



Spring 25 Newsletter

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From the Editor:

As we step into spring, we're excited to share the latest accomplishments within our department.

First, our BSE Social Science program has its new director, Dr. Wesley Jackson. You can read more about him [here](#). However, as we celebrate this new hire, it's important to acknowledge the hard work and leadership behind the scenes to ensure the smooth functioning of our department.

While this newsletter focuses on public-facing achievements, the department's success is a team effort—and that includes the unsung contributions of our chairs, admin, faculty, student workers, and graduate assistants.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated group of individuals who work behind the scenes, whether in curriculum meetings, recruitment events, job search committees, report compiling, or responding to student inquiries. These individuals continually support the department, and we extend our deepest gratitude to them for their ongoing efforts.

Secondly, this issue highlights the hard work and passions of our students and faculty. From academic to personal milestones, there is much to celebrate!

Whether you're an undergraduate student just starting your journey or a seasoned veteran of academia, we hope this newsletter is a reminder of the opportunities within the department and beyond. Thanks for your continued support and interest in the work we do.



Kelsey



Convocation of Scholars 2025



Miles Richard
*Charles Kenner Memorial and
Calvin C. Smith
Scholarships*



Mason Sherman
*C.K. and Linda McFarland
Scholarship*



Saber Brown
*Cooper-Huitt Memorial
Scholarship*

Dennis Rousey Best Paper Awards



Ravn Breed
Best Undergraduate Paper

“Divine Power: The Cult of Saints and Martyrs in the Early Church”



Sadie Duncan
Best Practice of History Paper

“The Transformation of the British Monarchy under Queen Victoria”



Jayme Rawls
Best Graduate Paper

“Metamora and the Completion of the American Identity”



Convocation of Scholars 2025



Ravn Breed
*Fairy Conlee-Gillespie
Memorial
Scholarship*

Liam Van Putten
Outstanding BA Student



Emily Brannon-Fletcher
Outstanding BSE Student

Convocation of Scholars 2025



Jared Allinson
*Dr. John G Galloway Award
Best Graduate Student*



Jayme Rawls
*Roger and Janna Lambert
Scholarship*

Phi Alpha Theta Inductees:

**Raven Breed
Saber Brown
Luke Caldwell
Laura Hennings
Miles Richard
Sloan Sifford**



Faculty Achievements



Dr. Kellie Buford published two book reviews and one book chapter. In June, she will present on a panel at the Society for the History of American Foreign Relations in Washington, D.C.



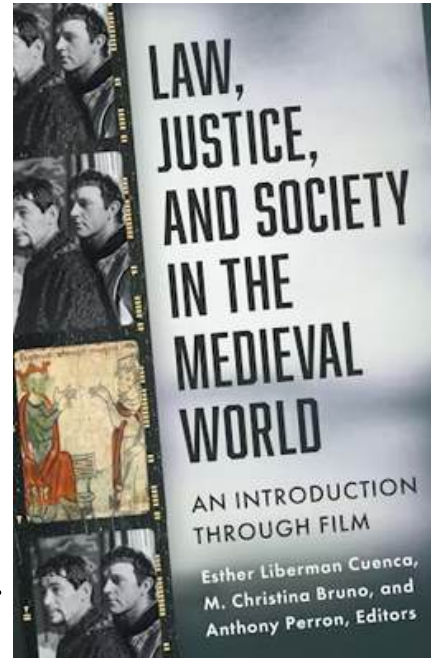
Dr. Lucy Barnhouse's monograph *Hospitals in the Communities of the Late Medieval Rhineland* will be honored as a Notable Book in Medieval German Studies at the International Congress on Medieval Studies.

Forthcoming projects (Summer 2025):

“Religious Women’s Authority and Rules for Nuns in Vision: From the Life of Hildegard von Bingen (2009).” In: *Law, Justice, and Society in the Medieval World: An Introduction Through Film*, eds. Esther Liberman Cuenca, M. Christina Bruno, and Anthony Perron, 96-104 and 218-220; Fordham University Press.

[As second author with Rachel Clark] “Church Law, Community Practice, and the Witch Trial That Wasn’t in Sorceress (1987).” In: *Law, Justice, and Society in the Medieval World*, 114-122; Fordham University Press.

“Communities and Custom: The Elections and Identities of Independent Benedictine Monastic Superiors in the Diocese of Lincoln, 1183-1340 A.D.” *Historical Reflections/ Réflexions Historiques* 51:2 (2025).



Faculty Achievements – cont.



Dr. Justin Castro wrote the historiographical essay “Engineering History in Latin America: A Review of Spanish-Language Books” in *Technology and Culture* and various book reviews for *Hispanic American Historical Review* and H-Net (H-Environment).

July 2024: Contributions to the Society for the History of Technology/International Committee for the History of Technology Joint Conference in Viña del Mar, Chile included the following:

--Roundtable panelist, Historiographical Commitments in the History of Technology: Repair, Replace, or Reuse?

--Research presentation, "The Masion of Salina Cruz, Mexico: Engineers, Labor, and the Politics of the 'World's First Stationary Dredge'"



Faculty Achievements – cont.

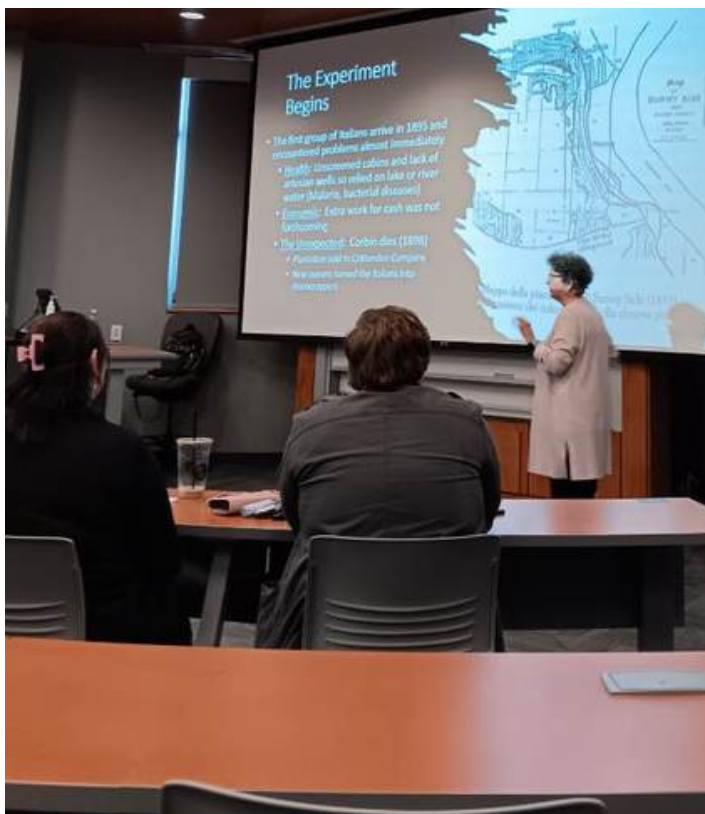


Dr. Jason Post presented “Spatial Narratives of Urban Anglers: Perspectives and Policy” at the American Association of Geographers in Detroit, Michigan. In July, he will head a FRAC funded research trip to Los Angeles, along with students Dustin Bywater and Saber Brown.



BSE Intern Supervisor **Madison Garrett** was accepted at Middle Tennessee State University’s public history program.

According to Graduate Director, Dr. Justin Castro: “It’s a solid fit for her interests in public history. It also houses the Center for Popular Music, which is another big interest of hers.”



Phi Alpha Theta President Jayme Rawls and Faculty Sponsor Dr. Erik Gilbert organized bringing guest speaker, Dr. Jeannie Whayne to campus.

Dr. Whayne visited with students at a luncheon and presented “Black Farmer Resilience and Italian Immigration in Chicot, County” as part of the CLAC Dean’s Lecture Series.

Thanks Dr. Whayne, CLAC, Heritage Studies, and all who attended!

Welcome to A-State History!



Arkansas State University is proud to welcome Dr. Wesley Jackson as our new Assistant Professor of History and Director of BSE Social Studies. Dr. Jackson hails from Temple, Texas, and brings with him a wealth of experience and expertise accumulated over a decade in the field of education.

Dr. Jackson's distinguished career began with his service as a United States Army Ranger, from which he retired in 2014. He holds an Associate degree in General Studies, a Bachelor of Science in History with a minor in 7-12 Pedagogy, a Master of Arts in American History, and a PhD in American History with a focus on African American educational disparities in the 20th century, complemented by a secondary emphasis on European History.



With seven years of experience teaching AP US and World History at the high school level in Texas, Dr. Jackson has also served as a concurrent US History teacher for two years. His most recent academic roles include Assistant Professor of History at Temple College, Associate Adjunct Professor at Austin Community College, and Adjunct History Professor at Central Texas College, where he has primarily taught dual credit classes, enabling high school students to earn college credits.

Dr. Jackson is an accomplished educator and scholar, having delivered lectures on classroom management techniques and classroom environment seminars. He has published articles on the educational history of the 20th century and is currently working on his manuscript, "Progressive Education and the Struggle for Racial Integration in Houston: The Evolution of HISD, 1876–1970."

We are excited to have Dr. Jackson join our faculty and look forward to the innovative contributions he will bring to Arkansas State University. His dedication to education and his passion for helping students achieve their highest potential will undoubtedly inspire and elevate our academic community.

Student Highlights



Graduate Assistant Jared Allinson has been accepted into the PhD history program at Mississippi State University, which emphasizes the history of science, technology, and the environment. He obtained an assistantship and will likely be assisting with the journal *Environmental History*.



Graduate Assistant Halee Mills will be the new Parkin Archeological State Park Station Assistant in Parkin, Arkansas.

This will be a wonderful opportunity for Mills to continue doing what she loves within the state.



MA History Student and Graduate Assistant, Skylar Bobo has been awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Japan Foundation to help preserve and document Edo period houses in Kyoto.

He will be traveling there from January 4th-14th; and will be presenting findings at a conference on the 12th. He will be one of five people from the U.S. on the trip!

Highlights – cont.



Grad Assistant and Phi Alpha Theta President Jayme Rawls received a Heritage Sites Students Research Grant of \$1,900.

From May to December 2025, she will conduct research on the United Daughters of the Confederacy in Chicot County.

In 2026, she will be presenting her findings.



BA student Laura Hennings also received a Heritage Sites Students Research Grant of \$1,723.

She is researching 20th-century women's interracial collaboration in the Arkansas Delta.

Her paper will highlight key actors who have been marginalized in the historic record, and will examine how their political activism, club work, and domestic labor influenced inclusive social change throughout the region.

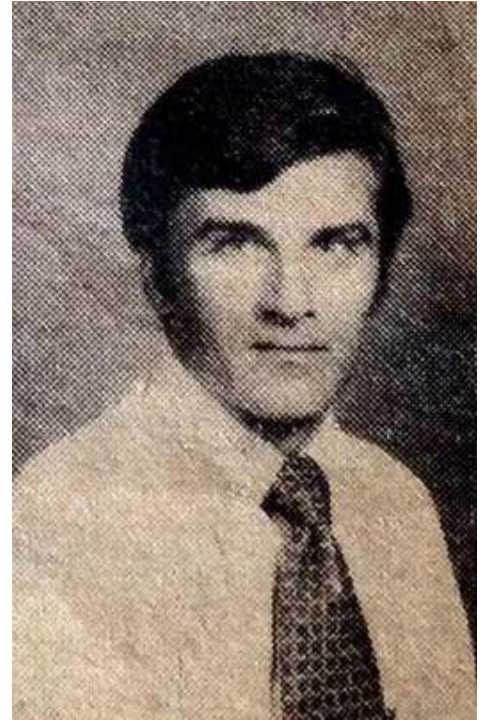


Sympathies Extended

ALEX SYDORENKO

It is with deep sadness that the History Department announces the passing of Dr. Alex Sydorenko, beloved colleague, teacher, and friend. Sydorenko was a faculty member for nearly fifty years, from 1972 until his retirement in 2020.

He passed away on February 11, 2025 and is survived by his sons, Alexander Sydorenko Jr. and Jeremy Sydorenko; grandson, Logan Sydorenko; cousins, Lilia and Ivan Onyshchenko of Ukraine and many colleagues, friends and loved ones. His obituary is available [online](#).



"He became an assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor, serving as the Department of History chair from 2000-2005.

In addition to serving as the Arkansas State University Faculty Association president in 1997-98, he also served as president of several professional organizations, including the Ukrainian American Association of University Professors.

Sydorenko published a number of articles on Ukrainian history and a book titled *The Kiev Academy in the Seventeenth Century* (University of Ottawa Press, 1977). Sydorenko is well known for his sincerity, generosity, broad historical knowledge, and always-entertaining conversations. He regularly hosted department celebrations and gatherings at his home near campus for many years." The last one being May of 2024.

Donations can be made to our "Friends of History" account [here](#), to [World Central Kitchen](#), or [United24](#) efforts to support Ukrainian people and causes.



Justin Castro

He'll be greatly missed! Condolences to his family and friends.

...

3d Like Reply



Lucy Barnhouse

Our time in the department barely overlapped, but he was very warmly welcoming to me.

3d Like Reply



Rachel Rogers

He was such an amazing professor! He once sang our class a Ukrainian song - so sad to hear of his passing.

3d Like Reply



William Cole Younger

Rachel Rogers All of the shenanigans in the classical mediterranean class.

3d Like Reply



Ruth Supko Owens

My condolences to his family. I have fond memories of interesting conversations with him years ago in the hallways of Wilson Hall.

3d Like Reply

2



Myeisha Nichols

He will be greatly missed. He was an amazing professor.

3d Like Reply



Chip Carroll

I enjoyed his classes and conversations were had. He will be greatly missed.

3d Like Reply Edited



Phyllis Pobst

Wenatchee, WA

♥ Saturday, February 15, 2025

William Maynard

Jonesboro, AR

♥ Friday, February 14, 2025

Alex was a respected and much-loved colleague. The History Department is poorer for his loss.

It is with great sadness I am writing on the occasion of Alex's untimely passing. Thank you Alex for your kindness and friendship when I joined the Department and for your friendship in the years that have followed - as a colleague, Chair, the host of so many enjoyable Department gatherings and especially for the dinners, for the pot roasts and for the beer you brewed! The myriad of students you taught were lucky to have been in your tutelage, and you will be and are missed. To paraphrase a Ukrainian saying, may you 'rest in fur' Alex.

MEDIEVAL & RENAISSANCE STUDIES COURSES



POLITICS!

Classical and Medieval
Political Theory, POSC
3413, Dr. Amy Buzby
(What should rulers do?
Who holds authority?)



ART!

Medieval and Renaissance
Art and Architecture, ARTH
3053, Dr. Katherine Baker
(More than castles and
cathedrals!)



LITERATURE!

British Literature to 1800,
ENGL 3223, Dr. Jerry Ball
(Dragons, pilgrims, and
more)



PHILOSOPHY!

History of Ancient and
Medieval Philosophy, PHIL
3123, Dr. Jacob Caton
(Thinking about life, death,
and thinking)

Graduate Assistants



Halee Mills



Skylar Bobo



Lucas Timmerman



Jayme Rawls



Jared Allinson

Alumni Spotlight

OUR ALUMNI. THEIR JOURNEY. YOUR GUIDES.

Edward Hawthorn, MA History, '18

“The summer after graduation, I served as an education & public programs intern at the Nantucket Historical Association in Massachusetts. After that, I served for a year as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Malaysia in 2019: my M.A. focus was global history and my undergraduate minor was in English, so the role tied those together nicely.



A 2022 side project has been to better share my research with the public: Nebraska hasn't had a comprehensive statewide architectural treatise written yet, so this will help fill that gap in the scholarship in the meantime. I found myself drawing upon a variety of degree skills as I assembled it, from the online tools learned in Intro to Digital Humanities to the importance of a cohesive framework gleaned from seminar discussions on theory.

The readings and seminar discussions really drove home how there is significantly more to a heritage site or destination than an official designation, and involved memorable examples from around the world that I wouldn't have discovered otherwise. And some of the sites discussed were in Melaka and Singapore, so it was rewarding to get to see those firsthand when I was stationed in Malaysia two years later! "



Alumni Spotlight

OUR ALUMNI. THEIR JOURNEY. YOUR GUIDES.

Collin Jo Thorton

Currently: Special Education Teacher
Marion Junior High
Arkansas



One degree skill is use is
“finding the time to understand my
students and being aware of outside
factors coming into play with their
success in the classroom.
(Thank you Dr. Buford) ”

Advice for someone who’s thinking of majoring in history:

“It is hard work, but so very rewarding. Remember, when they
pick your papers apart, it’s just because they care. :)”



WANT TO BE A FEATURED ALUM?

Contact Kelsey DeFord at
kdeford@AState.edu OR

[CLICK THIS LINK TO THE SURVEY!](#)

Department of History

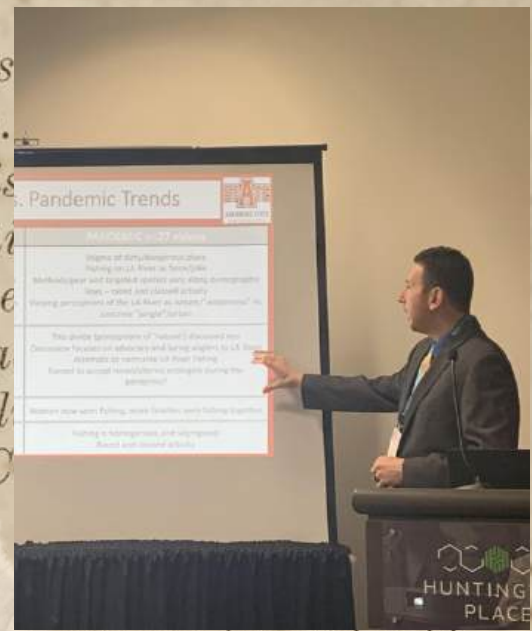
FALL 25 UPPER LEVELS

CRN	TITLE	TIME	INSTRUCTOR
63182	AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY I	MWF 9-9:50	TBA
62284	PRACTICE OF HISTORY	MWF 10-10:50	EDWARDS
64564	LATIN AMERICAN NATIONAL PERIOD	MWF 12-12:50	CASTRO
64564	MEDIEVAL POPULAR RELIGION	MWF 2-2:50	BARNHOUSE

Department of History

FALL 25 UPPER LEVELS

CRN	TITLE	TIME	INSTRUCTOR
62304	HISTORY OF ARKANSAS	WEB	KEY
64558	ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT	WEB	POST
64521	UNITED STATES SINCE 1945	TR 11:00-12:15	HRONEK
64539	MODERN MIDDLE EAST	TR 8:00-9:15	GILBERT
64566	MODERN EUROPE 1750 TO PRESENT	TR 12:30-1:45	DAVIS





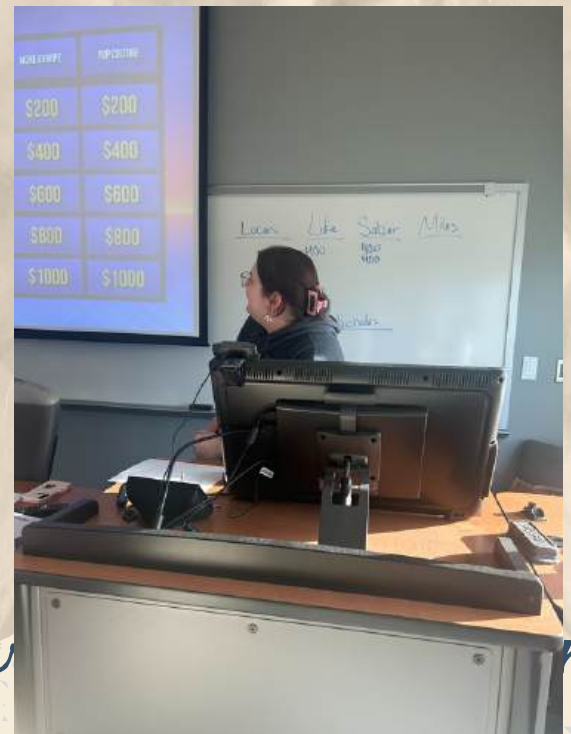
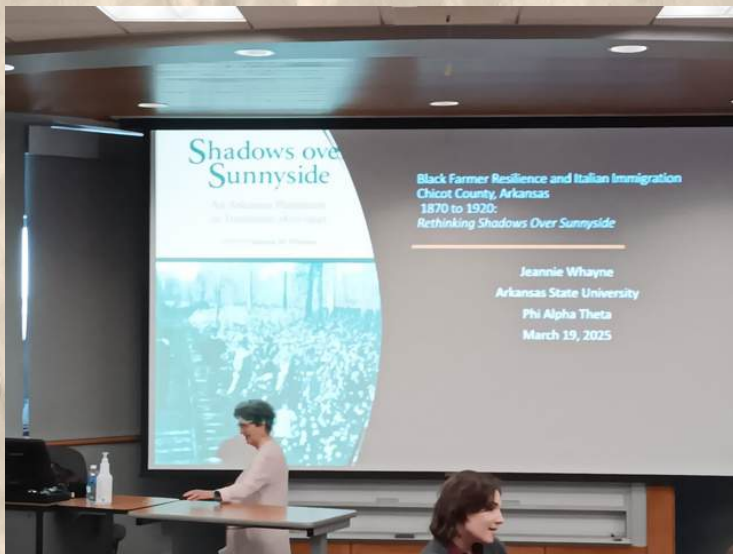
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Important Dates



Pups and Pancakes

APRIL 23

HERITAGE LAWN, 10AM-12PM



Last Day of Class

MAY 1ST



Spring Commencement

MAY 10TH



Final Exams

MAY 5- MAY 9

A-STATE HISTORY CLUB

The History Club, established in 2020, welcomes all A-State students passionate about history. It allows students who do not meet the requirements of Phi Alpha Theta membership to participate in Department of History events and to access the Wunderkammer history lounge, club quarters, and collections.

Contact Dr. Erik Gilbert: egilbert@astate.edu

Updates/News

Please email Kelsey information on your achievements to be included in Fall 2025 Newsletter - Nov 28

Students:
Stay on track with other updates on the A-State Academic Calendar.

Get a head start on purchasing your course materials by clicking the link here.

ADVISING

Schedule an appointment with Justin Gibson and register for classes (if you haven't already!)

Special Thanks

Dr. Kellie Buford

Photos: University Marketing and Communications, Carla Wehmeyer, Ibuki Hinohara, A-State Herald Photo Editor

Student workers: Kaylin Wilson, Jaxon McGrew, Alyssa Willie, Gnoor Singh