
*History Department
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Professor. History Department, Ithaca College. United States History. August 2013 - present.

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in History. 1999. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Major Field: United States social and cultural history.

Dissertation: “Murder and the Modern Sensibility: Sensationalism and Cultural Change in Richmond, Virginia, from the Victorian Era to the Age of Ragtime” (Prof. John F. Kasson, advisor)

Master of Arts in History. 1993. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Thesis: “Charting Richmond's Fun: The Changing Shape of Commercial Amusements in Richmond, Virginia, 1880-1920.”

Bachelor of Arts in History, with Departmental Honors. 1989. Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond.

BOOKS

The End of Public Execution: Race, Religion, and Punishment in the American South. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2022.

The Body in the Reservoir: Murder and Sensationalism in the South. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.

ARTICLES – Peer Reviewed

“What Counts: Trends in Racial Violence in the Postbellum South” *Journal of American History* 100 (September 2013): 375-400.

“The Scaffold’s Revival: Race and Public Execution in the South” *Journal of Social History* 45 (Fall 2011): 195-224.

“Jim Crow Justice, the *Richmond Planet*, and the Murder of Lucy Pollard” in Robert Asher, Lawrence Goodheart, and Alan Rogers, eds., *Murder on Trial, 1620 - 2002* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005), 61-85.

“Murder Made Real: the Visual Revolution of the Half-tone” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 111 (2003): 379-410. Winner of the William M. E. Rachal award for the best overall essay in the *Magazine* for 2003 and of the Society of Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era’s Biennial Article Prize for 2005.

“Freedmen and Enslaved Soil: A Case Study of Manumission, Migration, and Land” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 104 (Autumn, 1996): 455-80. Winner of the C. Coleman McGehee award for the best graduate student essay in the *Magazine* for 1996.

In PROCESS

“‘The Balance of It in Sugar’: How American Cash Betrayed the Working Poor” – an article exploring the ways access to dependable American cash itself was a challenge to workers. And several short-form articles.

AWARDS and FELLOWSHIPS

- **Virginia Historical Society Mellon Research Fellowship**, 2014; also in 1995, 1997, 2000 and 2004.
- Ithaca College’s **Faculty Excellence Award** for 2013, awarded for “overall excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service.”
- Ithaca College’s **Robert Ryan Professorship of the Humanities**, 2007-2010. A three-year honorary professorship.
- Ithaca College **Summer Faculty Research Grant**, 2007; also received in 2002 and 2004.
- Society of Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era’s **2005 Biennial Article Prize for the best essay in the journal literature on this era by a young scholar** who published in the years 2003 and 2004.
- **Virginia Historical Society’s William M. E. Rachal Award** for the best overall essay in the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* for the year 2003.
- **National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend**, 2001.
- Ithaca College **Center for the Study of Culture, Race, and Ethnicity Project Grant** to develop the course “Ethnic United States since the Civil War”, 2001.
- Ithaca College (small) **Faculty Research Grant**, 2001, 2003.
- **Keck Technology Grant** and Summer Workshop on Technology, 2001.
- **University of North Carolina On-Campus Dissertation Fellowship**, 1998 - 1999.
- **University of North Carolina’s George E. Mowry Research Award**, 1992 and 1997.

- **Virginia Historical Society C. Coleman McGehee Award** for the best essay in the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* by a graduate student for the year 1996.
- **Andrew W. Mellon Dissertation Seminar Fellowship**, 1995.

ARTICLES – Non-Standard Review

“The Multiple States and Fields of Lynching Scholarship” *Journal of American History* 101 (December 2014): 852-3. (A response to Michael Pfeifer’s state-of-the-field essay on lynching: ‘At the Hands of Parties Unknown’)

“When Coney Island Arrived in Richmond: Leisure in the Capital at the Turn of the Twentieth Century” *Virginia Cavalcade* 51 (Autumn 2002): 168-79.

“Review Essay: The Lure of the Sensational Murder” *The Journal of Social History* 35 (December 2001): 429-43.

BRIEF ARTICLES, CONTRIBUTIONS, and PUBLIC-FACING WRITING

“Grief in a Life Well Lived,” Commentary in *The Ithacan*, 30 April 2026

“The Troubling Roots of Off-Year Gubernatorial Elections” *Made By History*, 29 October 2025 (time.com)

“An Anticolonial War in the Heartland? No . . . But . . .” *The Edge*, 30 June 2024 (theedgemedial.org)

“Confounding White Supremacy” UNC Press Blog, 27 June 2023 (uncpressblog.com)

“The Slaughterhouse Accountant: Researching Death,” *Perspectives Daily* (online American Historical Association publication), 11 May 2023 (historians.org/research-and-publications/perspectives-on-history)

“The Racism of American Capital Punishment” *The Edge*, 26 January 2023 (theedgemedial.org)

“Thomas Judson Cluverius” and **“John Jeter Crutchfield”** in Sara B. Bearss, ed., *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, v. III, (Richmond: Library of Virginia, 2006), 313-15, 590-91.

“Cultural Change in the Gilded Age” and **“Crime in the Gilded Age”** in Leonard Schlup and James G. Ryan, eds., *The Historical Dictionary of the Gilded Age* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2003), 113, 117.

“Uncovering a Forgotten Life” in *Ithaca College Quarterly* 20 (Fall 2002): 13-14.

REVIEWS

Jessica K. Lowe, *Murder in the Shenandoah: Making Law Sovereign in Revolutionary Virginia* (Cambridge U. Press, 2019) for *Criminal Law and Criminal Justice Books* (2021). (online)

- Karen Cox, *Goat Castle: A True Story of Murder, Race, and the Gothic South* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2017) for *The Journal of American History* 104 (September 2017): 92.
- Carole Emberton, *Beyond Redemption: Race, Violence, and the American South after the Civil War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), and K. Stephen Prince, *Stories of the South: Race and Reconstruction in Southern Identity, 1865-1915* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2014) for *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 14 (July 2015): 464-67.
- William D. Carrigan and Christopher Waldrep, editors, *Swift to Wrath: Lynching in Global Historical Perspective* (Charlottesville: UVA Press, 2013), and Michael J. Pfeifer, editor, *Lynching Beyond Dixie: American Mob Violence Outside the South* (Urbana: U. of Illinois Press, 2013) for *Journal of Southern History* 81 (February 2015): 218-20.
- Michael J. Pfeifer, *The Roots of Rough Justice: Origins of American Lynching* (University of Illinois Press, 2011) for the online journal *Civil War Book Review* (www.cwbr.com; Fall 2011 edition)
- Karen Halttunen, ed., *A Companion to American Cultural History* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2008) for the *Journal of Southern History* 76 (February 2010): 224-26.
- Amy Louise Wood, *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America, 1890-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), for the *American Historical Review* 114 (December 2009): 1473-4.
- Richard F. Hamm, *Murder, Honor, and Law: Four Virginia Homicides From Reconstruction to the Great Depression* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003) for *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 111 (2003): 315-16.
- Patricia C. Click, *Time Full of Trial: the Roanoke Island Freedmen's Colony, 1862-1867* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2001) for *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 109 (2001): 339-40.
- Elizabeth Faue Bethel, *The Roots of African-American Identity* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), in *The William and Mary Quarterly* 55 (July 1998): 488-9.
- Lawrence B. Glickman, *A Living Wage: Workers and the Making of American Consumer Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell U. Press, 1997), in *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 53 (Jan. 2000): 335-37.

INVITED TALKS

- “Historical Contexts for the Election”** to multiple IC constituencies (and to Ithaca’s Religious Society of Friends Meeting), including the ICSM program and CFE, Fall, 2024. Earlier iterations were presented to ICSM classes in 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2022.
- “Faith and Service”** panel participant, Ithaca College, as a part of this year’s MLK week programming, 15 February 2023.
- “The War After the War: How the South Won”** sponsored by the Tompkins County Civil War Sesquicentennial Commemoration Commission and the Tompkins County Public Library, Ithaca, New York, 5 November 2014.
- “Cultural History and Racial Violence: Case Studies in Why the Humanities Matter”** for the December Ithaca College Faculty Colloquium, 5 December 2013.

“The South’s Path to a Sensationalizing Press” at the Symposium on the 19th Century Press, the Civil War, and Free Expression, Chattanooga, Tennessee, 12 November 2009.

“An Obituary for the Era of Lynching: Racial Violence in the Postbellum South Reconsidered” a culminating presentation of my research as the School of Humanities and Sciences’ Robert Ryan Professor in the Humanities for 2007-10, Ithaca College, 27 April 2010.

PRESENTATIONS

“Glossing the Text of White Supremacy, 1904,” a part of the panel “Reframing Reconstruction and Race in the Era of Jim Crow,” Southern Historical Association Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, 15 November 2014.

“What Counts: Trends in Racial Violence in the Postbellum South,” at the St. George Tucker Society Meeting, Augusta, Georgia, 30 July 2011.

“The Many Faces of Execution Sensationalism in the Southern Press” at the Symposium on the 19th Century Press, the Civil War, and Free Expression, Chattanooga, Tennessee, 12 November 2009.

“Public Executions as the Historical Context for Lynching”, a presentation at the Southern Historical Association annual meeting, Birmingham, Alabama, November, 2006. I also organized this panel, titled “Race, Lynching, and Legal Executions in the South and Southwest.”

“Recasting the Male Murderer at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” a presentation at the American Studies Association annual meeting, Washington, D.C., November, 2001. I also organized this panel, titled “Policing the Boundaries: Murderous Men, Sexualized Women, and Eugenics.”

“The Woman in the Case: Realism Recasts the Female Murder Victim in Richmond, Virginia, 1867-1911,” a presentation at the Southern Conference on Women’s History, Richmond, Virginia, 17 June 2000.

“From the Gallows to the Chair: Changes in Execution in Turn-of-the-Century America,” History Department, Ithaca College, 2 November 1999.

“Mimesis and Murderers: A Case Study of the Half-Tone’s Visual Revolution,” a presentation at the conference “Semblance and Likeness: Studies in Visual Culture,” University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 29-30 January, 1999.

“From Romance to Realism in Murder: Changes in the Criminal Face with the Introduction of Photography,” a poster presentation at the annual meeting of the Social Science History Association, Washington, D. C., October 16-19, 1997.

“‘Travesties of Justice:’ Virginia’s Judicial System and Popular Opinion in the Late-Victorian Era” a presentation at the conference “Telling About the South,” University of Virginia, 22 March 1997.

“The All-Absorbing Topic: A Murder Mystery in Late-Victorian Richmond, Virginia,” a presentation at the conference “Tales of the City: The Urban Center and Its Place in History,” Princeton University, 4 October 1996.

“Cousin Tommie!: Crime Sources and the study of Urban Culture,” a presentation at the ERASMUS intensive course “Cities and Cultures Since the End of the Middle Ages,” Leicester University, England, 16 April 1996.

OTHER PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS, CONVERSATIONS, and INTERVIEWS

Panelist on “Delimmas of AI for IC,” a Center for Faculty Excellence panel on the dangers of embracing AI, Ithaca College, October 2025 and November 2025.

Discussion Leader, “What Now?” a discussion in the aftermath of the 2024 Election with the History Club at Ithaca College, November, 2025.

Lecturer, [“Colonial Wars and Tensions,”](#) *Lectures in History*, C-SPAN. Taped my class period on 14 September 2013, and aired the episode dozens of times on C-SPAN2, C-SPAN3, and C-SPAN radio since October, 2023. It is likewise viewable on the web.

Speaker, “Historical Contexts for the Gist Manumission,” Gist Descendants Reunion, Mt. Orab, OH, July 2023.

Panelist on “Writing Beyond the Academy,” a Center for Faculty Excellence panel on short form writing, Ithaca College, May 2023.

Public Readings of and Conversations about *The End of Public Execution*:

- Buffalo Street Books, Ithaca, NY, February 2023.
- Book Launch, a part of the Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival, zoom, April 2023.
- Virginia Museum of History and Culture, Richmond, VA, June 2023.

Interviewed on the publication of *The End of Public Execution*:

- by Lane Davis for the New Books Network, December 2022;
- by John Heckman for the “Tattooed Historian,” April, 2023; and
- by Gerald Horne for “Freedom Now!” radio show, KPFFK, December 2024.

Public Readings of *The Body in the Reservoir: Murder and Sensationalism in the South*:

- Bookery II, Ithaca, NY, May 2008;
- Library of Virginia, Richmond, June 2008.

Panel Participant, “Race in America: then, now, & tomorrow: A discussion/engagement of Barack Obama’s ‘A More Perfect Union’ speech”. Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY, April 2008.

TEACHING

Courses Taught:

1968: A U.S. Revolution
U.S. History to 1865,
U.S. History since 1865,
The History of United States Popular Culture,
Workers in American History: The Story of Immigration, Race, and Class,
Rights and Wrongs: The History of U.S. Law,
The United States in the Age of Global Crisis, 1914-1945,
The United States in the Age of Cold War,
World War II and America (an Ithaca Seminar),
Historical Contexts for the Election (a 1-credit course),
Still a Mystery: Conversations Across Disciplines About What We Don't Know (1 cr.)

SERVICE to the History Department

Curriculum Committee Member, 2002-4; 2011-13; 2017-19; 2021-2, 2023-27; Chair 2018-19, 2023-4, 2024-7. In 2002-3, devised and wrote the departmental workload project, moving us from a 24-hour teaching load to a 21-hour load.

Scholarships and Awards Committee Member, 2011-13, 2023-24, 2024-6; chair 2011-12.

Personnel Committee Member, 2006-11; 2021-3, 2025-7.

Promotion Committee, 2017-18 (chair), 2018-19 (chair), 2019-20 (chair of one and member of another).

Library Liaison, 2004-2008; 2017-19.

Chair of Department, 2013-2016; included membership of personnel committee and ex-officio membership of the curriculum committee.

Handbook Committee, 2009-10. I chaired this committee charged with rewriting our Department Handbook.

Mayrock Lecture Committee Member, 2008-9. Organized bringing Dr. Debra Diamond ("Of Agency and the Sublime: Politics and Painting in 19th Century Rajasthan") and Dr. Penny M. Von Eschen ("Duke Ellington Plays Baghdad: Rethinking Power after 1945")

Search Committee Chair, 2006-7. Searching for a U.S./Global Environmental and Public Historian.

Search Committee Member, 2004-5. Searched for a Latin American Historian.

Coordinator, History Department Assessment Project, 2001- 2002. This involved a statistical survey, a survey of alumni, and the writing of a 72-page report on the state of the department and an action plan for changes in the department.

Devised and Completed a Statistical Study of the Ithaca College history department's staffing and course load over the last six years, as well as a study comparing those statistics with those of fifteen other history departments. 1999-2000.

SERVICE to the School of Humanities and Sciences

Coordinator of Legal Studies, June 2023 – ongoing. Coordinating the program's budget and curriculum, managing and balancing advising load for the program and running steering committee meetings. In 2023-4, this has included leading the effort to perform our self-study.

Curriculum Committee, member, Spring 2023.

Faculty Senate, member, 2001-7, 2009-14; 2017-20. Member of the Senate's executive committee, 2013-14, 2019-20; President of the Senate for three terms, 2010-13; Senate Parliamentarian for 2009-10; 2018-19; Senate Vice-President for three terms, 2002-5.

Member of the School Strategic Planning Taskforce Subcommittee on Student Success, 2018.

Faculty Senate Subcommittee Evaluating Department Scholarship Statements, chair, 2011-14.

SERVICE to Ithaca College

Ithaca College Faculty Council Member, 2008-10, 2015-2017, 2023-6. In 2023-5, served as executive committee member and secretary.

Committee Member, Park School Search for Media Law Professor, 2024-5.

Voter Education and Registration Task Force, member, 2023-4.

Guest Lecturer for the IC First Year Seminar Program, 2008 to present. Offered multiple one-hour presentations on "The History of Ithaca College" each Fall semester in odd-numbered years; in election (even-numbered) years, since 2016, I offered one-hour presentations of the historical contexts of that Fall's elections.

Member of the Dana Professor Selection Committee, 2017, 2021.

Member of an Ad Hoc Committee Reviewing the Dana Professor Program, convened by the Provost and reporting out to the Faculty Council, 2017.

Ithaca College Faculty Governance Ad Hoc Committee Member, 2009-10.

Faculty Affiliate for H.O.M.E. (Housing Offering Multicultural Experience) in Ithaca College's Office of Residential Life, 2006, 2008-10.

Co-Facilitator for a Seminar on Tenure and Promotion offered by the IC Center for Faculty Excellence, Fall 2009.

Search Committee Member, Spring 2008. Searching for a one-year assistant professor in African Diaspora Studies for Ithaca College's Center for the Study of Culture, Race, and Ethnicity.

Freshmen Reading Initiative Leader, Fall 2003. Served on a committee to develop questions for both students and faculty/staff leaders, then gave a short presentation to faculty/staff on historical themes relevant to James McBride's *The Color of Water*.

SERVICE to the Profession

External program reviewer for: The Legal Studies Program of SUNY-Canton, 2026.

Manuscript reviewer for: NYU Press, 2024; *Journal of Southern History*, 2005, 2016, 2023; *Law and History Review*, 2021; *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, 2019; *Journal of American History*, 2014; *19th Century History*, 2013; Houghton Mifflin, 2008; *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 2002.

Review panelist, Junior Scholars workshop (zoom), sponsored by the Southern Historical Association's Professional Development Committee, October, 2024.

Review panelist, Society of Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era's Biennial Article Prize, 2008.

Review panelist, National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend program, 2002 and 2003.

SERVICE to the Community

Committee Member, Nominations Committee, Ithaca Monthly Meeting of Friends, 2024-; and clerk of the library committee for the Friends, 2024-

Volunteer, Friends of the Library Booksale, 2022-present.

Presented a lecture/discussion on "Historical Contexts for the Midterm Elections" at Longview retirement community as a part of the Ithaca College-Longview partnership, October 2018.

Consulted with the History Center of Tompkins County on their project to have an "Italian-American Ithaca" day celebrating that community, Fall 2017

Presented a lecture/discussion on "Ellis Island and Immigration History" at Longview retirement community as a part of the Ithaca College-Longview partnership, 29 July 2004.

PRIOR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Associate Professor. History Department, Ithaca College. August 2006 - August 2013.

Assistant Professor. History Department, Ithaca College. August 1999 - August 2006.

Lecturer, University of North Carolina, 1998-1999.

Courses: World Since 1945, Spring 1998 and again in Summer 1999.

Lecturer, Greensboro College, 1998.

Course: World Societies to 1500, Summer 1998.

Teaching Assistant, University of North Carolina, 1993-1997.

Courses: U.S. History to the Civil War, U.S. History since the Civil War, Emergence of American Culture, U.S. Business History, World since 1945, North Carolina History since 1865.

Research Assistant to Professor Jacquelyn D. Hall, UNC, 1995-1998.

Subject of research: Southern women writers in the early-twentieth century.

Archivist in the Southern Historical Collection, UNC, 1995.

Subject: American Textile Manufacturers Association, papers of the Executive Secretary.

Research Assistant to Professor James L. Leloudis, UNC, 1992-93.

Subject of research: Public education in North Carolina in the early-twentieth century.