture composed primarily of queer, lesbian, trans, and gender non-conforming artists of color. Recently popularized by the television show *Pose*, ballroom consists of chosen families, or houses, and the opulent performance competitions they produce. Ball competitions are more than spectacles of creativity and fabulousness; they are also rituals that call forth and renew black and LGBTQ cultural traditions. The electronic music derives from modern progressions of the African drum, and is influenced by blues, jazz, gospel, and funk. Voguing, an improvised dance form, is influenced by a variety of black diasporic movement practices. The gender-bending costumes stem from the extravagant drag balls staged in U.S. cities as early as the 1890s. Ball commentators, or masters of ceremony, are griots: storytellers and living archives of the community's cultural knowledge. The ballroom scene mobilizes performance as a system of learning, storing, and

transmitting knowledge, referencing the past to renew a queer, anti-racist public in the present.

In 2018, I worked with ballroom leaders to launch the Peabody Ballroom Experience, an unlikely public humanities collaboration between Baltimore's ballroom scene and Johns Hopkins University, an elite, majority-white university in a majority-black city. As project coordinator, I mobilize my positionality as a white, queer person with institutional privilege to redistribute resources from inside the university walls to outside of them; to act as a mediator between Hopkins and ballroom, two publics with radically different levels of access to power; and to advocate for the value of knowledge produced through minoritized publics and practices, particularly performance. By taking performance seriously as a repository of knowledge and history, the project expands what the public humanities can look and feel like. Over the past five years, with funding from the Mellon Foundation, we have recorded more than a dozen oral history interviews; archived ballroom ephemera; produced three documentary films; held public film screenings and dance workshops; co-taught undergraduate courses; and, most dramatically, staged three epic ball competitions at the opulent George Peabody Library. At these events, ballroom artists interpret and reimagine the Library's historic collections through costume and stylized performance.

History and performance collided on Saturday, April 15, 2023, when more than three hundred ballroom artists and guests gathered for our third ball competition. Titled "Baltimore Beautiful Symbols," the ball honored "the trailblazers and blueprints—the 'royalty'—who paved the way for Baltimore's ballroom scene." For months leading up to the event, I collaborated with four ballroom leaders—Legendary Rhonda Carr, Icon Enrique St. Laurent, Legendary Marco West, and Icon Sebastian Escada—to curate more than a dozen competition categories that showcased Baltimore's ballroom history while also drawing inspiration from the George Peabody Library's historic collections. We asked competitors to pay homage to Baltimore's Legends and Icons as they brought to life a selection of the Library's rare books. The Library itself—with its soaring atrium, tiers of cast-iron balconies and black-and-white marble floor—was a fitting backdrop for an eye-popping history lesson about Baltimore's ballroom scene.

For over three hours, performers embodied the Legends and Icons who paved the way for those gathered in the Library. For the category "Femme Queen Perfect 10," for example, trans women competed for prizes in a category Rhonda Carr titled "Cleopatra" in honor of Baltimore ballroom legend Sabrina Icon: "a queen much like Cleopatra." In instructions circulated before the ball, Carr asked performers to "compel the judges" by "embodying" both Cleopatra and Sabrina Icon. As they competed, vintage YouTube videos of Sabrina Icon played on a screen behind the runway while the event commentators recounted her contributions and past performances, often chanting in sync with the DJ's signature beats. Another category, written by Enrique St. Laurent, required dancers to perform in the style of Baltimore legend Ricky Allure, embodying his "grace, antics and clever stunts." They were required to dress "as a mystical fairy," inspired by the Peabody Library's copy of Michael Drayton's *Nymphidia: The Court of Fairy* (1814). Every moment was referential, as performers embodied historical figures and fashion, putting modern takes on everything from the "Blood of our Ancestors" to the "Amazons." From the categories to the costumes to the rare books that lined the stacks, history suffused the event.

Among the few non-ballroom attendees were roughly twenty-five Hopkins undergraduates who learned about ballroom history, culture, and dance for weeks before the event. Marquis Clanton, an Icon in the ballroom scene, led five vogue workshops for students in the Peabody BFA Dance Program, beginning with the "history behind the movements." Clanton and students kicked off the ball with a gorgeous, choreographed performance. Students in my course "Queer Performativity" studied ballroom history for three weeks and attended a class session co-taught by Legendary Marco West. One student wrote that she appreciated the "deep past" that was on display at the ball. "It did not feel like a simple, one night event," she reflected. "It was part of a legacy of the many balls and

performers that have taken stage in nights just like this." Another student reported that the ball "put all the things I've learned in class about the history of ball and its transformative power for the queer community into perspective." Being able to immerse herself in the experience "helped shape my understanding of the beauty of ball culture … and the work that goes into queer of color worldmaking." Learning about ballroom history enabled students to attend the ball as knowledgeable participants, rather than voyeurs, and to approach ballroom performance as a system of learning, storing, and transmitting knowledge.

Our ball competitions are just one component of a public humanities project that continues to cultivate an exchange of knowledge between Johns Hopkins University and ballroom, reimagining knowledge production outside institutional norms by prioritizing methods rooted in minoritized publics and practices. More information is available at our multimedia website and on Instagram. To read more about ballroom culture and its history in Baltimore, visit: https://peabodyballroom.library.jhu.edu/home/ballroom-history/.

Joseph Plaster *is Curator in Public Humanities and Director of the Winston Tabb Special Collections Research Center at Johns Hopkins University. His research and teaching combine archival, oral history, and public humanities methods to examine the worldmaking practices of marginalized publics in the United States, with a focus on intersections of gender, sexuality, and race. His first book* Kids on the Street: Queer Kinship and Religion in San Francisco's Tenderloin *(Duke University Press, 2023) explores the informal support networks that enabled abandoned and runaway queer youth to survive in central city tenderloin districts across the United States, and San Francisco's Tenderloin in particular, over the past century. To learn more, visit Plaster's personal website.*

The Power of One: Patient- and Family-Centered Care at MUSC

By Caroline DeLongchamps, Lisa Kerr, Kelly Loyd, and Shannon Deeb December 1, 2020

"I think about our final days with Maia often," Shannon Deeb wrote of her daughter. "Since we had been in the PCICU so long, we had one of the private rooms. I'm so thankful for that room; after being in it for almost three months, it had become our home away from home. That room allowed us to spend the night with Maia next to us two nights before she passed away. (Yes, we broke many rules that night!) Two days later it allowed us to have a beautiful morning filled with visitors, then a peaceful, quiet time to take her last breaths with just those that brought her into this world: Mom, Dad and God. I cherish that morning, and it is one of the things that brings me comfort as it was such a beautiful and peaceful time."

Shannon wrote these words as part of a plea to the medical director of the pediatric cardiac intensive care unit (PCICU) at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC). Plans were being made to build a new children's hospital, and the PCICU team wanted the new facility to have a hybrid unit that included both private rooms and open bays. Having been in one of these units in the current facility, Shannon understood the team's desire for open bays. She knew care team members felt it would be easier to see and access the patient from the nurses' station, particularly in an emergency. However, Shannon had a different perspective. When her emotions had been at their highest during her daughter's stay, Shannon didn't feel like she could cry because everyone could see her. She couldn't play music for her daughter because of their proximity to the next patient. She needed to pump her breast milk but did not want to leave her baby. She felt a whole range of emotions that she wasn't allowed to express because of the lack of privacy.

When a physician made an exception and moved Shannon's family into one of the few private rooms available, it made a powerful impact on them. The three walls that constituted a private room had glass front doors, but those walls gave them the dignity and respect they needed to be a family and, ultimately, the space for Shannon and her husband to say goodbye to their daughter.

After attending a hospital design meeting, Shannon felt compelled to share her experience in writing. Once leaders heard and understood the profound impact that privacy had on her family, they made an immediate decision to have private rooms for every patient in the new hospital, not just the PCICU. With her brief but powerful story, Shannon changed the design of the new Shawn Jenkins Children's Hospital and Pearl Tourville Women's Pavilion at MUSC.

Thanks to stories like Shannon's, we at MUSC recognize that narratives have the power to create change. Like Shannon, other MUSC patients and family members have impacted policy, practice, and education at our institution by sharing stories that highlight the imperative of partnering with every patient and family member to improve quality and safety. Yet not every story told in the hope of improving systems of care has been equally engaging or memorable. Those that include vivid description and detail, demonstrate awareness of purpose and audience, and include a call to action are most successful at inspiring change. With this in mind, the Department of Patient-and Family-Centered Care collaborated with the Office of Humanities to design Patient Story Writing Workshops that are now also co-led by a Family Faculty member, Kelly Loyd, who completed our first workshop and helped us refine it. These workshops are designed to teach elements of writing craft that help patients or family members create a five- to seven-minute version of their stories that will engage a healthcare audience. Ultimately, those who complete the workshop can serve as Family Faculty and teach MUSC students, faculty, and

staff about core concepts of Patient- and Family-Centered care through their narratives. In this blog post, we provide an overview of our workshop design and describe the various formats where patients and families are invited to share their stories.

The Workshop

As manager of Patient-and Family-Centered Care, Caroline DeLongchamps begins the workshop with an overview of MUSC Health, including the system's mission, vision and values. Then she provides the definition and core concepts of Patient-and Family-Centered Care (PFCC). PFCC requires healthcare providers to work with patients and families, rather than only doing to and for them. Respect, dignity, participation, information-sharing, and collaboration are essential elements to creating mutually beneficial partnerships among providers, patients, and their families [1] . By giving examples of the core concepts in the healthcare setting, we help workshop participants recall their own healthcare experiences. Participants begin to understand that when one or more of the core concepts was present in their care it usually led to a positive outcome and, when absent, it may have left them feeling angry, scared, confused or hurt.

After this introduction, Lisa Kerr, Director of the MUSC Office of Humanities, begins the portion of the workshop devoted to writing craft. Her instruction focuses on the differences between writing expressively for personal healing and writing a personal story for a public audience. Lisa then discusses elements of writing craft that make a story engaging and memorable, including dialogue, description, and imagery. Through a series of interactive exercises, writers learn to develop a "hook," how to "show" instead of "tell," and how to conclude with a "takeaway." For each exercise, participants are offered a chance to share. Although sharing is always optional, many participants are eager to do so, and this sharing becomes meaningful for everyone, sparking discussion and additional ideas. Using this process, we move writers from brainstorming to considering how their story might take shape. To help participants imagine how their own story might become a five- to seven-minute piece, Kelly Loyd reads her story as a model. After hearing Kelly's story, participants are given time to work on their own. Some participants put pen to paper immediately. Others prefer to talk through their ideas with one of the three workshop leaders. By the end of the workshop, most participants express having some sense of direction—or feeling inspired by the interaction with us and others. As we close the workshop, we invite all participants to submit their drafts to us so that we can help the writers with their revisions.

Sharing Our Stories

Our storytellers may choose to share their narratives in a variety of ways. A young girl shared her story with institutional leaders during a leadership conference to emphasize how essential a holistic approach is to the care of sickle cell patients. A person who struggled with addiction credits MUSC with saving his life after he was diagnosed with Hepatitis C. "I had no hope and no money," he said, "but they didn't give up on me." The mother of a patient at the Institute of Psychiatry shared her story to an orientation class of new employees entitled, "Walk a Mile in My Shoes." A pediatric patient with cystic fibrosis recorded his story to implore staff to use proper infection prevention practices, "because 30 seconds of laziness should not cost me years of my life." This patient's story is one of many that have been recorded, edited, and included in a Patient Story Library that is available to all students, staff, and faculty at MUSC. The voices of our storytellers remind us that health care is personal and that there is tremendous value in partnering with patients and families and including them as members of the health care team.

One of the most powerful storytelling experiences happens in MUSC student classrooms in a session called "More than Words." Our class sessions are designed to teach MUSC medical, nursing, pharmacy, and other graduate health science students through patient and family stories and to discuss with them why stories are valuable in health care education and practice. To this end, Lisa Kerr introduces the concept of narrative medicine and health humanities and Caroline DeLongchamps presents the core concepts of Patient- and Family-Centered Care before introducing our Family Faculty. Once introduced, these Family Faculty members read the written versions of their stories one at a time. Their stories include themes of partnering in the care of the patient, effective communication, treating patients and families with respect and dignity, and shared-decision making. When these themes are present, we often hear stories of extraordinary gratitude and privilege, even in the wake of pain and loss. However, the converse is also true, and occasionally when one or more of the above mentioned themes is missing from a story, we hear about a negative experience or harm that affects the patient and family. The goal is to teach future health care providers the importance of partnering with their patients and families to improve the quality and safety of the care we provide.

When Kelly Loyd reads her story, students hear about her journey with her twin girls who were born 11 ½ weeks early and spent 77 days at MUSC in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Kelly describes her role as a mom at the bedside and how she was offered the opportunity to partner with care team members to provide that extra bit of continuity and preparation when the time came to take her girls home. Kelly encourages the students to offer all patients and family members the same opportunities that she was offered to participate and collaborate in their health care journeys.

After all stories have been read aloud to the MUSC students, we open the floor for discussion. We assure them that we are offering a safe, open time for dialogue and want them to feel comfortable asking us questions that may affect their decision-making when they are treating their own patients. We have found this to be an energizing discussion in every session, and we always leave the classroom feeling confident that the future of health care is in good hands.

Our Future

Working with patients and families as they craft and share their stories is a rewarding collaboration for all of us. It provides patients and family members a voice at MUSC and allows them as Family Faculty to partner with care team members to educate our students, faculty, and staff. Informed by the disciplines of communication, rhetoric, and creative writing, this program sits at the intersection of the health humanities and Patient-and Family-Centered Care. While the Patient Story Library includes a diverse set of stories, we've had less success recruiting a diverse group to become members of our Family Faculty. To meet this challenge, we continue to develop ways to reach a wider population. For example, we've discussed the use of scribes to allow people to tell their stories when they don't feel as comfortable writing it down themselves. We're also planning an online-only version of the workshop to reach individuals in their homes. As Kelly Loyd says in her own story, it's important that everyone is empowered to use their voice, to know their stories can effect change, and so we continue to look for ways to offer everyone "a seat at the table."

Caroline DeLongchamps *is the parent of a former pediatric trauma patient and now serves as the Manager of Patient- and Family-Centered Care for MUSC Health.* ***Lisa Kerr*** *is a Professor of writing and humanities at MUSC Health.* ***Kelly Loyd*** *is the mother of twin daughters born prematurely at MUSC Children's hospital. She now serves as a patient and family advisor and member of the Family Faculty program.* ***Shannon Deeb****'s daughter was a patient, which compelled her to serve for a number of years on the MUSC Children's Health Patient and Family Advisory Council.*

Study and Struggle From the Inside

Anonymous October 19, 2021

This blog post was generously written for Humanities for All *in spring 2021. It was published as part of a series highlighting the work of the Study and Struggle program, including a long-form profile where you can learn more about the history, goals, and scope of the program. To contextualize the work and impact of Study and Struggle, we suggest you read the profile first. At this time, the author of this post requested to remain anonymous.*

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After spending almost thirty-three years in a Mississippi prison, on a hot summer day in 2020, I was contacted and invited to be a host of a radical study group.

What intrigued me about this program was that it was facilitated by grassroots organizations within the state, faculty members at universities across the country, and authors and civil rights activists around the world. Upon reading the literature provided free of charge, I now realize what I have thought and voiced for many years: prison is big business. Prison Industry Corporations in every state are making huge profits on the backs of inmate labor. Commissary and phone companies are using price gouging tactics to profit as well. Jails, prisons, regional facilities, and immigration detention centers have become the ultimate examples of human trafficking and bondage. There are very few wealthy people in these types of institutions. Prisoners or detainees are mainly poor, Black, white, Hispanic, or transgender people.

After close examination, I recently made a connection between ICE prisons and the people being kept at state-designated women's prisons; people are receiving hysterectomies at an alarming rate, literally making it impossible to have children. According to the 13th Amendment, slavery was abolished in 1865, except for the punishment of a crime. Prisoners are legalized 21st-century slaves.

Because of Angela Davis' book *Are Prisons Obsolete*, I started thinking about the possibility of prison abolition. At first it seemed like a far-fetched idea, until I started thinking about the enslaved who were price bound and trafficked here from other lands, how they too must have viewed their freedom as an impossibility. Another example is the death penalty. Although it is still legal in twenty-seven states, the fact that it has been abolished in twenty-three states in the U.S. and many other countries cannot be ignored.

Oregon recently decriminalized small amounts of drug possession. Instead of treating them with punishment and imprisonment, some addicts in Oregon are now receiving the kindness, compassion, and understanding they deserve. Imagine how many people would be able to avoid incarceration if drugs were decriminalized in every state. Instead, prisons have installed revolving doors. Once released, people can receive as little as twenty-five dollars and a bus ticket, setting them up for failure. We can learn from past and present mistakes and evolve into a more humane and compassionate society. Prisons are not the solution. If they were, no one would ever return there.

Because of this study group, we have learned about helping those in need survive with mutual aid, and strategy techniques are being taught, learned, and put into practice. The experience has not only been rewarding and educational, it has allowed me to form new relationships and bonds.

In conclusion, while I struggle, I will continue to study and learn about the struggles of others. I will stand strong and I will continue to stand long. Only now, with the help of the members of this movement, I have the comfort of knowing that I will not stand alone.

The Pandemic Journaling Project

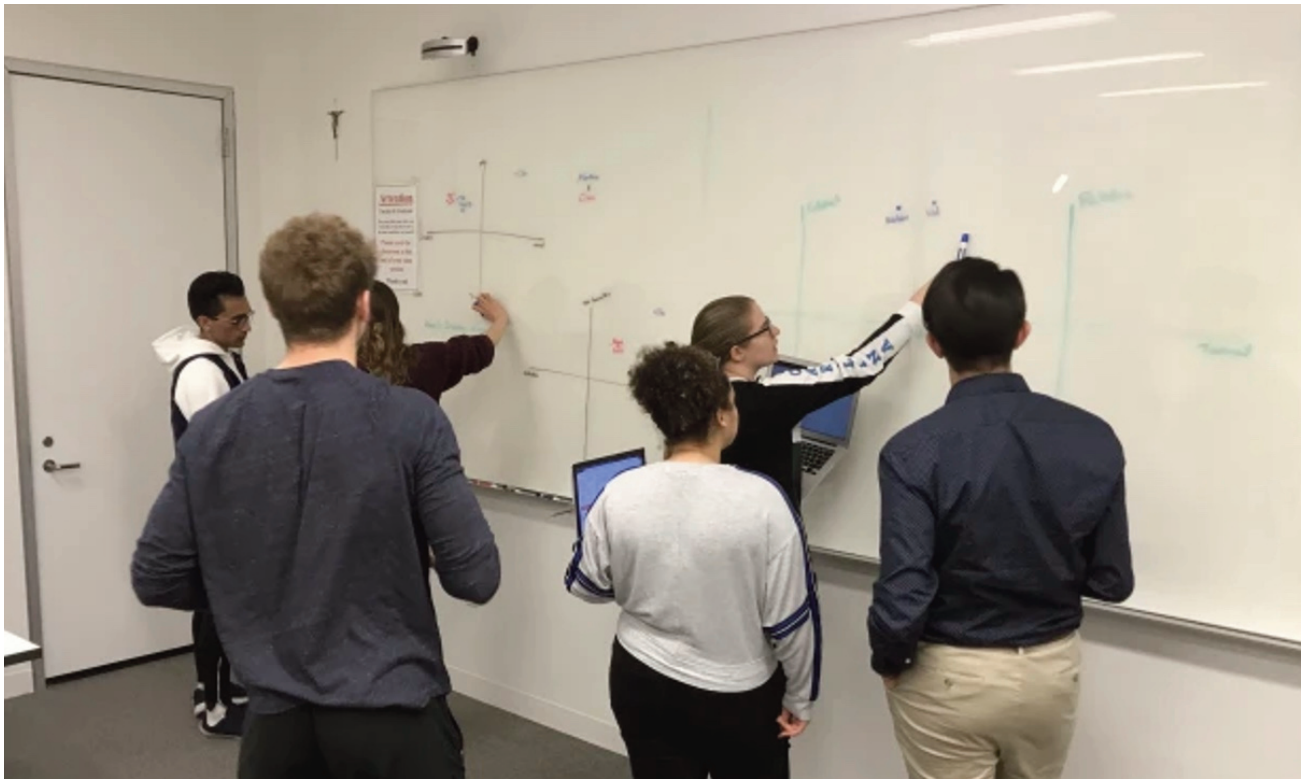
By Sarah Willen June 30, 2020

This spring, as the force and magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic became increasingly clear, an interdisciplinary team at the University of Connecticut, Brown University, and Trinity College raced to create the Pandemic Journaling Project, a combined journaling platform and research study that lets anyone around the world create a weekly record of this turbulent time using text, voice recordings, and images, for themselves and for posterity. With versions in English and Spanish, anyone with access to a smartphone, tablet, or computer can contribute in only 15 minutes each week. While the Project is open to all, the team is especially committed to recording the experiences of communities disproportionately affected by the pandemic—especially essential workers (in health and other sectors) and communities of color, who face significantly higher rates of COVID-19 risk and infection. Participants will be able to view and download a full archive of their own responses via a password-protected website and, if they choose, give permission to share their entries on the project's public Featured Entries page. After 25 years, all contributions will become part of a publicly accessible historical archive.

Teaming up with a diverse Advisory Board comprised of experts in history, psychology, digital humanities, and other fields, Project founders Sarah Willen (UConn) and Katherine Mason (Brown), both anthropologists, are pleased to see the platform emerge as a meaningful space for weekly reflection. At the same time, the team is working to "pre-design an archive" that will have value to researchers in humanities, social sciences, and health fields, now and in the future. Before creating their first journal entries, participants are asked basic questions about demographics, COVID-19 exposure, and current health status. Two journaling opportunities follow, including one recurring question about the impact of the pandemic on one's life and a choice of two weekly questions on topics such as work and finances, health, and encounters with discrimination and racism, as well as experiences of social connection, community, and the arts. Although the Project initially was developed to capture experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic, its scope has expanded, by necessity, to include participants' reactions to the death of George Floyd and the widespread social and political unrest his murder has ignited across the United States and around the world. This expanded focus hews closely to the Project's declared mandate, which greets website visitors: "Usually, history is written only by the powerful. … The goal of the Pandemic Journaling Project is to make sure that ordinary people struggling through this pandemic have their voices heard, and their experiences remembered."

The Pandemic Journaling Project was launched with seed funding from various units at the University of Connecticut, including the Office of Global Affairs, the Human Rights Institute, and the Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP), as well as the Center for Urban and Global Studies at Trinity College and the Population Studies Training Center at Brown University.

Teaching the Public Humanities



Students mapping projects from *Humanities for All*. Image courtesy of Matthew Pavesich.

Teaching With *Humanities for All* (Even Online!)

By Matthew Pavesich June 30, 2020

Note: What a time to be alive: I drafted most of this blog post before March 2020, and then the world turned upside down. The pandemic necessitated online instruction at a scale that must have shocked even the most ardent MOOC supporter. Simultaneously, convulsive and grief-fueled racial upheaval emerged all across the world in response to the murder of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others. Universities and the humanities have always been both a part of the problem and a part of the solution: they are entangled in racism and they persist as sites of transformative opportunity. To me, the public humanities especially hold potential for radically transformative work. And everything that we can do, from our teaching positions of power, to work with students as they acquire the means and methods to change the world (they already have the motivation!), helps to tip the scales.

This post is about one simple classroom exercise with the *Humanities for All* database, which works both online and F2F. But first let's zoom way out in order to zoom back in.

Zoom Out

Some say—and have been saying for decades—that the humanities are in crisis. In optimistic moments, I prefer to think that we're in a moment of evolutionary adaptation, changing who we are and what we do in response to significant pressures of all sorts (economic, political, cultural, and more).

In navigating this complex context, there are many ways to advocate for the humanities. The National Humanities Alliance (NHA) engages in several of them, including legislative advocacy, convening stakeholders, and documenting, promoting, and building capacity for innovative humanities work. NHA's *Humanities for All*, for example, collects examples of publicly engaged humanities work including research, teaching, preservation, and public programming. Much of this work considers how to broaden the audiences for and expand the forms of the work. I've engaged in public humanities work myself, and I continue to think about and work on the ways I can integrate my research and teaching interests with public action.

For those of us in teaching positions, I'd suggest that we should consider our classrooms to be places for students to become attuned to what the humanities are becoming. Our classrooms, that is, can become laboratories where we collaboratively think, see, and feel our way into more expansive, generous, and vibrant versions of what the humanities are and can be in the 21st century. Crisis, if that's what this is, might be an opportunity.

Zoom In

There are all kinds of ways to integrate public and engaged humanities work into our classrooms, but I've had the good fortune to be able to develop an entire course devoted to the public and engaged humanities at Georgetown University. In my English 434: Humanities@Work class, we ask two big questions: (1) what can the humanities do in public (culturally, politically, economically, etc.), and (2) what can we, as individuals with training in the humanities, do in the world (professionally, civically, personally, etc.)? The goal of the course is for students to come away with a broader sense of what the humanities are, what they achieve, and what they are good for—and for students to see a more expansive horizon in which they can work and grow. The exercise I describe here is one that I situate near the start of the semester in Humanities@Work.

The biggest challenge in a public humanities class is that we're usually starting from scratch. It's the rare student who already has a good sense of what the "public humanities" are, let alone a sense of the range of work or the possibilities therein. I can assign all the reading in the world, but that's not enough for students to get a sense of the rhythms and flows of public engagement. We need to examine public humanities projects—lots of them—for students to see what exactly this kind of work can be. *Humanities for All* offers a perfect resource for this purpose.humanists of all generations with as wide a view on the work as possible.

During the first week of class, I ask students to explore the *Humanities for All* database and to come to class having identified three publicly engaged humanities projects that especially caught their interest. I also assign the NHA's accompanying essays on the goals and types of publicly engaged humanities work. In small groups, students discuss the three projects that caught their eye, using the accompanying essays to consider ways to analyze the projects. This conversation helps all students become familiar with a number of projects, while also asking them to look at them in relation to each other.

Next, I ask students to map all these projects in relation to each other on axes that they identify as relevant. These axes can be of a wide variety: size or specificity of audience, emphasis on the textual and/or the visual, the design

for instruction or interaction, and (infinitely) more. The point is to engage students in even more active variations of the strategic thinking that goes into the composition of such work. Students, at first, are a little bewildered by my request, but once it becomes clear that I'm inviting creative activity, rather than asking for a correct answer, things begin to loosen up and get weird in a good way.

If teaching online, there are a number of tools one might use to conduct this exercise in a digital synchronous or asynchronous environment. Google's Jamboard, Canva, Prezi, and other visually-driven platforms allow students to spatially arrange text and images, and that's all you need. This exercise suffers not at all from a transition online. Each group can present through screenshare in Zoom, if synchronous, and via blog posts on a shared class blog, if asynchronous.

And so, in the space of one brief class activity, we have: (1) familiarized ourselves with a number of public humanities projects, as well as the NHA's helpful typology and goals for such work, (2) engaged in a reflective exercise that considers the strategies of specific individual projects, and (3) extended that reflection beyond the analysis of individual projects to analyzing projects in relation to each other. This combination of tasks both familiarizes students with the public humanities landscape and invites them to consider these projects from the perspective of those who created them, necessary first steps towards doing this kind of work oneself.

Zoom Back Out

In the current iteration of this class, students go on to analyze other people's projects in our Precedent Studies assignment, to identify their own values, skills, and goals in a Public Humanist Statement, and to prototype their own public humanities projects. But it all starts with the simple exercise I describe above. The exercise amounts to one small step at the very beginning of a semester, but when things go right it sets in motion everything that follows: an evolution for students that expands their sense of what the humanities make possible for them as individuals and for the world.

As the humanities evolve into something that none of us quite has a handle on yet, it seems crucial to involve students in the work of re-creating the humanities, especially insofar as it becomes a partnership among an increasingly diverse group of people and institutions. If we're becoming something new, best that it be driven by humanists of all generations with as wide a view on the work as possible.

Matthew Pavesich *is Teaching Professor of English and Associate Director of the Writing Program at Georgetown University. His publicly engaged rhetoric project on how Washington, DC residents visually remix their flag,* DC/Adapters, *can be found in* Humanities for All *and online at http://www.dcadapters.org/. .*

Artwork from the Paintings for Justice series created by Gwynne Duncan for Herstory. Image courtesy of Herstory Writers Workshop.

Memoir as a Tool for Action

By Susan Scheckel March 9, 2021

"How do we make education transformative?" This question, posed recently by scholar and activist Ibram X. Kendi, resonates for many educators in the humanities.

As an English professor, my answer is grounded in a belief that stories have the power to change the world—by fostering empathy, deepening understanding of the complex challenges of being human, and empowering individuals to rewrite the narratives of their own lives. Often, however, I find myself questioning whether my teaching (at a STEM-dominant, R1 university) really transforms the students who find their way into my classroom.

It was by stepping outside the classroom and entering into a collaboration with the local nonprofit Herstory Writers Workshop (HWW) that I—and my students—(re)discovered the transformative power of stories. For years I had heard about HWW's work: in teaching memoir writing to diverse populations on Long Island—from the incarcerated and their families to recent immigrants of all ages to migrant farm workers and beyond—HWW helps to bring unheard voices into the public arena so that they might have the power to change hearts, minds, and policies.

Two years ago, as part of our public humanities initiative, the Humanities Institute at Stony Brook University (HISB) invited HWW to talk about their work. Instead of just talking, they showed it in action. Several high school "newcomer" students, many still learning English, shared brief memoirs they had written in Herstory workshops. I became spellbound as I listened to a young woman describing her father's death at the hands of gang

members and the courage that empowered her to cross the border alone in hopes of finding safety and opportunity in the US. Through simple language, vivid imagery and exquisite narrative pacing, this brief memoir carried me into her world. Nothing I had encountered before—books, articles, academic and political debates on immigration policies and reform—made so clear the human dimensions of this complex problem. This young woman was not only a talented writer but also a powerful individual who had seized control of her life's narrative. Everything I believed about the transformative power of stories was confirmed.

Thus began a remarkably productive partnership between HWW and HISB. We began with one workshop, Testify: Memoir as a Tool for Building a Movement, hosted by HISB and led by Herstory's founder, Erika Duncan. College students wrote alongside retired teachers, nurses, activists, and a formerly incarcerated man and his wife, working together to shape stories that connected their lived experiences to larger social issues. They inspired what Herstory refers to as "the dare to care."

Watching the workshop from the perspective of someone who has spent my professional life trying to convince often skeptical students of the power and pleasures of writing, I was astonished by how quickly these students became serious and skilled writers. When signing up for the workshop or introducing themselves at our first meeting, most of the students had stated apologetically, "I'm not really much of a writer." By joining community members who came to the workshop not because they needed to fulfill a requirement but because each had a story that they felt the world needed to hear, the students approached writing in a new way: with a sense of urgency and commitment. They became part of a true writing community united by a sense of common purpose and faith in the power of stories to bring about change. By the end of the semester, the students had grown as writers and as human beings skilled in the art of deep listening and attentive to the value of each individual's unique experience. Over and over again in the final course evaluations, students wrote that this was one of the most meaningful experiences of their college careers.

During the two years since the collaboration between HWW and HISB began, the program has grown dramatically. A credit-bearing internship enables students to write with community members as they learn about, and contribute to, Herstory's story-based strategy for change. Participation has grown almost ten-fold since the internship began; the original "Testify" workshop has expanded into six. We established a Herstory Training Institute at Stony Brook and, working with the national organization Coalition for Community Writing, created a fellowship for graduate students from diverse disciplines and regions who want to integrate Herstory pedagogy with their work as scholars, teachers, and activists. The graduate fellows are taking their training to places we never imagined as they organize memoir writing workshops among the homeless living in the Denver Coliseum; Black cops working to change the policing system from within; and child brides in Syria (to name just a few).

When the pandemic struck, we worried about how it might impact a project grounded in the power of bringing diverse individuals together to form a writing community. To our surprise, the isolation produced by the pandemic, combined with growing awareness of racial injustices and social divisions, super-charged the demand for more workshops: Black students formed a group to address racial disparities made more visible by the pandemic; another workshop brought together students living with disabilities writing to increase awareness of their experiences and needs. New groups are quickly forming as ongoing events make ever more apparent the need for empathy and unity across our differences.

We have discovered that the virtual writing communities retain the same sense of trust, common purpose, and presence that made the original in-person workshops so magical. Herstory's unique, empathy-based pedagogy may

be part of the reason. At its core is the Page One Moment—the art of starting a story from a point that "dares" a reading stranger to care about the writer from the first page. The assumption that strangers may not initially care about those they see as "other" seems especially suited to the cold and distancing medium of Zoom and the state of the world we now inhabit. The pedagogy of the Page One Moment reminds us that there is, indeed, no time to waste if we hope that our words might help to bring about the transformations our world so profoundly needs.

Susan Scheckel *is an Associate Professor in the English department at SBU, where she teaches American literature and leads the departmental initiative on experiential education. She is a board member and former Interim Director of the Humanities Institute at Stony Brook.*

Carlisle Indian School students, circa 1890. Image courtesy of the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center.

Exploring the Carlisle Archive

By Leah Milne August 24, 2021

In her essay, "Leaving Home for Carlisle Indian School," Berenice Levchuk (Navajo) remembers "visit[ing] the old Indian school" only to be directed to the cemetery. With recent news about hundreds of unmarked graves discovered in Canadian residential schools for Indigenous children, the reason why Levchuk was sent to the cemetery—the remaining relic of the infamous Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania—should be clear. What is often less clear are the experiences of children at schools like these, and how and why they arrived there in the first place.

When I first set out to design a public humanities research project introducing students to this important history, I hadn't fully processed the ethics of doing so. However, this consideration quickly became a major part of the conversation. How do we honor and not oversimplify or distort the experiences of the Carlisle students, especially when the audience encountering these digitized records may be unfamiliar with the subject? Or, as Darren Lone Fight (Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Muscogee) put it so eloquently in an email to me, "Are we here re-enacting a second-order violence (violation) through our analytic method and purpose?"

As a teacher of ethnic American literature and composition, I am haunted by this question as I search for ways to familiarize students with the voices and experiences of marginalized groups. It is so easy to do harm, and so hard to equip readers with enough information to make ethical choices. It is also difficult to unlearn the popular dominant narratives that, for non-native people, so strongly influence the way Indigenous people are seen—or not seen. This is especially true when Hollywood has long depicted Indigenous people not only as violent and primitive, but also as existing only in a long-forgotten past.

In my Composition courses, my students and I explore these questions by reading and researching various selections from the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center (hereby referred to as CISDRC, or the archive). The archive's curators encourage research of Carlisle's residents by digitally preserving student records, publications, photographs, and more. Begun by Dickinson College in 2013, the CISDRC had only been around for two years in digitized form when I offered to pilot a lesson incorporating the student records into my curriculum. I first did this through supplementary firsthand accounts of Carlisle from authors such as Zitkala-Ša (Yankton Dakota), the aforementioned Levchuk, and a documentary film entitled *Warrior Women* about Lakota community organizer Madonna Thunder Hawk. These texts preceded a deep dive into the archives themselves.

One of the most impactful ways I've found to begin grappling with the ethics of archival work is detailed in one of the many lesson plans provided by the CISDRC—namely, an examination of Carlisle student portraits when they first arrive compared to photographs taken much later.

Meant to prove Carlisle's promise of "civilizing" students, the photos instead depict assimilation and cultural erasure, as evident in this famous before-and-after set of pictures of Navajo student Tom Torlino, taken three years apart.

The archives not only made historical figures like Tom Torlino more real to them, but also showed how, even with "official" records, one needs to read between the lines. Overall, my students and I benefited greatly from what Susan Wells famously identifies as the "three gifts of archival work": namely, a resistance to closure, a loosening of resentment by productively facing the anxieties of our discipline, and finally, a reconstruction of the humanities disciplines such as rhetoric and composition in order to "rethink our political and institutional situation, [and] to find ways of teaching that are neither narrowly belletristic [or aesthetic] nor baldly vocational." The archival medium alone can do none of these things without context, and it is one thing to inform and to educate, and quite another to make sure that we're doing so justly and properly. With traditional research papers, I found students less inclined to consider their writing audiences or the importance of the research method themselves. Reflecting on their public humanities research work at the end of the semester, students discussed not only how their work with the CISDRC helped them think more deeply about ethical research, but also the importance of archival research issues such as reliability, privacy, and responsibility.

Describing her Black Feminist Archive, Irma McClaurin points out that archives, "even at their best … are imperfect reflections of an imperfect world. Inequities in whose writings are collected produce inequities in whose histories become known, and the failure of vision of one generation becomes failure for the next." Thus, in addition to providing historical context and relying on the CISDRC lesson plans, I also enlist others with more personal stakes: Namely, I rely on contemporary Indigenous voices—including memoirs such as Deborah Miranda's (Ohlone-Costanoan Esselen) *Bad Indians*—for insight and instruction. One of my favorite examples is Abigail Chabitnoy's (Aleut) poetry from *How to Dress a Fish*. Chabitnoy's poems function—as Natasha Tretheway states when describing her own poetry—at "the intersections of public and personal history, cultural and historical memory, amnesia and erasure" by examining her great-grandfather's experience and student records at Carlisle. Works such as these allow us to understand what archives can do—that is, simultaneously fill important gaps while creating others that allow room for further contemplation.

Leah Milne *teaches American and postcolonial literature at the University of Indianapolis. She is the author of* Novel Subjects: Authorship as Radical Self-Care in Multiethnic American Narratives *(University of Iowa Press, 2021). You can find her on Twitter @DrMLovesLit.*

Student Voices

(Left to right) Yessica Pineda, Lauren Rosenfeld, Juliana Zanubi, Sergio Godinez, Emerson Sherbourne and Laura Pachón joined six Faculty Fellows from across the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences and leaders from Chicago-area community organizations to create three interdisciplinary courses for HumanitiesX. Image courtesy of DePaul University/Jeff Carrion.

Student Fellows Share Learnings From DePaul's HumanitiesX Collaborative

By Sergio Godinez June 21, 2022

Each year at HumanitiesX (HX), DePaul University's experiential humanities collaborative, six student fellows work in partnership with a cohort of faculty and community fellows to design and deliver new interdisciplinary, project-based, community-engaged courses in the humanities. As one of the first students in this new role at DePaul, I'm here to report that although the work is daunting at times, student fellows can bring an invaluable perspective to initiatives like HumanitiesX.

Student fellows join the HumanitiesX fellowship cohort in the winter quarter after the three teams of HumanitiesX fellows—consisting of two faculty members and a community partner—have drafted a syllabus for their new course. Student fellows then work with the full cohort, reviewing course descriptions, syllabi, and assignments. Near the midpoint of that quarter, in pairs, we are assigned to and begin to work with one of the three courses. When the courses run in the spring, we assist both inside and outside the classroom wherever

needed. We help communicate the professors' expectations. We co-facilitate discussions, organize community outings, and help students as they develop their projects. In the summer, we put the finishing touches on student projects, and we reflect on all the work we accomplished.

In the spirit of sharing what we've learned as the first cohort of HX student fellows, I offer five ways that faculty and administrators can put student fellows to work in the service of public humanities programs and maximize our contributions as co-collaborators.

1. Create Open Forums for Constructive Feedback

Collaboration is at the core of what we do at HumanitiesX. Our faculty and community fellows seek to better understand student experiences in the 21st century, and our honest feedback is encouraged at every step of the process.

In the winter quarter, for example, us six student fellows reviewed the course descriptions of each of the three new courses before they were circulated to students during the course-registration period. Among our suggestions: let the students know what the community partner organization does and who they serve, make the course title more specific, let students know there is no prerequisite in video editing or art to take the course. We did the same thing with the draft syllabi, sharing our feedback in a group meeting with all the faculty and community partners.

As student fellows, we want to see our program succeed. Thus, when we notice areas of improvement, we enjoy having the opportunity to share our ideas. The creation of open forums for constructive feedback has allowed us to build a strong, communicative, and innovative collaborative fellowship program.

2. Develop Opportunities for Student Fellows To Pursue Their Passions

HX courses are organized around a different unifying theme each year. This year's theme has been Immigration and Migration. One of the reasons why our collaborative has been so successful in its inaugural year is because each of us carries a passion for this year's theme. We were selected specifically for our demonstrated interest in immigration and migration.

Laura Pachón, for instance, also serves as a student fellow and is a first-year grad student in DePaul's MA in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies program. Her passion for topics in immigration and migration stems from an earlier class experience. "I took a course on peace and conflict studies, and it opened my eyes to all the atrocities going on in the world," she said. "When I would speak to my friends and family about this and no one really knew what I was talking about, it made me start a campus organization inspired by Amnesty International to educate my peers and community." Laura brought that same commitment to HX.

Recognizing our sense of sincerity about the theme and the roles we were stepping into, our supervisors invited us to explore our individual interests. In the winter, for example, student fellows were invited to host "Fellows Fridays," one-hour meetings during which we could present to the full cohort about our interest in immigration and migration. I made a presentation to the group sampling how topics within immigration and migration are variously communicated through poetry, music, and art and how each medium uniquely resonated in relation to this year's theme.

Giving us choices was also important for cultivating our passions. Each student fellow rank-ordered the three HX courses we wanted to pair with in the spring and we were all matched with our first- or second-choice course.

Likewise, we all do work on behalf of the HumanitiesX initiative, but we could choose one of three areas to work on: Media and Outreach, Documentation and Storytelling, or Immigration Resources and Web Content. I've always wanted to gain experience in writing articles for publication, so I joined Media and Outreach. I have the creative space to write blog posts that simultaneously speak to my commitments and spread the work of the collaborative. My work for the Media and Outreach team is why you're reading this article here on *Humanities for All*.

3. Encourage Student Fellows To Identify and Develop Their Strengths

During our first few weeks in our fellowship, we were asked to identify our individual strengths and how they could be used to benefit the collaborative. One of the first group activities we did was to contribute to a group "User Manual" to share with the other student fellows and our supervisors how we each best worked. Having the opportunity to openly discuss our strengths, we made discoveries early on about how we each could uniquely support HumanitiesX.

Comfortable with public speaking and able to engage a diverse audience, I became a PR representative for the collaborative, speaking at events like DePaul's annual Service Speaks Conference to explain how we were pioneering how the humanities are taught in higher education. The student fellow that I'm paired with, Yessica Pineda, is an art minor with an interest in photography. She has been important to documenting our course with photographs.

Giving student fellows the opportunity to reflect on their strengths, and then to use and develop them, builds a sense of respect. It makes us excited to attend meetings, conferences, and community events as we can see our strengths make a difference in the collaborative.

4. Treat Your Student Fellows as Co-Collaborators

Entering the role of a student fellow can be intimidating. Working with faculty who are pioneers in their fields and community partners who are leaders in the Chicagoland area sometimes makes it difficult to imagine where we as students fit in.

Yet the six of us quickly realized that the faculty and community fellows wanted us to engage as equals. Being included in every aspect of the fellowship opened our eyes to how we can contribute to building new structures through which higher education can address problems of today and solutions of tomorrow.

Juliana Zanubi, a student fellow and junior majoring in International Studies, experienced this up close. "I see how teams built of different people with different areas of expertise and focus can come together and create something that will inspire others and improve our communities," she said. As a bilingual Spanish/English speaker, Juliana has been an essential collaborator in her team's course, which is working to gather oral histories of activists for immigrants' rights with Brighton Park Neighborhood Council.

5. Make Student Fellows Feel Part of Something Big

The culture of trust, understanding, and purpose between HumanitiesX fellows is reflected in each of the four pieces of advice I've mentioned above. The community we've created together both emerges from and contributes to our belief that the work we're doing will matter long after we've ended our fellowship. As student fellows, we know that we have contributed to a new model for teaching and learning at DePaul and that we have, even if only in a small way, helped to increase understanding about immigration and migration.

Juliana summed up this interconnection between trust, understanding, and purpose: "Getting immigrant stories out there gives me hope that people will be able to relate to their lives more and recognize that immigrants are people with feelings and unique stories."

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If you're thinking about including student fellows in your university-based public humanities program, we hope you'll find your way back to this article. For more information, please feel free to contact our faculty director Lisa Dush, our HX coordinator Deborah Siegel-Acevedo, or reach out to an HX student fellow.

P.S. In a few years, we'll all be looking for jobs. We have great experience. Look us up!

Sergio Godinez *is a 2021–22 Student Fellow with HumanitiesX at DePaul University.*

The 2022–2023 Engaged Humanities Network Undergraduate Research team in the Tolley Humanities Building on Syracuse University campus. From left to right: Aidaruus Shirwa, Katherine Miles, Lizmarie Monetmayor, Maggie Sardino, Sophie Stokoe, and Justo Antonio Triana. Image courtesy of Brice Nordquist.

Discovering My Passion for Public Arts & Humanities

By Maggie Sardino May 17, 2023

Syracuse University's Engaged Humanities Network (EHN) builds relationships of mutual support among faculty, students, staff, and community partners across the university, city, and region. Through creative work, curricular development, public programming, graduate research assistantships, and a team of undergraduate research assistants, EHN is embedded in projects across the City of Syracuse.

I came to the EHN as a sophomore through my studies in Citizenship and Civic Engagement—a unique major at SU which prepares students to participate in ethical community engagement. I was attracted to the EHN because of my commitment to place. As a lifetime resident of Syracuse, I am committed to strengthening the relationships between SU and surrounding communities.

When I began working as an EHN research assistant, its program structures did not exist, with the exception of the undergraduate research team and a committed group of faculty and staff mentors. We were clearly invested in ethical community engagement, but what our work would look like and what the EHN would be was still being developed. We knew that in order to maximize the impact of the engaged humanities, there needed to be space for undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, staff, and, importantly, community partners to have their perspectives heard and seriously considered. Over the past three years, the EHN has grown to include 28 associated projects involving over 250 faculty, students, and community partners from 25 different departments, 8 colleges, and 20 community-based organizations.

Being involved in the creation of the EHN instilled in me the belief that through publicly engaged research and community work I could create tangible institutional and social change. It created the infrastructure for me to pursue innovative, community centered projects.

What Can Engaged Humanities Research Look Like?

Through the EHN I have been introduced to an expansive range of engaged humanities research projects: from working on a youth storytelling project to conducting a nation-wide analysis of assessments of community engaged programming to directing a documentary on local housing redevelopments.

In the summers of 2020 and 2021, I was a research assistant with the Narratio Fellowship, an intensive storytelling and leadership program aimed at providing resettled refugee youth with the opportunities and tools to share their stories and creative works locally and on the world stage. I helped facilitate workshop sessions and served as the program's documentarian. This involved documenting the Fellows' experiences through photography, video, narrative-based observation and in-depth interviews. As a documentarian, I provided the program's organizers with a clearer picture of the Fellows' experiences during workshops and culminated in a public profile series on the Fellows. This experience introduced me to the importance of centering community members in the assessment of publicly engaged arts and humanities projects, especially when universities are involved.

During the summer of 2021, I became aware of an organization (Blueprint 15) which planned to raze several public housing complexes in Syracuse and replace them with mixed-income housing. On first listen, the plan sounded like a great opportunity for the city. As I investigated the outcomes of communities where similar plans were implemented, I became increasingly alarmed. While communities did experience economic growth, there were also less publicized harmful effects: the displacement of public housing residents and the disruption of public housing communities disproportionately inhabited by communities of color.

After discovering these less publicized outcomes and speaking with residents of Syracuse's public housing, I realized that I had an opportunity to use my storytelling skills to elevate the perspectives of residents and encourage Blueprint 15 to address the project's potential for community displacement. To help tell this story, I decided to create a documentary. The writing, directing and editing of the film posed many challenges. Throughout the documentary's creation, I had to teach myself how to construct a film's arc, gather b-roll, record interviews and edit video. It also required me to disrupt departmental silos. I collaborated closely with architecture professors and professional architects, who helped me to understand how design and structural integrity impacted discussions around public housing. I consulted public policy analysts who provided key insights to the technical dimensions of mixed-income housing and public-private partnerships. I also sought advice from writing professors on the narrative arc of the documentary.

Through the documentary project I was also navigating the larger environment that the university exists within. Current and former public housing residents served as both interviewees and my most important advisors. Getting to this point, where residents were active collaborators, was not immediate. Most undergraduate students doing engaged humanities research are forced to confront the historic and contemporary tensions between universities and their surrounding communities. My research did not begin when I started conducting interviews; it started with informal conversations and relationship building with community members.

Ultimately, I produced *A Blueprint for Re-Renewal* which presents stories from residents of their experiences living in public housing and explores current plans to replace the complex with mixed-income housing. I organized the first screening and panel discussion for the film. I created media toolkits, invited journalists and collaborated with eight community-based organizations to publicize the event.

Over fifty people attended the first screening. During the open panel discussion, attendees shared a range of responses: polished political statements, impassioned demands, genuine inquiries, and scathing critiques. Current and former residents voiced frustration with the lack of representation during the planning stages of the redevelopment and called for proper support for residents to participate in community meeting. David Rufus, a former resident of Pioneer Homes and member of the New York Civil Liberties Union, said, "One thing that is critically important is that people have the ability to express their concerns and opinions without any concern. Residents in public housing have so many issues to deal with. Shelter, rent, heating, keeping their families safe and keeping the community safe and sanitized."

The problems *A Blueprint For Re-Renewal* exposed and the panel discussion I arranged were covered by local news outlets. Blueprint 15 acted to address some concerns, including inviting a member of the refugee community to join their outreach committee and becoming more transparent by releasing detailed maps and providing descriptions of who would own and operate the buildings. Plans for transforming the public housing site are still moving forward, but centering resident voices through the documentary led to more accountability and greater input from a range of stakeholders.

Charting My Own Path Forward

As I continued to work within public storytelling projects, I became certain that this was the work I am meant to do. Once I realized I wanted to pursue publicly engaged humanities as a future career, it was a matter of navigating how to carve this path out. In my junior year, I began to seek out opportunities to expand my understanding of community-based research. During fall 2021, I applied for a Canada Fulbright MITACS Globalink scholarship to conduct research at the Electronic Textual Cultures Lab (ETCL) at the University of Victoria, Canada over the summer.

In December 2022, I received news that I had been awarded the scholarship and would conduct research at the ETCL. That summer was a life changing experience and opened my eyes to the connections between digital humanities and engaged humanities research. During that time, I conducted research on knowledge diversity and market consolidation in the academic publishing industry. I also helped to organize the Digital Humanities Summer Institute (DHSI), a gathering of hundreds of scholars to share cutting-edge digital humanities work. During the Institute, I took a course on social knowledge creation which explored Wikimedia and digital knowledge commons.

While working on my application for the Marshall Scholarship (which fully funds young citizens of the United States to study in the United Kingdom at the graduate level), I began to visualize my path forward. I realized that completing a master's degree in digital humanities would provide the training in digital storytelling, data visualization and open access publishing that I would need to develop innovative community-based storytelling projects. The applied anthropology and community arts master's program at Goldsmiths, University of London, will enable me to gain skills and experience with community-based research methods.

This past winter, I received news that I was one of forty students from across the United States chosen to be a Marshall Scholar, enabling me to continue my path towards publicly engaged humanities work.

Having the support of the EHN has been instrumental in helping me discover potential collaborators, teaching me skills to create interdisciplinary and boundary spanning engaged humanities projects and providing me with models of what this work can look like. The EHN introduced me to the power of public humanities and has been instrumental in choosing to pursue community-based storytelling as a future career path.

Maggie Sardino *is a recent graduate of Syracuse University with degrees in writing & rhetoric and citizenship & civic engagement. She is invested in empowering and transforming communities through innovative storytelling. As a Marshall Scholar, Maggie will be pursuing her master's in digital humanities at King's College London in the fall.*

A Public Humanities Bibliography

This annotated bibliography of secondary source texts related to the public humanities in higher ed includes various types of sources, including books, individual chapters, journal and magazine articles, newspaper opinion pieces, higher education reports, videos, and personal blogs. Almost all sources include a URL for an online location where the material can be accessed using an institutional login, or, in the case of many of the books, a location where the text can be purchased. It is divided into four sections:

Defining the Field

These resources provide an overview of the public humanities as a field within the humanities. Topics covered include definitions and methodologies for carrying out public humanities research and programming.

Higher Ed Institutions and the Public Humanities

Topics in this section include trends in higher education, examination of university involvement in community engagement and public humanities work, and exploration of current roles that graduate students and college faculty play in the public humanities.

Public Humanities Infrastructure

These resources offer insight into building higher education-based infrastructure that supports the public humanities. Whereas the resources under the Higher Ed Institutions and the Public Humanities subheading concentrate on the current state of the field, these texts focus more on change-making toward a public humanities landscape that better serves the students and communities with which it interfaces.

Public Humanities in Practice

This section includes case studies of community-based public humanities projects and an exploration of the methodologies that are commonly used.

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