



# Today & Yesterday

Newsletter of the Department of History

Volume 46, 2022

## Russia's invasion of Ukraine: Changing perspectives on past and present

By Dr. Christine Varga-Harris

Historians are increasingly asked to explain how the past can inform the present, even if we have long been reluctant to do so.

Associate Professor Dr. Christine Varga-Harris, our expert on Russian, Eastern European, and Soviet history, reflects on how the demand to provide context for Russia's invasion of Ukraine changed her approach to history and to her thinking about the present.

When Russian troops invaded Ukraine on February 24, like many, I was in shock. I could not believe that the country whose history I had studied for over 30 years would suddenly initiate the kind of brutal aggression it had itself suffered (I of course

of the conflict. Therefore, in preparing my talk for our European Studies Program one month into the war, my objective was to mute the din of speculation about “what will happen next” and instead to offer insight into the history of “Russia and Ukraine” that the Putin regime was abusing. Focusing on “Maps and Facts,” my talk spanned from the origins of Kievan Rus’ in the 9th century, through the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, and offered a bird’s eye view of historical subjects that were surfacing in the news at the time. These included the 1654 Pere-

is compulsory (to disallow critical discussion of troubling or unflattering aspects of the past). Alongside parallels to history (namely, Stalinism), novel phenomena, too, are emerging. Take for example the paradoxical “Z” symbol that has come to signify Russian support for the invasion of Ukraine. It seems to reference all at once the West (*Zapad*), in terms of troop movements or the source of Russian grievances—and yet the Latin, not Russian Cyrillic, character is used; the lightning bolts on *Nazi* SS uniforms; and “Victory” (*Za pobedy*), which in the collective memory conjures up the Soviet fight *against* Nazi Germany. The meanings will become clearer when the war is history.

Meanwhile, in Ukraine, amid the ongoing death, destruction, and refugee crisis, accusations about the criminal and genocidal nature of Russian military actions are gaining solid ground. In this moment, I find myself spellbound by journalists like those employed by the Latvian-based Russian news site *Meduza*, and social scientists with deep connections to the former Soviet Union who are offering webinars with titles like “Do Russians Support the War?” Essentially, while finding my field of study, Russia, in the spotlight in a way it has not been for decades, I have a greater appreciation than ever before for the critical symbiosis of my discipline (history) with those of experts on the ground who are witnessing events as they unfold and trying to connect the dots of the *recent* past and the present.



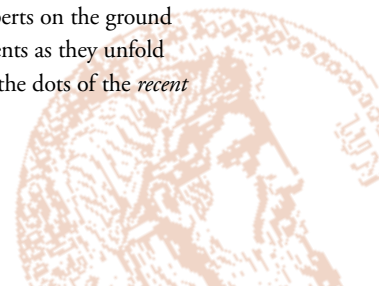
Dr. Christine Varga-Harris

have in mind the mass destruction, the 27 million dead, and the war crimes that Soviet citizens—among them Ukrainians and Russians—had endured during the Second World War). I also could not have imagined that Russians would again be severed from the world as they had been during the most tense moments of the Cold War. Yet as the expat journalist Michele Berdy put it in the title of a recent *Politico* article, “The dots were all there. We just couldn’t connect them.”

While it was clear that Russia had started a war—not a “special operation” to save Russians in Ukraine from ethnic discrimination or a fascist genocidal regime—it was impossible for me to digest the events unfolding during the first days

iaslav Agreement by which Zaporizhian Cossacks chose Russian over Polish rule; the 18th-century Russian Imperial conquest of the Crimean Peninsula; interwar Ukrainian nationalism; and the rash of secessions (including by Ukraine and Russia) that had led to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Through brief forays into such topics, I sought to highlight some of the kernels of historical truth from which disturbing fallacies of pro-war discourse were being constructed.

Now in Russia, the media has been gutted (by what is effectively a “don’t say war” law); protesters are repressed; Putin talks about “cleansing” his country of “traitors” (i.e., detractors of the war and himself); and “patriotic history education”



## Russia's invasion of Ukraine: Challenges and opportunities for a new teacher

By Lauren Sexauer '21

As I reflect on my studies at ISU, I realize how fortunate I am to have had the flexibility to take the classes that I did. While getting my history education degree



Lauren Sexauer

I was lucky enough to take enough classes to complete peace and conflict resolution studies and European studies minors. My classes in these minors mostly focused on Eastern Europe and conflict over the last century. Working with Dr. Christine Varga-Harris, in classes like HIS 368 and HIS 234, I learned the complex history that shaped Russia's invasion of Ukraine. These classes allowed me to have a core basis of knowledge that proved invaluable while teaching this year. I cannot thank Dr. Varga-Harris enough for her mentorship in this field.

As a World history and U.S. history teacher, I knew I had to cover the invasion of Ukraine with my students, not only because I was passionate about the region or the obvious importance of war and conflict. From the moment the invasion started, I began to witness inappropriate memes and ridiculous takes appear on social media. Providing accurate historical information in my classes felt particularly important. Reaching into my content tool-

box from ISU, I felt prepared to discuss the historical legacy behind the Russian and Ukrainian conflict. However, I knew that staying up to date on the unfolding events was crucial, so that I could accurately explain the topic and answer questions from my students.

I knew that grappling with this situation in my classroom was a pursuit I could not undertake alone. I sought live updates on the situation so that I could stay as prepared as possible, but I also felt it necessary to connect with my ISU cohort, so we could lean on each other as we handled this topic. I had Zoom calls with fellow ISU alums, Grace Bartlett, Drew Schmidt, and Jen West, and messaged in *all* of my ISU teacher group chats. Together we created lesson plans, mapped out discussions, and shared articles and resources. Sharing concerns, articles, advice, and education strengthened how comfortable I felt talking about a conflict as important as this to my 200 students, and I am grateful for my curated community. In my classes, we dedicated entire days to the historical legacy, practiced media literacy by reading various news articles from varying political perspectives, and held discussions. I created an ungraded student forum where students could share intimate reactions to the unfolding news. I teach primarily juniors at a diverse school, and so, the conversations about racism in Ukraine and the required military service of teenage boys were particularly hot topics of

discussion. Since the invasion, my classes have also done a sort of "weekly check in" on Ukraine to see what is happening and what can be done.

The student body at my school strongly reacted to the news of the invasion, particularly members of the History Club, for which I am faculty sponsor [editor's note: Lauren was president of the ISU History Club]. We quickly organized a fundraiser between the Student Council, History Club, and Rho Kappa (history honor society). Our school decided to hold a fundraiser selling miniature Ukrainian flags during lunch. We have sold about 350 flags and will be donating money at the end of the year to UNICEF for food/first aid relief. Not only did students seem to appreciate buying/selling the flags, but seeing them stick out of backpacks or be waived in the hallways has been a wonderful site.

My first year of teaching is coming to a quick end. Overall, I am incredibly grateful for the friendships, content, and direction given to me by the ISU History Department. Once a Redbird, always a Redbird.

### Today & Yesterday

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Editors: Keith Pluymers,  
Sharon Foiles

# Letter from the chair, Dr. Ross A. Kennedy

This past academic year has been an eventful one for the History Department. Perhaps most importantly, we returned to in-person instruction in the fall and, by late spring semester, masks became optional in the hallways and classrooms of Schroeder Hall. In April and May, we held our Awards Ceremony, History-Social Sciences Education Closing Ceremony, and Graduation Reception in person for the first time since 2019. These were joyous occasions for our students and their families, as well as the faculty, staff, and friends of the department. Although the pandemic remains a source of ongoing concern, there is a feeling of relief that the worst of its disruptions are behind us and a sense of pride that the History Department fulfilled its mission in scholarship and teaching despite the challenges it posed.

Indeed, the faculty produced almost 50 scholarly publications and presentations in 2021, including two books. Dr. Amy Wood won the College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Service Award and a major residential fellowship from the National Humanities Center. Amy and Dr. Katie Jasper also each won fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities – an extraordinary achievement given that less than 8 percent of applicants receive such high-level support for their research. Dr. Keith Pluymers won a University Teaching Initiative Award, a Shaw Teaching Fellowship from the College, and ISU's inaugural Environmental Stewardship Award.

For the second year in a row, two History students, Xavier Lee and Anna Tulley, were named Robert G. Bone Scholars, the highest honor the University can bestow on undergraduates. Finally, Dr. Kyle Ciani and Dr. Katrin Paehler earned promotion to full professor.

This academic year also marked the beginning of what will likely be a period of transition for the department. Dr. Linda Clemmons became director of Illinois State's Honors Program. We successfully concluded two searches for new faculty, hiring Dr. Nathan Kapoor of Grand Valley State University to teach the History of Science and Dr. Taylor Soja of the University of Washington to teach the History of Nineteenth-Century Europe. They will join the faculty this August. Meanwhile, Dr. Qiliang He and Dr. Issam Nassar retired from ISU. We thank them for their service and wish them well in their future endeavors. With our enrollment continuing to grow—the department now houses the fourth largest history program in the United States—we anticipate soon making new hires in several fields, including Native American history and economic history.

It's an exciting time to be a History Department Redbird. On behalf of everyone on our staff, I thank you for your support and generosity, and I hope you enjoy reading more about our activities this past year in the pages that follow.

## Obituary

### Dr. Mark Plummer (1929-2021)

In November 2021, Dr. Mark Plummer died at age 92.

After being drafted in 1952 and serving in the Army, Dr. Plummer earned his Ph.D. from the University of Kansas in 1960 and joined ISU's History Department the same year. He taught at ISU



Dr. Mark Plummer

until his retirement in 1994.

During his time at ISU, Dr. Plummer served as chair three times in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, respec-

tively. He chaired the department during a period of growth in the 1970s and forged relationships with study abroad, taking students to Taiwan when he was a Fulbright professor at National Taiwan University in 1965-1966. Dr. Plummer taught a diverse range of courses including those on the U.S. and East Asia. In addition to his work with the History Department, Dr. Plummer served as president of the Illinois State Historical Society.

Even after retiring, Dr. Plummer continued to serve ISU students. In 1998 he and his wife, Betty Plummer, endowed the Betty Plummer International Studies Outstanding Senior Scholarship, which provides financial assistance to an international undergraduate student.

Dr. Plummer published widely during his career across his range of interests and expertise with three books on U.S. history: *Frontier Governor: Samuel J. Crawford of Kansas* (University Press of Kansas, 1971); *Robert G. Ingersoll: Peoria's Pagan Politician* (Western Illinois University Press, 1984); and *Lincoln's Rail Splitter: Governor Richard J. Oglesby* (University of Illinois Press, 2001). *Lincoln's Rail Splitter* was awarded book of the year honors from the Illinois State Historical Society.

The History Department expresses our sadness at Dr. Plummer's passing. We wish to celebrate his extraordinary life and express our gratitude for his decades of service, teaching, and leadership at ISU and to the historical profession.

*Continued on page 4*

**Dr. William “Bill” Haddad (1939-2021)**

Dr. William “Bill” Haddad died on May 27, 2021. Dr. Haddad was a U.S. Army veteran who served in Japan prior to completing his Ph.D. at the Ohio State



Dr. Bill Haddad

University. He joined ISU in 1971 and taught courses in Middle Eastern History. He served as chair between 1984 and 1987, critical years in the department’s history when there were discussions about whether the history education major should remain in the department or move to the College of Education.

After serving as chair at ISU, Dr. Haddad moved to California State University at Fullerton where he served as vice president for international studies and later as chair for the CSU-Fullerton history department.

He authored and edited several influential books on the history of the Middle East, most recently, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict in the Arab Press: The First Three Decades* (Intellect Books, 2018).

The History Department expresses our deepest condolences and mourns the loss of our colleague.

**Dr. Niles Holt (1940-2021)**

Dr. Niles Holt passed away in November 2021 at 81. Dr. Holt joined ISU’s Department of History in 1968 and taught here until his retirement in 2003.



Dr. Niles Holt

Dr. Holt was a historian of science and European intellectual history, who completed his Ph.D. at Yale in 1967 with a dissertation on the German Monist movement. He published influential

articles on the scientists Ernst Haeckel and Wilhelm Ostwald and on the development of evolutionary biology after Darwin. In 2000, he delivered an invited lecture at Oxford on the reaction of German scientific organizations to Nazi efforts to involve scientists in their work and philosophies.

At ISU, Dr. Holt created the course “European Intellectual History” and

## 2021–2022 Student Awards

**HELEN M. CAVANAGH AWARD FOR BEST MASTER’S DEGREE STUDENT**

Andrew Erford  
Megan Huber  
Kelly Schrems

**HELEN M. CAVANAGH AWARD FOR BEST MASTER’S THESIS**

Mark Greer (U.S. History)  
Matthew Nalefski (U.S. History)  
Dennis Awuah (Non-U.S. History)

**LUCY LUCILE TASHER SENIOR SCHOLARSHIP**

Fall 2021  
John Kavanagh  
Sarah McCullough  
Sam Truppa  
Spring 2022  
Kaylee Combs  
Jacob Kaminski  
James Smith  
Anna Tulley

**GLEYNFA T. RAY AWARD**

Fall 2021  
Alana Born  
Xavier Lee  
Spring 2022  
Giavanna Gomez  
Sarah Lamkin  
Tressa Macaluso

**MARK WYMAN-STEPHANE BOOTH SCHOLARSHIP**

Arlysha Bovan-Morrow  
Maribel Pagan  
Adrian Shan

**JAMES TODD WILBORN SCHOLARSHIP**

Joshua Cihlar  
Genevieve Fritz

**SESSIONS HONORS SCHOLARSHIP**

Samuel Dunn  
Jack Mondragon

**WILLIAM AND JEANNE HOWARD SCHOLARSHIP**

Ben Sanetra

**HARMON RECRUITMENT SCHOLARSHIP**

Gary Gomez  
Sophia Zoltek

**DARREL A. SUTTER SCHOLARSHIP**

Samuel Dunn  
Caroline Slowik

**DARREL A. SUTTER TEXTBOOK AWARD**

Brianna Bowman

**DARREL A. SUTTER WRITING AWARDS**

Andy Lawrence  
Brianna Bittenbinder  
Nicholas Pierson  
Shannon Thommes

**DARREL A. SUTTER STUDENT TEACHER AWARD**

Fall 2021  
Stephanie Odeshoo  
Spring 2022  
Zach Peterson

**LAWRENCE W. MCBRIDE AWARD**

Fall 2021  
Haley Youhas  
Spring 2022  
Ryan Krukowski  
Julie Walsh

**HOWARD ROMANEK HISTORY SCHOLARSHIP**

Fall 2021  
Tristan Romero  
Spring 2022  
Luke Logerquist

taught it until his retirement. He also taught the inter-disciplinary and co-taught “Humanities” course and crafted the original proposal for HIS 300. He was a popular and widely respected teacher.

The History Department expresses our deepest sorrow at the loss of our colleague.



Dr. Charles Ross

**Dr. Charles Ross (1941-2021)**

Dr. Charles Ross died in May 2021. He joined the History Department in 1996 as supervisor for student teachers after a 27-year career as a high school history teacher with 20 years at Monticello High School in a

unique humanities program. Prior to his career as a teacher, Ross had earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Southern Illinois University and had begun divinity school at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School in New York.

At ISU, Ross worked not only as a supervisor but also as the internship coordinator and as academic advisor for history education students. In those roles, he was celebrated for his extensive knowledge of the major catalog and for his dedication to his students.

After his retirement from ISU, Ross returned to Monticello, where he enjoyed tracing his family genealogy, visiting historical sites, and spending time with his wife Lana and his grandchildren.

The History Department expresses our deepest condolences and mourns the loss of our colleague.

**Matthew David Dvorak (1998-2021)**

Matthew David Dvorak died in June 2021 at age 22 after a long battle with cancer. Dvorak graduated from Plainfield Central High School in 2017 and came to ISU to major in history. He was on track to graduate from ISU before his illness interrupted his studies.

The History Department expresses our deepest condolences and mourns the loss of our student.

## Addressing the challenges of teaching: History–Social Sciences Teacher Symposium recap

By Dr. Sara Piotrowski

On February 18, 2022, the History Department, McLean County Museum of History, ROE 17, and the School of Teaching and Learning returned to our annual in-person History–Social Sciences Teacher Symposium...or at least that was the plan. A massive winter storm dumped over 8 inches of snow in Central Illinois before the big event. Having mastered the “pivot” thanks to the pandemic, the team embraced Zoom and worked to put a handful of sessions online for participants who could not travel because of the road conditions. Luckily, we could still welcome over 200 attendees on campus and an additional 100 participants via Zoom.



The Symposium Planning Committee, from left, Steven Custer, Candace Summers and Hannah Johnson from the McLean County Museum of History, Dr. Richard Hughes, and Dr. Sara Piotrowski.

This year, the theme of our symposium was “Conflict Resolution: Civics and Culture in the Social Studies Classroom.”

We started off the day with a keynote by Dr. Jonathan Zimmerman, one of the foremost education historians working today. Zimmerman highlighted some of the particular challenges facing teachers, especially those who teach history. The title of his keynote was, “You Can’t Say That! Teaching

Controversial Issues in the Age of Trump, Black Lives Matter, and Critical Race Theory.” Zimmerman clearly outlined the historical challenges facing teachers and stressed how teachers are unprepared and unprotected as they seek to educate on these matters. Zimmerman’s historical examples resonated with Isabella Lethbridge, a junior who will be student teaching in spring 2023. She was shocked to learn that an educator in the 1950s—in the context of the Cold War—was repre-

manded for teaching her pupils that the USSR was more significant than the U.S., despite its truth. For historians, by nature,



The graduate student panel, from left, Chad Kuehnl, Hunter Watts, Dr. Andrew Hartman, Kelly Schrems, and Andrew Erford.

our field deals with the uncomfortable, taboo, and controversial. Zimmerman’s talk applied to the most seasoned educator and our novice teachers.

Throughout the day, we offered sessions that catered to elementary, middle-level, high school, and pre-service teachers across a wide variety of topics. Sessions included promoting and assessing student inquiry, fostering multiple voices and deliberative discussions, constructing an inclusive curriculum in an age of political

Continued on page 6



Spring 2021 alumni, from left, Emily Clements, Lindsey LaMorte, Arden Panek, Grace Bartlett, Lauren Sexauer, and Therese Rapp.

polarization, content depth, and more. The team received positive feedback about the wide-ranging topics presented at the symposium. Senior Kiera Holton, who will be student teaching this fall, said she gained a lot from the symposium.

“I liked being able to hear about the implementation of new and engaging classroom practices, and this got me thinking about how I can apply them during student teaching,” Holton said.

It’s also great when alumni return to campus to attend the symposium and present their areas of expertise. Twenty-seven alumni presented at the symposium, and we were grateful for their time, knowledge, and generosity. One such presenta-

tion titled “Method to the Madness: New Teachers and the Post Quarantine Classroom” brought six female spring 2021 graduates back to campus after spending the second half of their college career studying via online and/or hybrid modes. Therese Rapp, Grace Bartlett, Emily Clements, Lindsey LaMorte, Arden Panek, and Lauren Sexauer, in their first-year teaching at high schools all over the state, shared their wide range of experiences with our pre-service teachers. Speaking on behalf of the group, Lauren Sexauer said, “ISU supported us as students with their amazing staff, trained us as historians, mentored us as teachers, and now we feel eternally grateful to give a little bit of that back to the Redbird community.”

*Meaningful* professional development is crucial for individual growth, so we’re thankful for all the sessions that the presenters created.

While the History–Social Sciences Teacher Symposium has evolved and adapted since its inception in 2007, our goal of providing free, jam-packed professional development has not wavered.

We’ve heard from many alumni who look forward to this event each year. Once we have the date and theme of the 2023 symposium available, we will send out information via our alumni email listserv and post it on our various social media platforms. If you haven’t attended before, or it’s been a few years, please consider attending in 2023. To our “regulars,” thank you for your continued support. Even if you cannot participate, please help



From left, Dr. Sara Piotrowski, Dr. Richard Hughes, Dr. Alan Lessoff, keynote speaker Dr. Jonathan Zimmerman, Dr. Andrew Hartman, and Dr. Monica Noraian.

us spread the word. If you have any questions or ideas, please email Program Director Dr. Richard Hughes ([rhughes@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:rhughes@IllinoisState.edu)) or Coordinator of Student Teaching Dr. Sara Piotrowski ([scpiotr@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:scpiotr@IllinoisState.edu)).

## Capitol Forum on America’s Future, Illinois State University, April 2022

By Dr. Richard Hughes

After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, Capitol Forum returned to Illinois State in April 2022. Since 2013, the Department of History has hosted the Capitol Forum on America’s Future which brings high school teachers, students, scholars, activists, and history and social sciences teacher candidates to campus to

deliberate issues of American public policy in a changing world. This year’s event included 20 ISU teacher candidates and over 60 high school students and teachers from the following schools: Eureka High School, Homewood-Flossmoor High School, Knoxville High School, Maine East High School, Newark High School,

Normal Community High School, Normal West Community High School, and Streamwood High School. High school students attended sessions led by ISU teacher candidates from HIS 390, taught by Dr. Sara Piotrowski, who designed and utilized materials to facilitate small group discussions on such topics as terrorism,



Dr. Sara Piotrowski and ISU history education students participate in the first in-person Capitol Forum since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

immigration, trade, and climate change. These sessions were followed by a keynote presentation by Reverend Craig Mousin, J.D., from DePaul University on the historical roots of contemporary debates on immigration. The event culminated with a simulation of hearings in the U.S. Senate in which high school students presented oral and visual arguments representing different policy positions for the United States. The positions on American policy, which were then evaluated by ISU teacher candidates, are loosely based on

the innovative curriculum associated with the Choices Program developed at Brown University.

With the implementation of the department's revised history and social science education curriculum in 2018-2019, students in HIS 390 played a key role in creating and leading deliberative discussions of foreign policy. The entire experience introduces ISU history education students to the Choices curriculum and opportunities to collaborate with master social studies teachers from throughout

the state to obtain invaluable experience about how to promote civic engagement in secondary schools. The annual Capitol Forum remains an integral part of the department's efforts to connect current teacher candidates to experienced alumni and other practicing teachers, policy experts, innovative curricula, and talented secondary students, some of whom may one day attend Illinois State as veterans of the event.

Learn more about Choices curriculum at: [Choices.edu](https://www.choices.edu).

## History education students learn about 'Doing Justice 2 History'

By Dr. Keith Plumbers

How to reckon with the violence of the past has been at the core of recent controversies about history teaching. For aspiring history educators, learning how to approach difficult topics is essential to becoming effective educators. To help them do so, the History Department and Dr. Robert Fitzgerald of University High School brought Dr. Robin Whitburn and Abdul Mohamud from University College London to Illinois State to discuss strategies, methods, and their experiences teaching history that centered on justice.

History education majors already enjoyed Whitburn and Mohamud's book *Doing Justice to History: Transforming Black history in Secondary Schools*, but getting to meet the authors, ask questions, and hear their newest research provided a transformative experience. Fitzgerald writes that "curriculum decisions [are] something [teachers] are going to face daily." Whitburn and Mohamud provide them with questions and an approach grounded in their extensive scholarly research that will enable history education students to "become the culturally responsive and critical pedagogues the program and university train them to be."

Whitburn and Mohamud, said Fitzgerald, "ask students to think about the stories of those that have been traditionally marginalized and often excluded from the curriculum." And in doing so they emphasize the need to see history teaching as an activity that is grounded in and consistently engaged with scholarship. For

Dr. Andrew Hartman, this was one of the most valuable parts of the experience. "It's important for our students to speak with lifelong educators who take the scholarly side of teaching history seriously," he writes, "Not only have Robin and Abdul conducted in-depth historical research, but they test out their new-found knowledge in the classroom by creating and teaching lessons."

This provides an example for students to follow as they imagine themselves as teacher-scholars.

According to Dr. Richard Hughes, the presentation has already reshaped how history education students see their approach to pedagogy. Mohamud and Whitburn's presentation focused on how to incorporate histories of violence into lessons in ways that address questions of social justice and respect the agency of victims. "Our students create and then revise statements of their philosophy of teaching and learning history over the course of the program," Hughes writes, "And many have

already integrated the problem of historical violence into their intellectual approach."

History teachers have a crucial responsibility because they exert such a profound influence on popular understandings of the past. That can feel like a heavy burden, so seeing expert teacher-scholars is essential. "Robin and Abdul know how to inspire young people, including our students," said Hartman, and students "can take their example with them as they become history teachers in their own right." In doing so, they can ensure that their teaching does justice to history and to their future students.



University High School teacher Dr. Robert Fitzgerald organized the Justice 2 History event with ISU history faculty. From left, Dr. Andrew Hartman, Abdul Mohamud (speaker), Dr. Robin Whitburn (speaker), Dr. Richard Hughes, Dr. Sara Plotrowski, and Dr. Robert Fitzgerald.

# Faculty accomplishments

**Dr. Kyle Ciani** was promoted to professor of history. Her article, “Securing Childcare during World War II: The Case of San Diego,” was published in *Women and Social Movements in the U.S.*

She was appointed to the National Advisory Committee for the 1977 Women’s Conference Digital History Project, 2021, a NEH-supported project to collect oral histories of the thousands of participants at the 1977 conference. Her book *Choosing to Care: A Century of Childcare and Social Reform in San Diego, 1850-1950* (University of Nebraska Press, 2019) was selected as a featured book by the Society of the History of Children and Youth, and she conducted an interview for the society.

**Dr. Andrew Hartman** selected and introduced a series of essays from ISU graduate students he taught in a special section of Teaching History.

**Dr. Richard Hughes** published “Historical Narratives and Collective Memory: The African American Civil Rights Movement” in *History Education Research Journal* with co-author Sarah Drake Brown and “Propaganda and the 1936 Olympics: History, News Literacy, and Selling Nazi Germany to American Tourists” in *Social Education* with co-author Trevor Shields. He reviewed Jennifer Holland’s *Tiny You: A Western History of the Anti-Abortion Movement* for *The Journal of American History* and Allan O. Kownslar’s *The Great Texas Social Studies War of 1961-1962* for the *American Educational History Journal*. In addition, he participated in the roundtable, “SoTL Research and the Tenure and Promotion of Historians,” at the 2022 American Historical Association Annual Conference in New Orleans.

**Dr. Kathryn Jasper** was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant for her project, “Bounded Wilderness: Land and Reform in the Congregation of Fonte Avellana, 1035-1394.” She gave the plenary lecture for the Illinois Medieval Association titled “The Communication of Trauma and Monastic Friendship.” In addition, she was interviewed on paleography (the study of old writing) in *Mental Floss*.

**Dr. Janice Jayes** won a Fulbright Scholar Award to teach American studies, history, and literature at Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey, for the 2021-2022 academic year. This is her second Fulbright. In addition, she published “Debt Peonage in the 21st Century: The Shamar Betts Case Continues” and “The Border We Build Every Day: Guatemala in Champaign-Urbana” for *Public i*, a publication of the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center.

**Dr. Ross Kennedy** reviewed Mary S. Barton’s “Counterterrorism Between the Wars: An International History, 1919-1937” for *H-Net* and Phillip A. Dehne’s “After

the Great War: Economic Warfare and the Promise of Peace in Paris 1919” for *First World War Studies*. Routledge also accepted his proposal for a monograph titled *The Missing Piece: The United States and the Origins of World War II*.

**Dr. Katrin Paehler** was promoted to professor of history. She attended Need to Know X: “The Intelligence Legacy of World War II and the Onset of Cold War,” an international conference at King’s College London (November 2021), where she presented on “Gender Between Hot & Cold War: Hildegard Beetz and the Making and Unmaking of the ‘Ideal Spy.’”

**Dr. Keith Plumbers** received ISU’s inaugural Environmental Stewardship Award. In addition, he was recognized for teaching with the Kenneth A. and Mary Ann Shaw Teaching Fellowship and Outstanding University Teaching Award. He was invited to give talks on his book *No Wood, No Kingdom: Political Ecology in the English Atlantic* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021) at Princeton University and at the University of Southern California-Huntington Library Early Modern Studies Institute. He was also invited to present papers from his new project on eighteenth-century municipal waterworks and steam power at the University of Chicago British History Seminar and at the University of Illinois Chicago History Brown Bag seminar. He gave a paper titled “Indicted Weirs and the Competing Political Ecologies of Plantation Ireland,” at the Early Modern Ireland and the Wider World conference at the Huntington Library (San Marino, California) and participated in a roundtable on teaching the climate crisis at the American Society for Environmental History conference in Eugene, Oregon in 2022.

**Dr. Touré Reed** published an essay in a special issue of *Dissent* magazine in Summer 2021 titled “The Political Economy of Racial Inequality.” He and Dr. Adolph Reed, Jr. published “The Evolution of ‘Race’ and Racial Justice under Neoliberalism” in *Socialist Register* in October 2021 and participated in a forum on the essay at Columbia University. He presented a paper titled “Ethnic Essentialism and Symbolism are Poor Substitutes for Material Equality” at a conference on Black-Irish Relations, sponsored by New York University’s Glucksman Ireland House and the Gallatin School. He delivered the 2022 Black History Month lecture at CUNY-Staten Island. His articles “Why Liberals Separate Race from Class” (2015) and “The Dangers of Letting Racecraft Displace Class During the Pandemic” (2020) have been translated and reprinted in the French Journal *La Pensée*. His 2019 article, “Black Exceptionalism and the Militant Capitulation to Economic Inequality,” has been reprinted in Cedric Johnson’s *The Panthers Can’t Save Us Now: Debating Left Politics and Black Lives Matter*. He has



appeared as a guest on numerous podcasts, including *Give Them An Argument*, *The Jacobin Show*, and *This is Revolution*.

**Dr. Georgia Tsouvala** published a co-edited volume, *New Directions in the Study of Women in the Greco-Roman World* (Oxford University Press), to which she also contributed a chapter titled “Female Athletes in the Late Hellenistic and Roman Greek World.”

**Dr. Christine Varga-Harris** presented a paper, “Women of the World Unite! The Soviet Women’s Committee and Cultural Outreach to Developing Countries during the 1950s and 1960s,” in June 2021 for the Colloquium on Eastern European History, University of Bremen and Eberhard Karl University of Tübingen. In November 2021 she gave a talk at the Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies convention, titled

“Women of the Soviet Union and Developing Countries Unite – To Learn from One Another and ‘To Get to Know Each Other Better!’” She published “Soviet Women and Internationalism in Socialist Travel Itineraries in the 1950s and 1960s” in *Diplomatic History*, which will appear in June 2022.

**Dr. Stewart Winger** published an opinion perspective in the *Washington Post*, titled “Abraham Lincoln supported a wealth tax. Here’s why.”

**Dr. Amy Wood** was awarded two prestigious fellowships, a National Endowment for the Humanities grant for her project “The Criminal in the American Reform Imagination, 1870-1940” and the Delta Delta Delta Fellowship at the National Humanities Center. In addition, she has been awarded the ISU College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Service Award for 2022.

## Drs. Jasper and Wood win prestigious national fellowships

By Dr. Keith Plumbers

History professors Dr. Kathryn Jasper and Dr. Amy Wood have been recognized with multiple prestigious national fellowships.

Dr. Jasper won a \$30,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to complete her book, *Bounded Wilderness: Land and Reform within the Congregation of Fonte Avellana, 1035-1139*. This book explores the changes in the landscape at Fonte Avellana under Cardinal Bishop Peter Damian, one of the most famous church leaders during the “Investiture Conflict,” a period in which the Church and local leaders vied over who should have the power to appoint bishops, among other questions of religious practice and reform. By focusing on the material and environmental manifestations of



Dr. Kathryn Jasper

church reform, Jasper demonstrates that reformers like Damian saw the landscape as a critical site of transformation, in addition to the administrative and theological questions that dominate histories of the conflict.

Both the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Humanities Center recognized Dr. Amy Wood.

The NEH awarded her a \$60,000 grant and the NHC has recognized her with a year-long residential fellowship in North Carolina’s Research Triangle. These two fellowships will allow Wood to complete a book titled *Sympathy for the Devil: The Criminal in the American Imagination, 1870-1930*, which is under contract with Oxford University Press. This book will examine the rise of criminology as a discipline and its role in the wave of prison reform during this period.



Dr. Amy Wood

Wood’s book expands upon existing accounts of prison reform, arguing that emotions—those of both prisoners and criminologists—were essential. In doing so, she works to take seriously contemporary efforts to create a compassionate system of punishment and rehabilitation, examining why reformers and wider U.S. society found such goals compelling.

The History Department congratulates professors Jasper and Wood on these outstanding achievements.

**Dr. Touré Reed** was recognized by CAS as Outstanding College Researcher in Humanities.



Dr. Touré Reed

## Alumni spotlight: Dr. David Sam inducted into ISU College of Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame

By Dr. Keith Plumbers

In April 2022, the College of Arts and Sciences at ISU inducted Dr. David Sam into the CAS Hall of Fame.

Sam earned a B.A. from ISU in history, economics, and political science in 1981, graduating *cum laude* with departmental honors in history and political science. After completing his B.A., he went on to earn a Master of Arts in law and diplomacy (MALD) and a Ph.D. in international economic and political relations degrees from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.

Additionally, he holds an MBA in finance and marketing from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, a JD degree from the University of Akron Law School, and a Master of Laws (LL.M.) in energy law and policy (with distinction) from the Center for Energy, Petroleum and Mineral Law and Policy at the University of Dundee in Scotland.

Over the past two decades, Sam has served as a college president, first at North Harris College in Texas and, since 2007, as the eighth president of Elgin Community

College. In this role, Sam has led Elgin Community College to receive recognition and multiple awards.

Sam is an active leader in Elgin civic life, serving on the boards of the Elgin Area Chamber of Commerce; Alignment for Collaborative Education; Golden Corridor Family YMCA; and United Way of Elgin.

The History Department congratulates Dr. David Sam for his many achievements and warmly welcomes him to the CAS Hall of Fame.

## Graduate student spotlight: Andrew Thomas

By Dr. Keith Plumbers

Few people in history departments around the U.S. can say that they've played with blues legend Buddy Guy. Master's student Andrew Thomas is one of them, and his



Andrew Thomas

experience recording, touring, and gigging is wide-ranging. Andrew "Blaze" Thomas, as he is known in the music industry, has appeared on over 20 albums, as both a performer and songwriter. He earned his reputation in Chicago's unparalleled blues clubs and toured the world.

Drumming has been Thomas' passion since he was a small child, banging on household items until his parents bought him his first drum set at age 9. He began playing gospel music at New Miracle Temple church in the 1990s and was hooked. After completing his undergraduate degree at Western Illinois University, Thomas set

out to become a professional drummer.

Learning the blues was not easy. In a profile in the July 2021 *Living Blues* magazine, Thomas recounted his first night playing the shuffle, the fast, precise rhythm that anchors Chicago blues. "I fell flat on my face," he said. Rather than let that first moment of failure dissuade him, Thomas turned it into motivation to become great at his craft. To learn the blues requires intense focus and tireless work: "You've got to go down to the clubs, you've got to go down to the alley, you've got to get down and dirty, you've got to go hang out at the late-night stops," Thomas said.

It was precisely that tireless work ethic that helped earn him the nickname "Your Favorite Drummer" over 20 years of work.

Even as he gigged and recorded, Thomas has always sought to give back to other musicians. He wrote and published a book in 2020 titled *You've Got the Gig, Here's How to Keep It: A Working Musician's Model for Success*, and he has created a YouTube channel that offers up lessons that range from how to play the shuffle to advice for stage presence to guidance on how to act like a professional on- and off-stage.

Thomas decided to return to the university classroom to study history in response to the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin in May 2020. He wanted to understand the history of policing, violence, and race in the United States and believes that learning history can help us to create a better world today. He carried the same attitude that made him successful as a blues drummer to the classroom, treating every essay and class session as an opportunity to figure out how to put in the hard work to master the historian's craft, just like he worked to master the shuffle.

Since coming to ISU, Thomas has broadened and focused his interests, writing on the longer histories of the Atlantic slave trade and researching the African diaspora beyond North America, working with Dr. Kyle Ciani on oral history projects, and working on the McLean County Museum of History's Bloomington-Normal Black History Project. In this work, he continues to build on insights about the importance of historical sources beyond the page. Blues music, he told *Living Blues*, tells the story of the struggle of Black people in the United States.

Andrew's life as a musician and as a historian demonstrate how important it is to listen to and record these stories, whether on stage, in the studio, or as part of an oral history project.

## Undergraduate student spotlight: Ty Martin

By Dr. Keith Plumbers

Podcasts have become essential companions for commutes, chores, and other daily activities, and history podcasts are some of the most popular. These shows



Ty Martin, pictured with WWII veteran Roy Roberts

have helped shape their listeners' sense of the past and have opened windows into scholarly debates in the field. Ty Martin, a history education major from Forsyth, is going to be a part of this important field of public history and media through his internship with the *History That Doesn't Suck* podcast. This show, hosted by Dr. Greg Jackson, an associate professor at Utah Valley University who has appeared on, created, and consulted for television, radio, documentaries, and podcasts, provides a survey of U.S. history from the

American Revolution to the present.

The goal of the podcast, Martin writes, "is not only to educate people into learning more about American history but to entertain individuals by telling some exhilarating, heart-wrenching, and emotional stories." For him, this approach is one of the most appealing aspects of the internship. He wants to reach "individuals who aren't historians or [who don't] consider themselves super interested in history" and believes that popular media like podcasts provide a great way to make listeners want to learn more. *History That Doesn't Suck* works to draw those listeners deeper into the discipline by providing a bibliography for each episode to encourage deeper reading.

Martin said his courses at ISU provided essential preparation for this internship. For Martin, "learning how to think and write like a historian" was essential to earning this position. ISU faculty, he writes, focus intensely on good historical writing and professors Dr. Kyle Ciani, Dr. Ron Gifford, and Dr. Richard Hughes "sparked loads of interest" in what history can offer. In his position, he will be putting those skills to use, composing biog-

raphies for key figures in many episodes that will circulate via the podcast's social media. Martin is confident he will succeed in doing so because "ISU prepared me to effectively research and write as a historian."

Martin loves that history provides a way to uncover and share the stories of people who might otherwise be forgotten. It is easy to see how his passion for history made him an ideal match for *History That Doesn't Suck*. "There are some incredible people who did fantastic things that deserve recognition," Martin said. "Learning about the stories and struggles" of these people gives him a greater "appreciation for the sacrifice and impacts of people in history that have shaped the way I live today." In his internship, he will have the opportunity to not only continue exploring these stories but to share them with a wide audience.

After he finishes this internship, Martin wants to work toward cultivating a passion for history among his future students. He will be student teaching in spring 2023 and hopes to find a position teaching high school near his hometown.

## Illinois State Historical Society honors Dr. Mark Wyman with Lifetime Achievement Award

By Dr. Keith Plumbers

The Illinois State Historical Society has chosen Distinguished Professor Emeritus Dr. Mark Wyman as the recipient of



Dr. Mark Wyman

its 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award. Wyman taught at ISU for 35 years and authored eight books and countless articles. His teaching and research focused on the Midwest covering labor, race, ethnicity, migration and displaced persons,

environmental conservation, and the history of ISU.

Wyman spent his career bringing history outside the classroom as an active and engaged member of the Bloomington-Normal community. He worked for decades with the McLean County Museum of History on the Bloomington-Normal Black History Project, an oral history and archival collection in which African American residents narrate the story of the area, of their lives, and of their community. In retirement, Wyman has worked to draw attention to episodes of racial discrimination in Bloomington-Normal, writing the inscription for the 2018 historical marker describing the history of Miller Park's segregated beaches. His work pushes our community to look unflinch-

ingly at its past to build a better future.

Wyman continues to play a large role in the lives of ISU history majors. In 2004, friends and family established the Mark Wyman Scholarship, which is awarded to a student beginning their second semester majoring in history.

Dr. Ross Kennedy captured Wyman's importance to the field and to ISU. Over his distinguished career and in retirement, Kennedy writes, "Dr. Wyman embodied Illinois and Midwestern history in both substance and spirit. He is one of the most talented and admirable figures in ISU's history."

The ISU History Department offers many congratulations to Dr. Mark Wyman on this recognition.

