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INSIGHTS: NOTES FROM THE CCWH



CO-PRESIDENT'S COLUMN: ROSALYN TERBORG-PENN'S AFRICAN FEMINIST THEORY AND PRACTICE[1]

BY SASHA TURNER

"Hello Sasha, Reviewed the symposium program online today and saw you will be presenting also. I will see you there." A few emails and conference meet ups later, I had learned about several organizations for black women historians and scholars of the black experience, the crucial work they do, and why it was important for me to become a part of these communities. Out of the blue, Rosalyn Terborg-Penn had emailed, befriended, and given me lifesaving directions for navigating the American academy as a black, immigrant, and Caribbean woman studying black history.

It was not coincidental that Rosalyn had reached out to me. What seemed like



an out of the blue email was in fact a cosmic dance of intentions fulfilled. Rosalyn had known of me through the Association of Caribbean Historians (ACH) a few months prior to emailing me about my participation in the feminism and womanism symposium at Purdue University. I was scheduled to participate in an ACH panel which she chaired, but due to visa complications, I had to cancel my participation in the 2009 Guadeloupe conference. Rosalyn understood almost immediately my outsider status; she had lived it and theorized about it.

The Caribbean and South American Diaspora in the

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United States experience isolation, Terborg-Penn explained, because cultural and identity differences bar immediate integration into black communities. "But after years of experiencing social and economic proscription based upon race [migrants] will begin to identify with blacks because of [their] need for a survival network" [2]. Migrants' experience of threats to their survival and the fragmentation of social life thrust them more directly into the legacies of American slavery. Although migrants face similar struggles in their countries of origin, independence mask the "social, sexual, and racial inequalities perpetrated by colonialism" [3]. Black rule and black majority in the Caribbean and Latin America, and, indeed Africa, falsely imply post racist societies. But the economic and social structures of colonialism remain intact and these regions' dependence on their former colonizers replicate the inequalities and prejudices of colonial rule. Then, as now, the existential threat racism pose to Africa and its Diaspora demands survival and liberation struggles. Then, as now, the existential threat racism pose to Africa and its Diaspora demands survival and liberation struggles. Then, as now, the possibility

survival and liberation depends on female networks strengthened by common values.

From the use of research as a "tool of domination" [4], to the outright rejection of black scholars and black history, Terborg-Penn further understood how the academy replicated racism and broader social inequalities. Would-be-dissertation advisers, publishers, and colleagues, for example, thought her interest in studying black women's history futile. She recalled, "The professor for whom I worked as a graduate assistant at Howard called my topic "Micky Mouse" and suggested that I study something more serious, such as Eleanor Roosevelt" [5].

From her acute understanding of the struggles to come, Rosalyn volunteered herself as my mentor. Participating in networks, she impressed, would be critical to my survival. Crucial among these organizations were the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) and Association of Black Women Historians (ABWH). The sisterhood and community these networks provided made apparent their importance for me personally

and professionally; but it would take me years later to understand their ancestral significance and why Rosalyn was so keen that I joined the ABWH in particular. The guiding principles for Rosalyn's being and her scholarship were those of African Feminism; and through her co-founding and life-long work with the ABWH, Rosalyn aligned academic theory with praxis.

Terborg-Penn's essay, "Through an African Feminist Theoretical Lens: Viewing Caribbean Women's History Cross-culturally" is among her most influential work for my intellectual journey. I returned to the article while writing my book as a way of thinking through and beyond gynecological resistance. The concept gynecological resistance comes from the work of several scholars, not limited to Darlene Clark Hine and Kate Wittensten, Deborah Gray White, Hilary Beckles, Barbara Bush, and Verene Shepherd who argue that the nature and peculiarities of women's enslavement, that differed from enslaved men's, gave rise to unique forms of women's resistance. In this body of work, enslaved women orchestrated and carried out specialized types of resistance, including abortion, infanticide, sexual abstinence, and contraceptive use to resist sexual exploitation. Gendered resistance then was

not restricted to women's roles in revolts and rebellion, generally understood as male led and dominated. Crucially, by refusing to bear and raise children under enslavement, women reclaimed autonomy over their bodies and denied the commodified claims enslavers made on their reproductive ability.

Coinciding with significant scholarship challenging the idea that slavery obliterated memories of an African past, scholars of enslaved women similarly argued that enslaved people's former lives informed their resistance to slavery. Lucille Mathurin Mair, for example, illustrated that Caribbean enslaved women's use of particular herbs and mechanical means for inducing miscarriage originated from African sources. African cosmologies concerning the spirit, body, and human form of newborns further permitted infanticide.

Terborg-Penn's work confirms the crucial importance of looking not only at the transmission and transformation of African cultural values; but significantly, their gendering as well. African women's cultural values, including motherhood and female communal networks, informed

enslaved people's resistance, though not consistently in ways historians presume. Among Terborg-Penn's most significant contribution to Caribbean gender history, and in particular my own thinking, is her insistence that we write histories of women and the enslaved from "inside out" rather than "outside in" [6].

Reflecting on her 1983 University of Stanford Conference presentation, Terborg-Penn offers critical insight into what it means to examine the lives of enslaved women 'inside out.' In a white male led castigation of her presentation, conference participants challenged her selection of Queen Ann Nzinga (Angola), Grandy Nanny (Jamaica), and Harriet "Moses" Tubman as heroines. These women, discussants denounced, were far from honorable. After all, they insisted, Nzinga was a slave trader and Nanny returned runaway slaves to their masters after signing a peace treaty with British colonists. The controversy ended only after St. Claire Drake, also a pioneering scholar of the black experience, affirmed Terborg-Penn's argument. These women were heroines not by Terborg-Penn's rubric; these women were "selected by their own people." Our work is to understand "their status as heroines in the context of their own culture" [7].

In my own recent book, I examine childbirth culture as it evolved from the needs of enslaved women. Although enslaved women's birth cultures resisted slavery, in the context of enslaved women's daily life, birth rituals were meant first and foremost to assure parturient women of safe deliveries and secure the health and survival of infants. Enslaved women, for example, served as co-mothers, collectively responding to the difficulties of breastfeeding by nursing each other's children. Performing ritual baths during pregnancy and before and after delivery, caregivers harnessed spiritual power to protect mothers and children.

The social relationships and cultural practices that developed around providing for the needs of enslaved mothers and infants challenge the idea of enslaved people existing solely for the purposes of building the wealth of their captors; they resisted social death. Through childbirth and its associated customs, enslaved women created intimacy, kinship, and culture that affirmed life. To think of maternal care in terms of female networks, co-mothering, and social connections make the concept

gynecological resistance, though important, inadequate to capture the complex lives enslaved people lived.

Enslaved women resisted slavery by limiting their fertility. Yet, to focus on the destruction of the master's property as the primary mode of a woman-centered resistance is to view enslaved people through a "white filter": the action of Africans and their descendants solely responded to "white stimuli" [8]. Facing nearly certain physical and social death, the fight for survival is always political. The paradox of slavery is that the very survival of an enslaved person was a boon to their enslaver. In the case of childbirth, bearing children benefited enslavers; but it also reaffirmed women's values and was a vital source for building their own communities.

Childbirth was a dynamic space in which enslaved women negotiated communal reliance, gendered intimacies, and developed social bonds. Enslaved women created a network of support that depended on shared values, concerns, and beliefs and was sustained by the common

desire to keep children healthy and alive. As the anthropologists and an influential thinker for Terborg-Penn, Filomina Steady explained it, African-descended women's liberation extends beyond sexual oppression. Through multiple mothering, female networks, and the survival of children, African women and their descendants sought protection and liberation from a host of factors, including the deadly forces of colonialism and enslavement and their variants.

Terborg-Penn's theoretical insight comes full circle. Female networks were as valuable and vital to enslaved women's survival as they are to black women thriving in the academy. Rosalyn understood historically and firsthand the struggles of being black, woman, and immigrant in America and the academy. By first reaching out to me, and second encouraging survival through female networks, including the ABWH, Rosalyn lived her theory as praxis and paid it forward.

[1] Sasha Turner, "Rosalyn Terborg-Penn's African Feminist Theory and Praxis," *Black Perspectives*, October 21, 2019

<https://www.aaihs.org/rosalyn-terborg-penns-african-feminist-theory-and-praxis/>.

[2] Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, "Migration and Trans-Racial/National Identity Re-Formation: Becoming African Diaspora Women," *Black Women, Gender and Families* 5, no. 2 (2011): 4-24.

[3] Filomina Steady, "African Feminism: A Theoretical Approach to the History of Women in the African Diaspora" in *Women in Africa and the African Diaspora: A Reader* edited by Rosalyn Terborg-Penn and Andrea Benton Rushing 3-22 (Washington D.C. Howard University Press, 1996), p. 9, 10.

[4] *Ibid*, p. 4.

[5] Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *Being and Thinking Outside the Box: A Black Woman's Experience in Academia*, in Deborah Gray White ed. *Telling Histories: Black Women Historians in the Ivory Tower*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014), p.77.

[6] Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, "From Myth to History," *The Women's Review of Books* 8, np. 1 (1990): 8-9.

[7] Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, "Through an African Feminist Theoretical Lens: Viewing Caribbean Women's History Cross-Culturally," in Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton, and Barbara Bailey, eds. *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspectives*, (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1995), p.5.

[8] Okom Edt Uya, "The Mind of Slaves as Revealed in their Songs: An Interpretive Essay," *A Current Bibliography on African Affairs* 5, no. 1 (1972): p. 3-11.

NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BY SANDRA TRUDGEN DAWSON

Dear CCWH Members, This is my final newsletter column as Executive Director of the CCWH. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as the CCWH for the past ten years. It has been ten years of personal growth and, I believe, growth of the CCWH. Our programs and our awards have expanded, and we have an endowment account that is starting to grow. I will be standing down in January but plan to remain very much involved in the organization!

January will be a time of change for the CCWH. Ilaria Scaglia is stepping down as Membership Coordinator and Einav Rabinovitch-Fox will take her place. On behalf of the Executive Board of the CCWH, I would like to say a huge THANK-YOU to Ilaria for her service and to Einav for taking up the baton!

I also would like to take this opportunity to say thank-you to two very important people—Barbara Molony and Sasha Turner. These two women have worked continuously on behalf of the CCWH as well as some of our affiliates. As well as providing leadership and guidance to the Executive Board, each also write very thoughtful and insightful columns for the

newsletter each year. I will miss working with you both. Thank you for all your support and for your service to the CCWH!

Barbara is stepping down after four years as Co-president while Sasha will continue for another year. Thank you both so much!

Other unsung “sheroes” of the CCWH include Pam Stewart who serves as Treasurer; Whitney Leeson who serves as book review editor; Amy Essington who continuously updates the website; Julie de Chantal who works to co-ordinate with CCWH affiliates; Elyssa Ford our Public History coordinator; Tiffany Gonzales and Beth Ann Williams, graduate student coordinators; Nupur Chaudhuri, CCWH historian and fundraising chair; Jennifer Spear, Gold Award Chair; Michelle Marchetti Coughlin, CCWH/Berks Award Chair; Nicole Pacino, Chaudhuri Best First Article Award; Stephanie McBride, Prelinger Award Chair; Reena Goldthree, Chair of the Ida B. Wells Award; and Katherine Skrabanek and Isobel Singer, our Twitter and Social Media Coordinators. Thank you all, as well as the



other committee members, for your service to the CCWH!! I would also like to welcome the CCWH’s new Newsletter Coordinator—Jacqueline Allain. Welcome aboard! Please read more about Jacqueline later in the newsletter.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you for your support, your service, your scholarship and your activism. The CCWH is only as strong as its membership and you are mighty!!

In Sisterhood,

Sandra

2019 CCWH AWARDS

We are thrilled to announce the winners of the 2019 CCWH Awards! The Awards will be given at the Annual CCWH Awards Luncheon, New York Hilton, Saturday 4 January 2020.2019

209 CATHERINE PRELINGER AWARD

Dr. Jessica Waggoner, Book Manuscript project, *Crip Activisms: Race, Gender, and the Roots of Disability Consciousness, 1900-1950.*

2019 GOLD AWARD

LaShawn Harris, “Beyond the Shooting: Eleanor Gray

Bumpurs, Identity Erasure, and Family Activism against Police Violence,” *Souls* (2018).

Honorable Mention

Wendy Warren, “‘Thrown Upon the World’: Devaluing Children in the Eighteenth-Century North American Slave Market,” *Slavery & Abolition* (December, 2018).

2019 CHAUDHURI AWARD

Lauren Duval, “Mastering Charleston: Property and Patriarchy in British-Occupied Charleston, 1780–82,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* (2018).

Honorable Mention

Adriana Chira, “Affective Debts: Manumission by Grace and the Making of Gradual Emancipation Laws in Cuba, 1820s-1860s,” *Law and History* (2018).

2019 IDA. B. WELLS GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWSHIP

Kerry Marjorie Knerr, (U Texas) Diss. “Troubling Paradise: Tiki Bars and American Imperial Imaginaries.”

Honorable Mention

Shelby Pumphrey (Michigan State University), “Finding Asylum: Race, Gender, and Confinement in Virginia, 1880-1930”

2019 CCWH/BERKS GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWSHIP

Maria Esther Hammack, Diss. “South of Slavery: Enslaved and Free Black Movement across a Global Frontier, Mexico, the United States, and Beyond, 1790-1868.”

2019 RACHEL FUCHS MENTORSHIP AWARD

Barbara Molony, Santa Clara University and Ilaria Scaglia, Aston University, UK.

NOMINEES FOR ELECTED EXECUTIVE BOARD POSITIONS

This is an election year for two new CCWH officers—Co-president and Executive Director. Please read the Candidate statements and send your votes or alternative nominations to Sandra Trudgen Dawson at execdir@theccwh.org by 20 December 2019.

CRYSTAL FEIMSTER, CANDIDATE STATEMENT, CO-PRESIDENT 2020-2023

I am honored to accept the nomination to serve as Co-President of the Coordinating Council for Women in History (CCWH). Over twenty-years have passed since I first joined CCWH as graduate student. In 1996, Judith Bennet invited me to join

the board as one of the graduate representatives. For three years, I served under the leadership of Co-Presidents Nupur Chaudhuri, Peggy Pascoe, and June Hahner and Executive Director Marguerite Renner. During two of my three years, I worked with former Co-President Mary Ann Villarreal, who was also serving as a graduate representative at the time. Our duties as graduate representatives including writing essays for the newsletter, setting up and maintaining a space for graduate students at the AHA, and attending the annual board meeting and the CCWH luncheon. More importantly, it was an opportunity for me to work with and learn from women historians committed to improving the status of women in the historical profession and to promoting scholarship in the field of women and gender history.

As a young graduate student, I benefited from the feminist mentoring of CCWH board members and gained knowledge of the inner workings of the AHA and the historical profession in general. But for the most part, I learned the value of feminist collaboration and academic activism. Indeed, I was fortunate to work with faculty and graduate students (affiliated with various institutions including community colleges,

state universities, ivy league colleges, historically black college), public school teachers, independent scholars, archivists, public historians, museum professionals, and preservationists committed to advocating for women in all areas of the historical profession and to supporting the field of women's history.

CCWH, like the field of women's history, has a long and deep connection to feminist politics. Indeed, CCWH is the product of the dynamic relationship between women's history and feminist activism. Organized in 1969 as the Coordinating Committee of Women Historians in the Profession (CCWHP), the group set out "to recruit women into the historical profession, to alleviate discrimination against women students and faculty, to secure greater inclusion of women in annual meetings and the committees of the AHA, and to encourage the research in and teaching of women's history."ⁱ In 1995, CCWHP merged with the Conference Group on Women's History (CGWH) to become the CCWH that we know today. As an organization committed to promoting new scholarship in women's history and pushing for radical changes in the historical profession, CCWH continues to insist that women historians and scholars of women's and gender history matter.

The lessons I learned almost twenty-five-years ago as a CCWH graduate representative have influenced my scholarship and informed my service within the profession. As a scholar of 19th and 20th century America, specializing in African-American history, U.S. women's history and the American South, my research examines the links between racial and sexual violence, explores how the intersection of race and gender shapes both black and white lives, and insists on the political urgency of unraveling the race, class, and gender subtexts not only of the past but of current events as well. My book, *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching* (Harvard University Press, 2009) was an intellectual and political response to Anita Hill's 1991 testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee that Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas had sexually harassed her. A history of how women in the US South were affected by, and responded to, the problems of rape and lynching in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it introduces the experiences and ideas of a diverse range of women, black and white, from sharecroppers, washerwomen, and cooks to social reformers, suffragists, educators, journalists,

politicians, and artists. In the earliest stages of the project, when it was barely a dissertation, CCWH supported my research with Ida B. Wells Graduate Student Fellowship.

Understanding the history of racial and sexual violence and the diverse ways in which women have organized for social justice has informed not only my research and teaching, but also my political and professional commitments. For example, in 2014, I organized the "Ferguson and Beyond Teach-in: Race, Policing, and Social Justice" hosted by the Department of African American Studies and the Yale College Dean's Office. It was a university wide event that brought together faculty, staff, students, and members of the New Haven Community. I have worked with New Haven Arts and Idea Festival on various project that address race, gender and social justice in New Haven. I especially enjoyed working with New Haven high school students on the "New Haven Town Hall: Justice, Civility, and Active Citizenship." Moreover, I have worked with New Haven public school teacher to develop curriculums that take seriously the intersecting histories of women and people of color. At Yale, I have remained committed to training and mentoring graduate students in the field of women's history. Beyond New Haven and Yale, I continue to

make contributions to a host of professional organizations, from the Organization of the American Historians to the Southern Historical Association, the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians, the Association of Black Women Historians, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the Southern Association for Women Historians. In chairing various book and article prize committees, serving on program and diversity committees, and executive boards, I have sought to promote women's history and to address the particular concerns of women historians.

CCWH has always believed that women historians, especially those in the fields of women's and gender history, have a central role to play, not only, in the profession, but also in feminist struggles that turn so centrally on understanding the legacy of the past. Looking back over the last 50 years, CCWH has accomplished much of what it initially set out to do. In a recent article celebrating the 50th anniversary of the CCWH, current co-presidents Sasha Turner and Barbara Molony, and Executive Director Sandra Trudgen Dawson reflected on the history of CCWH and mapped new directions forward. Making clear that CCWH's work has implications that reach far beyond the walls of the academy, they wrote, "Academic issues of sexual harassment and

assault; the absence and insufficiency of maternity leave; and inequality in the pay gap, administrative work, hiring, promotion, and tenure reflect the #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo movements, as well as the struggles for reproductive justice and the rights of workers, children, LGBTQI people, Muslims, immigrants, and incarcerated people." Faced with such issues and many more--ranging from the increasing number of women in low-paid, part-time adjunct positions to attacks on academic freedom and the cutting of funds to the humanities-- CCWH has much work to do.

I would be honored to join Co-President Sasha Turner in leading CCWH in its continued effort to improve the status of women in the historical profession and to promote the fields of women and gender history. The challenges we face are many, but I have no doubt that CCWH with a diverse and active membership working in collaboration with our affiliate organizations is fully prepared to meet the challenge.

ELIZABETH EVERTON,
CANDIDATE STATEMENT,
CCWH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
2020-2023

Please accept this statement in support of my candidacy for the position of Executive Director of the Coordinating Council for Women in History. I am a longstanding member of the CCWH and have held several positions within the organization. I am a historian of modern France, with a focus on women and gender in far right-wing politics. Specifically, my work illuminates women's activity in right-wing spaces, narratives of gender in the press and other media and cultural objects, and, more broadly, the ways in which discourses and constructions of gender were shaped and reshaped in response to the explosive events of the Dreyfus Affair (1894-1906), a period of political turmoil following the wrongful conviction of a Jewish officer in the French army for treason.

Clubs, newspapers, and other spaces of the ultra-right have traditionally been presented as socially conservative, populated by men and hostile towards deviations from traditional gender roles. My dissertation, completed in 2011 as part of my doctorate from UCLA, explored the ways in which women existed within these spaces, as members of clubs,

as contributors to political action, as participants in the “Affair” itself, and, overall, as full members in the white French ethno-state imagined by nationalist, anti-Semitic, and other radical right-wing groups. Women’s roles were different from those of men, but they were nonetheless integral to the movement, and their presence not only as passive supporters but as militants solicited to combat what was perceived as an existential crisis. My current research springboards off this work, teasing out what I think of as the embodied Right, a political coalition marked by hyper-focus on bodies: as objects of disgust or desire, as sites of suffering, and as living microcosms of the ethno-state.

My involvement with the CCWH started when I was in the process of writing my dissertation. I was familiar with the organization and its mission, but I had little thought of becoming involved with it or any professional group—I was at that time thoroughly mired in the minutia of French political life in the late 1890s. One day, I received an email from Rachel Fuchs, who had just become co-president, asking me if I would be interested in serving on the CCWH/Berks Graduate Student Award Committee. If Rachel felt I should join, I knew I should join,

so join I did. In the past six years, I have served on the CCWH/Berks Award committee, the Nupur Chaudhuri First Article Prize Committee, and the Executive Board. Since that day in 2013, the CCWH has been an important and meaningful part of my life. Even as my professional career has taken me in unexpected places, the CCWH has been a constant site of inspiration and support, and I hope to give back to the organization as it has given so much to me.

The stated goals of the CCWH are “to broaden both the organization of women historians and the study of women’s history to represent as full as possible the diversity of women in the United States and internationally...to research and publicize information on the professional status of women, to represent the interests of women in all areas of the historical profession, and to strengthen ties between permanent and adjunct faculty, graduate students, secondary and elementary teachers and students, public historians, and the general public.” As an independent scholar and contingent faculty member, these goals are particularly resonant for me. From 2012 to 2015, I worked full time as adjunct faculty at three different

colleges. Since 2016, I have worked outside the academy while continuing my work as a historian. These experiences give me insight into how our profession as historians is changing. I believe the CCWH is well positioned to lead the way for other professional organizations looking to navigate in uncertain waters. The CCWH’s numerous grants and awards, mentoring program, resources, initiatives and achievements, and overall commitment to “supporting women’s history and all women in the historical profession” set it apart. As Executive Director, I would work to maintain what the organization has achieved over its fifty years and support it as it moves into the next fifty.

CCWH SESSIONS AT THE AHA, NEW YORK 2020

FRIDAY, JANUARY 3, 2020

1:30 PM-3:00 PM--Gendered Mobilities and Colonial Intimacies: Histories of Migration and Settlement in the Age of Empire

1:30pm-3.00pm—CCWH Annual Business meeting

3:30 PM-5:00 PM-- Revisiting
Trafficking Narratives and
Sexual Danger in 20th Century
Europe and the Americas

6:00 PM-8:00 PM—CCWH
RECEPTION AND BOOK RAFFLE
CO-SPONSORED BY THE BERKS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 2020

8:30 AM-10:00 AM—Gendered
Bodies in Time of Revolution:
Representation and Reality in
Comparative Contexts

10:30 AM-12:00 PM—Surviving
and Thriving: Inclusive,
Meaningful Mentorship for
Women Across the Profession

12:00 PM-1:15 PM—CCWH
Annual Awards Luncheon

1:30 PM-3:00 PM—Aging as a
category of Experience:
Scholarship and Activism

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2020

8:30 AM-10:00 AM—Queering
Suffrage: Towards an
Intersectional History of
Women's Suffrage

10:30 AM-12:00 PM—What
History Loses When Contingent
Labor becomes the Norm

1:30 PM-3:00 PM-- More Than
One Path: Maneuvering the
Demands of the Academy and
De-stigmatizing Career Diversity

3:30 PM-5:00 PM—What Money
is Doing to Academia and What
We Can Do About It

MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2020

9:00 AM-10:30 AM—After
Suffrage: Representing the
Impact of a Movement

11:00 AM-12:30 PM—Disability,
Gender, and the Great
Depression in the United States



PUBLIC HISTORY COLUMN

BY ELYSSA FORD

Among the many current undertakings of the National Council on Public History, one of the largest is the endowment campaign. In 2018, the organization launched a three-year campaign running through 2020 to raise \$250,000. This amount will bring the NCPH endowment to \$1 million and will help secure the organization's financial viability moving into the future.

The endowment fund is used by the NCPH to provide services to the public history profession and to its members. Conference travel support to new professionals and international participants, an initiative to increase racial and ethnic diversity in the public history field, and workshops for practitioners in the field are a few ways that the endowment fund supports the NCPH membership.

In addition to these opportunities, the fund is vital to the organization's institutional viability. One of the primary goals of this campaign is to increase the NCPH's fiscal independence. We aim to fund two full-time positions without salary support from the NCPH's institutional host. This desire has become a necessity as university budgets are tightened and programs in the humanities see declining enrollment and, thus, more limited funding largesse.

The endowment campaign comes at a seminal moment in NCPH history. The campaign culminates in 2020, the 40th anniversary of the organization. To quote the NCPH, "Ours is an ambitious agenda, but then NCPH has been an ambitious organization since its creation in 1980. For three decades NCPH has been dedicated to helping history practitioners engage with the

public to create better histories, encourage widespread appreciation for the past, and foster greater historical understanding. Our work as public historians is as important as ever in making sense of events shaping the world today. We are counting on you to show your appreciation for all that public history is and what the NCPH does for our profession and our community. With your help we will continue to build NCPH's ability to offer leadership in what remains an exciting and expanding field."

To donate now, go to <https://ncph.org/giving/endowment/>. It is possible to make a one-time gift or a three year pledge. Donations can be made online, via check, and even a recurring donation through your bank. Help the NCPH build a brighter future by making your pledge today!

Information and language from the NCPH endowment campaign program (<https://ncph.org/giving/endowment/>) was used in writing this column.

GRADUATE STUDENT COLUMN: UTILIZING TECHNOLOGIES OF POWER IN THE PUBLIC

BY TIFFANY JASMIN GONZÁLEZ



Last year, I worked as the Public Historian for the City of College Station on a part-time basis. Within this role, I maintained the upkeep of the city's online archive, Project HOLD. The online archive is home to over 1,000 documents: newspaper clippings, photographs, yearbooks, government documents, and local memorabilia. I also liaised the city's Historic Marker Program. In the last year, close to 10 residents have applied and received a historic marker, which in turn allows for public recognition of a home or building in the city.

While liaising the Historic Marker Program, I came to understand the real value of why it is vital to make sure structures receive public recognition, especially those from underrepresented groups in society. In College Station, we are experiencing massive growth due to the university's push for enrollment, more people moving in or back, and more

businesses opening up in the area. However, the downside of this growth relates to the preservation of older homes with historic significance. For example, a well-known and respected African American residents in College Station have resisted against the tearing down of old houses in their neighborhood. Their resistance is tied to maintaining the integrity of the neighborhood, as well as the embodiment of African American contributions to College Station. In other words, the residents are fighting against the erasure of their history.

In my journey of learning the ropes of public history, I have gained first-hand experience but also gained a deeper appreciation for the external value our work makes to the public. We have to use our technologies of power, as I reference, to bring greater awareness about social justice to influence the public's knowledge about what is going on in society. Historic markers are just one example of the technologies of power we hold in the craft.

I urge those reading this column to reflect and think about what technologies of power you have, and to use them for a greater good.

MEMBER NEWS

Barbara Keys is moving from the University of Melbourne to take up a chair in U.S. and Transnational History at Durham University. Her edited volume, *The Ideals of Global Sport: From Peace to Human Rights*, appeared with Penn Press in 2019. She served as President of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations in 2019.

Jacquelyn Dowd Hall's new book, *Sisters and Rebels: A Struggle for the Soul of America*, was published by W. W. Norton in spring 2019. Jacqueline is Julia Cherry Spruill Professor Emerita of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

In Memoriam

We remember "HERstory" and mourn the passing of Cokie Roberts, Pioneering political journalist, author, Founding Mother of NPR and Maryland Women's Heritage Center Honorary Board member. We are thinking of Cokie's family and the contributions she made as a role model for so many. <https://www.npr.org/2019/09/17/761050916/cokie-roberts-pioneering-female-journalist-who-helped-shape-npr-dies-at-75>Other News.

The latest issue of *Feminist Periodicals* (volume 39, number 3, Summer 2019) is now available.

Ellen Spears celebrates the publication of her book *Rethinking the American Environmental Movement post-1945*, which is available from Routledge/Taylor&Francis



CALL FOR PAPERS

The 113th Annual Meeting of the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association

“The Past is Always Present”

August 6-8, 2020

Portland State University,
Portland, Oregon

The 2020 Program Committee invites proposals for panels, roundtables, and individual papers on any subject, but particularly welcomes proposals that address the conference theme: The Past is Always Present. 2020 plausibly stands as a year of historically resonant events, locally, nationally, and globally.

Today, as debates regarding truth and authenticity churn at dinner tables, in classrooms, and clatter through the echo chambers of news and social media, historical understanding and analysis is more important than ever to navigating conflicts over immigration, equality, racial justice, democratic institutions, and war and peace. The 2020 PCB-AHA conference encourages participants to think about and discuss how historical knowledge and interpretation—of the distant as well as immediate past—advances professional scholarship and simultaneously shapes public understanding of the world. In the same vein, the program committee encourages participants to explore the trajectory of change and challenge within the profession of history—the imperative of diversity, broadening career paths, obligations and responsibilities of teachers and mentors, and emerging historiographical themes.

continued on p. 22

BOOK REVIEWS

A Girl Stands at the Door: The Generation of Young Women who Desegregated

America's Schools.

Devlin, Rachel. New York: Basic Books, 2018/ 342 pp. \$32.00. ISBN 978-1-5416-9733-1

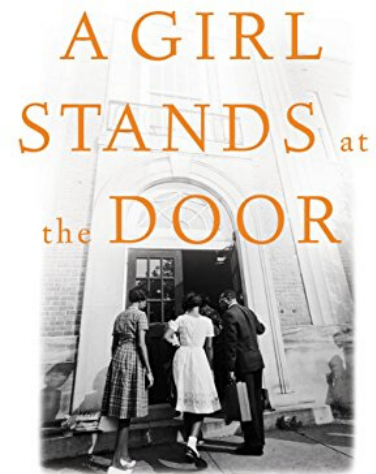
By Marguerite (Peggy) Renner, Glendale College

A Girl Stands at the Door: the Generation of Young Women Who Desegregated America's Schools adds an exciting chapter to the history of the roles that women played in the Civil Rights movement of the mid-twentieth century. Rachel Devlin begins her account with Lucile Bluford's crusade (1939), to gain admission to the University of Missouri graduate program in journalism. Hoping to use *Gaines v Canada*, the 1938 Supreme Court decision which prohibited racial discrimination in higher education, Bluford applied eleven times over eleven years to gain admission to the University of Missouri. Her credentials included managing editor of the *Kansas City Call*. She was qualified for admission, but as an African American she was rejected.

Her repeated efforts led the University to close its prestigious school of journalism rather than admit her. The Bluford case reveals that early desegregation efforts focused on higher education and began in the 1930s, earlier than many civil rights histories report.

In the early 1940s focus shifted to the elementary schools. These cases included the efforts of Ada Lois Siquel, Marguerite Daisy, Karla Galarza, Constance Carter, Justine Bishop, Vivian Alpha Brown, Doris Faye, Ester Brown, Deborah Gray White, Dorothea Davis, and other young women and girls to desegregate America's public schools. Yes, a few young men challenged the apartheid system in the public schools, but the majority of the activists were young women.

From their struggles we learn of the cultural dynamics of their efforts. Family support was strong for these young women. Fathers and mothers were not content to see their children's learning opportunities limited by the *Plessy v Ferguson* decision (1896) which had promised but never provided "separate but equal" education to



America's African American youth. Some fathers lost their jobs. James Carr, in 1947, for example, a physical plant manager at the Pentagon, and everyone on his crew, along with teachers and members of the PTA were fired when he challenged the segregated schools in Washington, D.C. Devlin reports that Carr says he was "retired" not "fired," the action taken by Harry S. Truman. Most parents were not so fortunate. Many were harassed incessantly by members of the communities, school boards, and others. While some families had community and church support, others were confronted by friends and neighbors who feared that desegregation efforts would harm them. Racism in America threatened them, their homes, the jobs which many preferred to avoid. Devlin highlights the differences between fathers and mothers in their perceptions of

of their work. Women said they organized “receptions” while men remembered them as “chitlin parties.” Young men were hesitant to participate in the various struggles. They had sports to provide ways to distinguish themselves while girls did not. But girls did not join in the desegregation struggles to gain status. Many just did not want to disappoint their parents. Devlin’s account of the women’s role in desegregation is powerful, but *The Girl Stands at the Door* offers other equally powerful histories. While *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka Kansas*, 1954, can be considered common knowledge, Devlin provides the scaffolding upon which that important decision was made. She begins with the Bluford efforts discussed above which was ultimately resolved in *Bluford v Canada* in the 1950s. Following *Bluford*, 1939 came efforts in the 1940s: *Alston v School Board of the City of Norfolk*, 1940; *Graham v Board of Education*, 1940; *Smith v Allright*, 1944, *Chambers v Florida*, 1946; *Carter v Florida*, 1947; *Galarza v Board of Education*, 1947; *Bishop v Corning*, 1948; *Pearson v Board of Education*, 1948; *Sipuel v Board of Regents*, 1948; *Corbin v County School*

Board of Pulaski, 1949. For each of these cases Devlin provides enlivening accounts of the struggles to challenge apartheid in the public schools. As the dates indicate several of the cases came after World War II, but they do not appear to be responses to the war. Many fathers and mothers were concerned about their children’s education irrespective of their war experiences.

There were also Supreme Court cases in the 1950s preceding *Brown*. These included *Jennings v Hearn*, 1950; *Sweat v Painter*, 1950; *Mc Lauren v Oklahoma*, 1950; *Belton v Gebbart*, 1951; *Bluford v Canada* referred to above, 1951; *Bolling v Sharpe*, 1952; *Bush v Orleans*, 1952; *Davis v County School Board*, 1952; *Bulah v Gelbart*, 1953; and then the *Brown* decision, 1954. And there were other protests that never climbed to Supreme Court status. Devlin contextualizes these cases to highlight the changes in strategies to end apartheid in America’s public schools. While the earliest cases focused on higher education, in the 1940s fathers and mothers began to protest education in the elementary and secondary grades. Some of these early protests sought to

provide “equal” education for African American youth, as *Plessy* was supposed to do. Parents recognized that their children did not enjoy the quality of education and/or physical school conditions that what white children had. Others rejected the “make the schools equal” argument. While some African American children attended well equipped and maintained schools with high quality teachers, some parents felt their children deserved programs that would prepare them for the same opportunities as adults that white children had. This meant toppling the “separate but equal” farce.

A Girl Stands at the Door also reveals the conflicts and tensions between the Legal Defense Fund of the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People over the efforts they would support. The NAACP had to decide whether it was going to support “equal education” as advocated in *Plessy* or would take a more daring stand for integrated education. These tensions included what cases to support, funding, legal teams, and more. Initially Thurgood

Marshall, the NAACP's most prestigious attorney, did not want to shift to from higher education to elementary schools. He feared the cases brought to him would not stand the test in court.

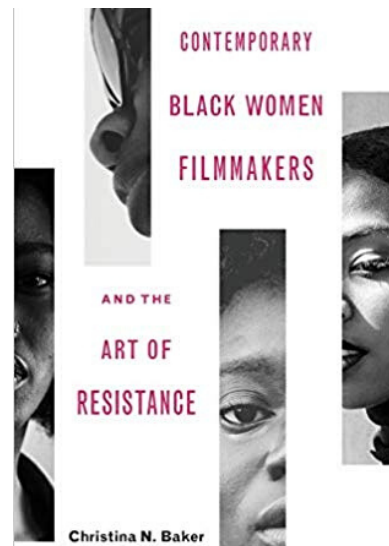
Devlin ends her history by broadening our knowledge of the efforts to desegregate the schools after *Brown*. She offers a powerful account of efforts in Baton Rouge and Charleston, where most of the activists were young women. In Baton Rouge the school board sought to desegregate the last year of school rather than the first. The experiences of these adolescent women will remind the reader of the horrific accounts of Central High in Little Rock, Arkansas, 1957. While a few spoke of decent treatment by white girls, their accounts largely scream of racism in these cities. But desegregation was not just a southern story. Deborah Gray White, a public school student on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, was transferred from an almost all black class to a Special Progress class, which was white, to make the school look integrated. For young women in the 1960s, faced with the limits set by mainstream culture, integrating the schools promised to broaden their options for adult life. More powerfully, women experienced a sense of filial

duty that their brothers did not have, she argues. Devlin end with the efforts to desegregate that came after *Miliken v Bradley*, 1974, when the court enlivened segregation by ruling that integration could not take place across district lines. Her discussion provides a frightening reminder of the racism we still see today.

Contemporary Black Women Filmmakers.
Baker, Christina N.
Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2019. 195 pp. \$29.95.
ISBN 978-0-8142-5499-8.

By Evan Elizabeth Hart, Missouri Western State University

Christina Baker's *Contemporary Black Women Filmmakers and the Art of Resistance* opens with a useful anecdote that does a masterful job setting up this book's importance. In the premiere episode of the fourth season of *Project Greenlight*, the HBO show supporting aspiring filmmakers, Effie Brown, producer of the films *Real Women Have Curves* and *Dear White People*, challenged show producer Matt Damon. The team, including Brown and Damon, were in the process of selecting a director for a film in which the sole black character was a prostitute assaulted by her pimp. As Baker notes, Brown



raised concern regarding the director's race, noting, "I just want to bring something up . . . I just want to urge people to think about whoever the director is, the way that they're going to treat the character of Harmony . . . The only Black person being a hooker who gets hit by her White pimp." Damon quickly interjects, dismissing Brown's concerns, insisting "when you're talking about diversity, you do it in the casting of the film" (2). Eventually, over Brown's concerns, the rest of the producers select a white man to direct the film.

According to Baker, "Effie Brown's interaction with Matt Damon is a microcosm of the larger battle in which Black women engage in order to be heard" (2). As Baker meticulously shows, black women filmmakers struggle against myriad challenges in making films from their standpoints. Indeed, a central problem Baker notes about the film industry is that black women's stories are often

“reinvisioned by male filmmakers” (3). Thus, Baker’s focus rests on black women filmmakers who “choose to create and share stories about Black women that are unlike those that are typically produced by the mainstream” (5). In doing so, she highlights “the relationship between recent work of Black women filmmakers” instead of “providing an exhaustive history of Black women filmmakers” (19). Baker’s work focuses on six films: Gina Prince-Blythewood’s *Love & Basketball* and *Beyond the Lights*; Kasi Lemmons’s *Eve’s Bayou*; Tanya Hamilton’s *Night Catches Us*; Ava DuVernay’s *Middle of Nowhere* and Dee Rees’s *Pariah*. As per Baker’s requirements, these are all films directed and written by black women with a major theatrical release.

As Baker notes, few films meet her criteria. Indeed, between 1991 and 2014 only fourteen films met them. So why be so strict in these criteria? Because Baker is most interested in what she terms their “*womanist artistic standpoint*” (16). These filmmakers “used artistic expression as a means of creating narratives that challenge the racial and gender oppression experienced by Black women” while also challenging “oppression by creating images and narratives that resist the marginalization

of Black women’s perspectives by drawing from their experiences and perspectives as Black women” (19). Indeed, in her analysis of these films, Baker draws from the writing of black feminist scholars such as Patricia Hill Collins, Toni Cade Bambara, and bell hooks to support her interpretation of standpoint theory, which argues black women “have distinctive ways of viewing and experiencing the world in response to a highly effective system of economic, political, and ideological control used against them” (18). It is because of these distinct forms of knowledge that black women filmmakers are able to challenge racial, gender, and class oppression.

Baker organizes her analysis in five chapters, four of which focus on how the filmmakers combat and challenge elements of various controlling images of black women. In order to ground these analyses, she opens with the chapter “Unicorns” which discusses the womanist artistic standpoint to understand how black female filmmakers move “the voices of Black women from margin to center” (17). Since films made by black women are rare—or unicorns as Baker suggests—there are also few films which reflect their standpoints. Because of this, Baker argues, too many films by

“tend to portray black women in either a negative light or as one-dimensional characters. Through creating complex, nuanced characters, black female filmmakers find myriad ways to change the cultural narrative on black women. Chapters two through five focus on more specific images and how the highlighted filmmakers undermine negative stereotypes. In chapter 2, “Work as Passion: *Love & Basketball* and *Beyond the Lights*,” Baker analyzes two films with black female leads who “exercise agency in order to pursue personally meaningful work” thereby countering the standard depiction of black women as helping “define the purpose of other characters” (11, 46). Throughout the films, characters succeed in fields either dominated by or controlled by men—professional basketball and hip hop—while maintaining satisfying romantic relationships and seeking self-fulfillment. These women who “have it all” are the antithesis of most black women in films who are one-dimensional or are punished for trying to have both satisfying careers and loving relationships.

Love is also a major theme of chapter four, “Rebellious Love: *Middle of Nowhere* and *Pariah*.”

It may have helped the narrative flow of the book to pair these chapters together, but Baker's analysis here of "rebellious love" is excellent. Protesting, in particular, the image of the un-loving, hypersexual jezebel, Baker convincingly argues that both DuVernay and Rees created lead characters who were not "emasculating, hypersexual, or incapable of love" (130). Instead, the two women "embrace a womanist perspective by highlighting the necessity of self-love . . . choosing love is as liberating as it is rebellious" (131). Both films explore romantic and self-love from different standpoints, and this is precisely why such films are so important in Baker's analysis; the filmmakers have different standpoints so they should deliver unique visions of black love. If the significance of the womanist artistic standpoint is to complicate society's vision of black women, then these films are all the more important when they represent black women differently.

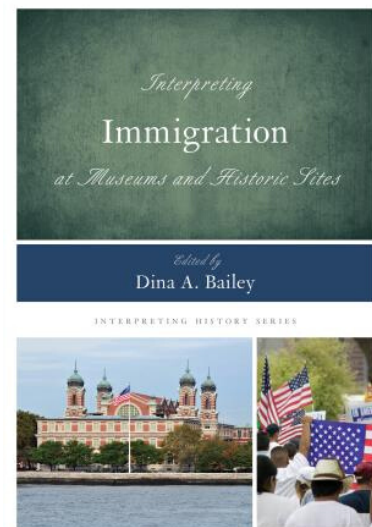
Perhaps the most powerful chapter of Baker's work is the third, "Y'all Are My Children: *Eve's Bayou* and *Night Catches*." These films challenge society's racist ideas about black motherhood. All too common are stereotypes of black mothers as absent at best, "deficient, abusive, and destructive" at worst (76). Rather than trying to

'rehabilitate' the image of black mothers by embracing nuclear families and biological connections, the filmmakers "refuse to accept the narrow idea of 'good' mothering being tied to a woman's embrace of the patriarchal nuclear family" (104). Both films discussed end with the possibility that the nuclear family is not "the only or ideal option for the women" in the films (105). Baker also highlights how these filmmakers recognize a kind of other mothering as an important element of motherhood for many black women. In approaching these films from their own standpoint, DuVernay and Lemmons both manage to combat controlling images – including the welfare queen and the jezebel – by portraying black mothers in a complex and positive light.

Throughout the work, Baker does a powerful job exploring the various controlling images that still define black women in the dominant culture. She rightfully points out that film—as a cultural touchstone for most Americans—often does black women a disservice by nurturing these stereotypes. It will be wonderful to see more scholars explore the "art of resistance" moving forward, especially those that might not fit the tight strictures Baker set for her study.

***Interpreting Immigration at Museums and Historic Sites.* Bailey, Diana A. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018. 137 pp. \$32.00. ISBN 978-1-4422-6324-6.**

By Mayra Lizette Avila,
University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley



Interpreting Immigration at Museums and Historic Sites examines how the forty members of the Civil Rights Network of the International Coalition of Sites and Conscience sought to identify a variety of different dialogue models that moved away from passive museum participants to active learners. Members of the Network have developed interpretive approaches to encourage discussions of difficult contemporary subjects such as immigration and the immigrant experience. Sarah Pharaon explains that museums were hesitant to address contemporary immigration as it could upset their communities,

board members, and funders as the topic could be seen as too political in nature (1). This edited volume traces the commitment of the Network to make history relevant by taking key issues, in this case, immigration and making it into an interactive and collaborative learning experience for its visitors through eight case studies.

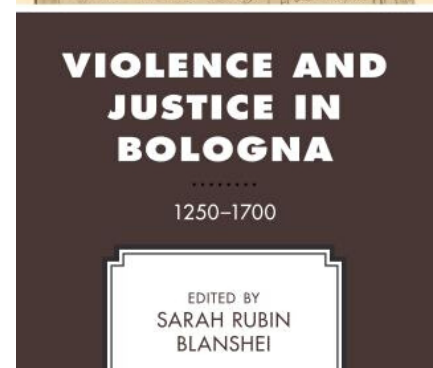
The eight diverse institutions provide their distinct strategies for the design, implementation, and sustainability of the program that addresses contemporary immigration. Yet each institution did come to one consensus that the “melting pot” narrative did not work as many individuals do not identify as immigrants or descendants of them. Consequently, the museums sought to clarify prevailing misconception, myths, and stereotype about immigrants and other minorities by utilizing distinct local immigration communities’ stories in exhibits to show that there is not one immigration story but many and they are all American stories (36 and 56). By focusing on their distinct community’s needs and immigration history each museum selected and designed their exhibit models, artwork and its interpretation, educational programs, and walking tours to engage their respective audiences. Consequently, the Network

utilized broad themes that call for individual interpretation such as defining “We” and what is the “American Identity” which yield various answers that are followed up with a series of questions ranging from restriction and admittance to civil rights and civil liberties. The answers were used by the Museums to encourage discussion and dispel myths regarding immigration.

In order to make history relevant the National Dialogues on Immigration Project created guidelines for museums and sites to promote awareness of historical perspectives, encouraged individual and collaborative learning, and promoted an open dialogue (124). This edited volume serves as a guide for museums and sites to create exhibits and programs that touch on contemporary topics. Diana A. Bailey calls for the reader to spread awareness and become involved in an authentic dialogue by listening and learning from different point of views. *Interpreting Immigration at Museums and Historic Sites* adds to the literature of Museum Studies, Historical Memory, and Oral History by providing a guide for those interested in curating exhibits and creating an educational program that focuses on contemporary topics.

Violence and Justice in Bologna, 1250-1700.
Blanshei, Sarah Rubin.
Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018. 263 pp. \$110.00. ISBN 978-1-4985-4633-1.

By Emily Sohmer Tai,
Queensborough Community College, CUNY



The city of Bologna has long been synonymous with legal learning, as the site of Western Europe’s oldest university (est. 1088), and the eleventh-century “rediscovery” of Roman law. The rich holdings of Bologna’s Archivio di Stato have, moreover, supported over a century of research on the history of criminal justice. In *Violence and Justice in Bologna, 1250-1700*, Sarah Rubin Blanshei, a long-standing expert on Bologna’s archives, joins nine colleagues to mine their wealth for new insights into how

medieval European society conceptualized violence to settle disputes, manage social behavior, and impose legal authority.

An introduction (ix-xxxii), co-authored by Blanshei and a second contributor, Colin Rose, situates these studies in the historiography of violence, showing how they offer a collective critique of the historical sociologist Nobert Elias, whose *Civilizing Process* (1939) argued for “a dramatic and progressive decline of medieval violence...(ix-x).” The authors featured in this volume have, instead, adopted the more nuanced approach of legal anthropologists like Sally Falk Moore (xiv), to study the adjudication of violence in Bologna as a reflection of local political and social objectives often overlooked by scholars more beguiled by Venice, Genoa, and Florence.

The first five essays, gathered under the heading “Criminal Justice: Procedures and Practices,” show how various forms of criminal violence were managed to promote what several authors term “hegemonic justice” in Bologna—and, by extension, the power of those who controlled its civic polity, whether local patricians, or representatives of papal power. In “Vendetta, Violence, and Policy Power in Thirteenth-Century Bologna,” (xxi-xxii; 3-35), Gregory Roberts draws

upon the often overlooked registers of the *Corone ed Armi*, which recorded fines paid to Bologna’s communal officials for weapons possession, to show that vendetta (*vindicta*) was not so much tolerated in Italian medieval cities as carefully monitored. In “Criminal Court Procedure in Late Medieval Bologna: Cultural and Social Contexts,” (xxii-xxiii; 27-53) and “Bolognese Criminal Justice: From Medieval Commune to Renaissance Signoria,” (xxiii; 55-81), Massimo Vallerani and Sarah Blanshei adopt contrasting views of a pivotal transition in the history of European criminal justice: the shift from accusatorial process—in which litigation was initiated by a plaintiff’s accusation—to inquisitorial process, which assigned investigatory power to a judge. While Vallerani argues that this transition gave rise to multiple adjudication models between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries (a contention with which this reviewer incidentally agrees), Blanshei asserts that accusatorial process explicitly declined over the same period, a development she attributes to the expense it could impose (55-60). Vallerani and Blanshei nonetheless agree that the expansion of secular judicial process signaled the extension of government power: “The dominance of inquisito procedure derives from the growth of state power in criminal justice,” writes

Blanshei (65), while Vallerani asserts that “public” trials of the Duecento” were supplanted by secret denunciations during the Tre and Quattrocento (50-51).

Trevor Dean’s “Investigating Homicide: Bologna in the 1450s,” (xxiii-xxiv; 83-100), studies another underutilized archival series: the nineteen *vacchettini* or *bastardelli* maintained by the court notaries of Bologna’s *podestà*, to provide the volume’s most readable discussion of twenty-two homicide cases investigated between 1451 and 1456. Unlike summary court registers, the *bastardelli* documented every stage of judicial process—including, critically, the use of torture, the mode of discovery most associated with inquisitorial procedure (97). Colin Rose’s concluding essay, “Violence and the Centralization of Criminal Justice in Early Modern Bologna,” (xxiv; 101-122), traces the shift from medieval courts presided over by a communal *podestà* to a papal-controlled *Tribunale del Torrone* that was effected with the assertion of direct papal control over Bologna by Pope Julius II in 1506 (xxiv).

A second set of essays, “Typologies of Violence,” consider specific crimes, or specific groups of malefactors. In “*Contra Ribaldos Proditores: From Factional Conflict to Political Crime in Renaissance Bologna*,” (xxiv-xxv; 125-143),

Sara Cucini discusses the period that preceded the papacy's establishment of the Tribunal del Torrone considered by Rose: the contested dominion of the Bentivoglio family, which roiled fifteenth-century Bologna with a series of violent confrontations. Margaux Buyck examines escalating apprehensions over "The 'Enormous And Horrendous' Crime of Poisoning: Bologna, ca. 1300-1700," (xxv-xxvi; 145-165), fueled by the political rivalries of late medieval and early Renaissance politics, as well as widening access to spices that could be used to harm, as well as help. Blasphemy, the focus of Melissa Vine's easy, "To the Podestà or the Inquisitor?: Adjudicating Violence Against God in Bologna, 1250-1450," (xxvi-xxvii; 187-206), lay in a grey zone between the purview of secular and ecclesiastical courts, but was prosecuted by both, as "evil words against God," were perceived as a common danger to Christian communities (187-188). Christopher Carlsmith's closing chapter, "Student Violence in Late Medieval and Early Modern Bologna," (xxvii; 207-226) studies the misbehavior of Bologna's famed university students.

Carlsmith's essay incidentally refers to an instance when violence targeted a woman: the kidnapping of the jurist Giovanni de Andrea's niece in

in 1321 (which cost the perpetrator, Giovanni de Valenza, his life). This is only one of several references that will render these essays of special interest to readers of this publication. Trevor Dean's study of homicide, for example, considers the tale of Giovanna Tibaldi, accused, in 1453, of plotting, with a lover, Alberto Boccadiferro, to kill her husband, Gaspare. While Giovanna saved her own life by maintaining her innocence under torture, it was her *fama*, or reputation, for social independence, that raised suspicions of her possible adultery and conspiracy. Substantial reports, by contrast, that the Flemish shoemaker Wilhem had beaten his pregnant wife, the Scottish woman, Joan, to death, did not lead to Wilhelm's conviction (94-95). Buyck's essay on poisoning notes perceived links between poison, magic, and abortion—perceptions that endured through the early nineteenth century (149-152). Here, too, readers may note the fate of Dorothea Bolognetti, whose husband Camillo attempted to kill her twice, once by poison, a second time by beating, before her brother, for reasons that Buyck does not discuss, finished the job (161). Particularly valuable is Carol Lansing's "Accusations of Rape in Thirteenth-Century Bologna," (xxvii-xxviii; 167-185), which brings together Lansing's

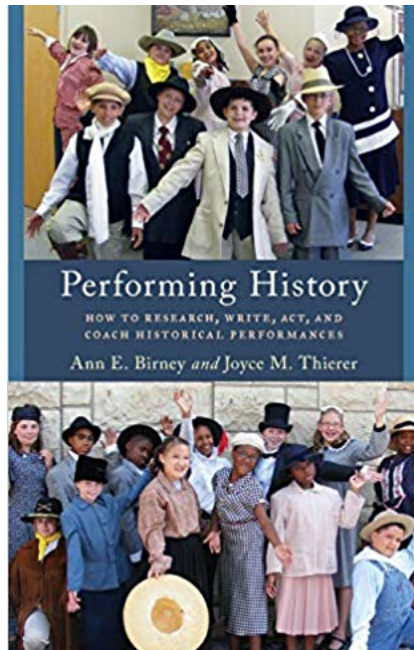
previous research on medieval women with the volume's focus on violence and legal procedure, demonstrating that the accusatorial process, whatever its expense, enabled lower-status women to hold higher-status men accountable for sexual assault—an opportunity that diminished with the advent of an increasingly politicized inquisitorial system in subsequent centuries (169-170; 182).

A few of these essays might have been improved by the consideration of parallels to contemporaneous developments elsewhere. Cucini, for example, might have noted that the Bentivogli strategy of condemning political adversaries as rebels was also utilized by warring clans in Pope Julius II's native Liguria. Robert's essay might have considered the ways in which the imposition of the fines he discusses might have been a fiscal, as well as a judicial, strategy, fashioning hegemonic justice into a response to the increasingly monetized economy of urban medieval Europe. Finally, this reviewer noted a few inaccuracies in citations of Trevor Dean's research in the volume's introduction (xix and xxxii). But these are minor flaws. This is an important collection of essays that will be useful to any scholar with interests in the history of criminal justice, as well as the history of women in Western Europe.

***Performing History: How to Research, Write, Act, and Coach Historical Performances.* Birney, Ann E. and Joyce M. Thierer. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield, 2018. 243 pp. \$35.00. ISBN 978-1-4422-7890-5.**

By *Samantha M. Williams*

As historical performers, Ann E. Birney and Joyce M. Thierer characterize their work as a “mission,” and emphasize their “responsibility” to share the stories of historical figures whose lives have traditionally been ignored or overlooked by historians (xv). Birney and Thierer perform in a troupe called Ride into History, which was established in 1989, and focus on introducing female historical figures to audiences that range from grade school-aged children to senior citizens. Birney and Thierer are passionate about their work, and through their discussions of historical performances seek to redefine and expand the traditional definition of ‘historian’ to include actors, storytellers, and small business owners who work outside of the academy. Crucially, they also underscore the importance of historical performance as a way to remind audiences of the impacts of women and people of color throughout history.



In *Performing History*, Birney and Thierer are primarily concerned with sharing their experiences and knowledge as historical performers. Three of the chapters (one, five, and seven) are aimed at organizations that deliver historical performances, providing them with practical instructions for managing their business and producing entertaining and educational demonstrations. In these chapters, Birney and Thierer discuss the nuts and bolts of historical performances, from establishing a troupe to choosing a partner with whom to perform and manage a business. They also provide information about the details that should be included in performance contracts, how best to organize performance spaces, and how to deal with any performance-related problems that arise. The authors also inform prospective performers about the time commitment

needed to create performances and the importance of delivering meaningful presentations that connect with audiences. Throughout, Birney and Thierer include personal stories and anecdotes about each of these topics.

The other four chapters in the book are directed at historical performers, and provide guidance on building compelling characters that will engage a variety of audiences. Importantly, the authors encourage performers to identify and conduct themselves as professional historians. For Birney and Thierer, this means carrying out extensive research into primary and secondary sources when developing their characters, engaging with archivists and librarians, investing the necessary time to understand the historical figures they plan to embody, and developing stories about them that will resonate with diverse audiences. In terms of their actual performances, the authors emphasize preparation, practice, and showing respect both for the historical figure being portrayed and one’s audience. As in other chapters, Birney and Thierer share their experiences in this regard, and relay details of their depictions of figures including Calamity Jane, Amelia Earhart, and Rachel Carson to further illustrate their points to the reader.

Birney and Thierer also write extensively on the importance of engaging young people in historical performances and interpretations, and outline strategies for developing youth performance camps and classes for younger students. The authors advocate “sharing the mantle of authority” with young performers by involving them in all aspects of historical performances, from choosing their characters and conducting research, to encouraging their participation in team production meetings (104). These activities, according to Birney and Thierer, teach children communication skills, build their confidence, and create a connection between young performers, their community, and the past. They provide instructions for interacting with young performers, and describe how to prepare for and manage a historical performance camp. Birney and Thierer describe this latter endeavor in specific terms: they list the best snacks to provide camp attendees, describe how camp meeting spaces should be organized, and provide sample registration forms, codes of conduct, and evaluations to be handed out at the end of the camp. Throughout this section, the authors also convey their experiences managing different types of youth performance camps, and share the testimonials of students who participated in and enjoyed these events.

Birney and Thierer’s desire to encourage people to engage in historical performances of all types is evident throughout the book, both in their enthusiastic descriptions of their work and in the practical advice they offer to individuals considering similar careers. They provide an extensive index intended to help potential performers in this regard, and share a variety of useful insights. Given their emphasis on working with children, the majority of items in the index focus on documents potentially useful to those interested in running youth performance camps. Birney and Thierer provide a timetable for operationalizing a camp, list daily responsibilities and timelines for camp activities, and share application and registration forms, as well as several other relevant documents. They also provide a potential list of figures that could serve as characters for historical performers to portray, as well as guiding questions about these figures’ lives and short descriptions of their historical significance. This index will undoubtedly be useful to historians venturing into this area of their field.

Performing History demystifies the art of historical performance and demonstrates the important role historians play outside of traditional academic settings. Birney and Thierer successfully show how their work compliments history

as taught in classrooms and museums by engaging their audiences in a way that makes them feel as if they are part of and connected with historical figures and events. Graduates of public history programs will find this text useful, as it outlines a career path that includes research, writing, travel, and creative expression for historians interested in a career outside of the academy. Through their vivid descriptions and detailed guidance, Birney and Thierer will likely inspire new generations of historical performers to connect with audiences and share their love of history beyond the classroom.

CALL FOR PAPERS

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The Program Committee encourages proposals that enable conversations across specialist boundaries and engage the audience. We welcome submissions from graduate students, adjunct faculty, non-traditional scholars, and K-12 teachers. Anniversaries may provide inspiration for panels and roundtables: For example, the Missouri Compromise (1820); enactment of Nineteenth Amendment and Woman Suffrage

(1920); end of World War II, liberation of the Nazi death camps, atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, U.N Charter, and closing of Japanese Internment Camps in the U.S. (1945); the Voting Rights and Immigration and Naturalization Acts of 1965; and *Bush v. Gore* (2000).

To make inquiries about the conference, please email PCB-AHA executive director Michael Green at michael.green@unlv.edu. Information on submitting proposals, connecting with prospective panelists, and finding out more details about the annual meeting (e.g., the venue, registration, lodging) will be available in the fall of 2019. In the meantime, please visit www.pcb-aha.org for updates.

Panel Proposals must include a contact person; a title and 250-word abstract of the panel or roundtable; the title and brief description (100 words) of each presentation; a one-page C.V. (including each participant's email address and affiliation); and any AV requests. The Program Committee also welcomes individual paper submissions. Please include title, 250 word abstract, one-page C.V., affiliation, and contact information.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS: DECEMBER 31, 2019.

Decisions regarding acceptance will be conveyed no later than March 1, 2020. Please note that submission of a proposal constitutes a commitment to attend the conference if the proposal is accepted. Graduate student presenters will receive information about travel subventions upon acceptance.

NOTE FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

BY JACQUELINE ALLAIN



My name is Jacqueline Allain and I am delighted to take on the role of Newsletter Editor with the CCWH. I am a PhD candidate at Duke University where I study French Caribbean history. I look forward to working with you all!