



**THE HISTORIAN**

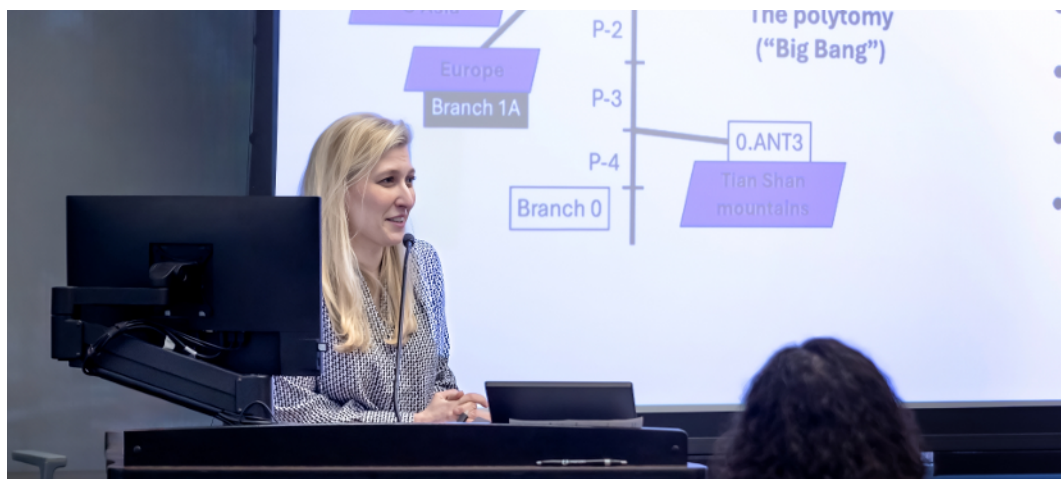
**SPRING 2025**

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings to all as we start a much-needed summer break!

It has been a challenging, but rewarding, semester. The landscape in higher education is changing, perhaps more quickly than ever before. We continue to grapple with the ways new technologies impact the way we teach, learn, and engage with one another. If you follow the news, you are also likely to be aware of shifts to federal funding models that affect the entire campus. Finally, it must be said, the American Historical Association, the Organization for American Historians, and countless professional historians have recently had recourse to publicly condemn censorship and defend the standards of our profession.

The world has reminded us that the study of history isn't a luxury or an intellectual pastime. It's essential. Historians – including many of you reading this newsletter – understand that in an age when disinformation runs rampant and competing narratives



**Dr. Danielle Battisti** speaking at the Richard Dean Winchell Lecture, April 24, 2025.

battle for attention, our discipline takes on greater meaning. We are among those who insist on the value of evidence. We push back against efforts to rewrite the past for present-day agendas. And as some actors place an almost blind faith in the power of technology to shape our future, historians offer a vital counterbalance to the “move fast and break things” ethos. Our work helps to keep questions about the human condition—its struggles, its progress, its contradictions—at the center of the conversation about how we choose to move forward.

Each year, I find new reason for hope as I watch colleagues, students, and alumni put these lessons into practice. This year's cohort of faculty and students have continued a tradition of excellence that seems to make our awards ceremonies grow longer, campus events more dynamic, and engagement with our communities more impactful. I hope you enjoy reading about just some of the achievements we've witnessed this semester in the pages of this newsletter.

## Congratulations to our 2024 - 2025 graduates!

### Undergraduate Students

Jonathan Booth  
Haleigh Diltz  
Riley Goldhorn  
Logan Good  
Cody Jackson  
Joshua Kersch  
Nate Krejci  
Anthony Mai  
Margaret Militti  
Clayton Moore  
Seth Oney  
Raul Perez  
Jordan Ring  
Daniel Smith  
Megan Streff  
Bryan Yumul

### Graduate Students

Md Showkot Ali  
Jessica Botts  
Angela Ecabert  
Angela Ekwenye  
Thomas Forke  
Tyler Gillis  
Emily Good  
Michael  
Gutierrez-Madriral  
Anabel Hazelton  
James Howard  
Sarah Lehn  
Jason Libby  
Jason Lura  
Bobbie  
McWilliams  
Jeff Preston  
Alexis Ritterbush  
Treygan Russell  
Alexandra Shaner  
Sean Summerfelt



Undergraduate student, **Sophie Krueger** putting up a new photo show exhibit and making sure the text is lined up correctly with the photos.

## FEATURED UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT - SOPHIE KRUEGER

Sophie Krueger, a Secondary Education major with a double-minor in History and Anthropology, spent spring 2025 gaining hands-on experience at [The Durham Museum](#) under the mentorship of Kristen Rowley.

During her internship at the Durham, Sophie worked on research, photo archiving, and processing collections. Her research project culminated in her curation of an exhibit on "the Golden Spike Days of 1939." The "Golden Spike Days" were a four-day celebration commemorating the release of Cecil B. DeMille's world premiere of the movie, "Union Pacific."

In the photo archive, she worked on digitizing historical negatives, while her favorite project—part of collections—involved transcribing and researching original documents from the Byron Reed collection.

**"I really enjoyed my time interning with the museum and can't wait to return for the summer semester!" - Sophie Krueger**



Graduate student, **Mason Hartwell** in the Criss Library Archives and Special Collections.

## FEATURED GRADUATE STUDENT - MASON HARTWELL

This spring, Mason Hartwell completed an internship in the **Archives and Special Collections** at UNO's Criss Library.

Working under the guidance of Professor Lori Schwartz, Mason gained experience with exhibit installations and collection processing, working with materials from the Senator Chuck Hagel and the Dr. Jo Ann Carrigan collections. These projects offered him a deeper understanding of archival practices. As he considered what he learned, he said, "My internship at the Criss Library under Professor Lori Schwartz was one of the highlights of my student career. Becoming a subject matter expert on a collection made it clear that this experience wasn't just for me, I was really contributing to the library's mission. Not only did I learn the ins and outs of working in an archive, I also gained valuable insights from special collections staff that have reshaped my career outlook."

Looking ahead, Mason plans to continue building on this experience with a summer internship in Genealogy & Local History at the Omaha Public Library.

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**Interested in an internship? Contact History  
Intern Program Coordinator, Dr. Mark Boxell  
[mboxell@unomaha.edu](mailto:mboxell@unomaha.edu)**

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## Graduate Program Highlights

### Final Projects

The department introduced a new non-thesis option to the History Graduate Program, the Final Project HIST 8040, which has been highly successful. This spring, **Tyler Gillis** created a website centered around a 3-D model of Delphi. His digital narratives combine text, the interactive model, and additional resources. You can see his impressive finished project [here](#).

### 17th Annual UNO Student Research and Creative Activity Fair (RCAF)

On April 11th, the Office of Research and Creative Activity hosted the RCAF at the Community Engagement Center, and several of our graduate students showcased their GRACA-funded research. RCAF is an opportunity for students to present their work and shape their careers, and we are **proud to share** that **Sarah Lehn** won the award for Best Graduate Oral Presentation & **Tom Forke** won Honorable Mention in the Oral Presentation category. Sarah and Tom earned their M.A. while teaching for Omaha Public Schools. Sarah created a teaching portfolio, "The Eagles and the Kaiser: Omaha Central High School and World War I Anti-Germanism" and Tom wrote a thesis, "Religious Expression in the Soviet Gulag."



## DUAL ENROLLMENT

### Jason Lura

Jason currently teaches AP American Government and AP U.S. History for Bennington Public Schools and is one of our outstanding Dual Enrollment teachers. In fall 2024, he finished his first semester of teaching dual enrollment for UNO. Reflecting on the experience, he said, "I love that my students at Bennington have the opportunity to receive college credit for their hard work!" Jason is currently completing his Master of Arts in History & Government here at UNO.

## ALUMNI

### Brianna Tafolla, MA 2018

Brianna Tafolla Rivière joins the Boston University faculty as an Assistant Professor this fall. Congratulations on your tenure-track position, Brianna!

### Peter Taylor, BGS MS 1973

Peter Taylor, a retired US Army Lieutenant Colonel, was selected as one of the 2024 State of West Virginia's 'History Heroes', an annual award given by the State's Department of Arts, Culture and History to those who "Go beyond the call of duty to ensure the success of local history, genealogy, preservation and museum organizations."

Taylor, an author and historian, was recognized for his book, *A Civil War History of Harrison County, West Virginia, 1861-1865*, a work that was donated to the local Historical Society for publication.



**Marilyn Moll** holding her Master's Thesis "*Count and Democrat: Brockdorff-Rantzau as the Weimar Republic's First Foreign Minister.*"

## FEATURED ALUMNA MARILYN MOLL, MA 1967

Marilyn Moll attended the University of Nebraska at Omaha when it was known as the Municipal University of Omaha, and she continues to take pride in her academic achievements - especially her master's thesis.

Marilyn's daughter, Nancy, recently shared, "My mother's thesis *Count and Democrat: Brockdorff-Rantzau as the Weimar Republic's First Foreign Minister* has been downloaded 2629 times from Digital Commons, since 2017. I know she was looking at her own 1967-bound copy just yesterday. At 95 ½, she can continue to look back on it with such personal pride of dedication and accomplishment for a military housewife. She values that every day in her old age."

While in the graduate program, Marilyn worked closely with History professors A. Stanley Trickett, Ert Gum, and Paul Beck. She credited Dr. Trickett's seminar on the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 as the inspiration for her thesis. "In the course of studying Germany's initial reaction to the Treaty of Versailles," Marilyn recalled, "I became interested in the German Peace Delegation, especially Count Brockdorff-Rantzau." She dug into historical records and crafted a well-researched and thoughtful thesis, which remains accessible today. A bound copy is housed in the History Department's seminar room.





## Congratulations Class of 2025!

## GRADUATION CEREMONY

On May 16th, we proudly welcomed a new class of undergraduate and graduate students into our growing alumni community. This spring's M.A. graduating class was especially noteworthy—one of the largest in recent years!

The commencement ceremony took place at Baxter Arena, where faculty

members Dr. Danielle Battisti and Dr. Martina Saltamacchia joined in the celebration. Thanks to their thoughtful planning and coordination with students, they shared joyful moments and captured memorable photos.

Congratulations once again to all our graduates! We're excited to see

where your journey takes you next - and proud to have you as part of our alumni family.

Pictured above L-R Michael Gutierrez-Madriral, Jeff Preston, Jessica Botts, Dr. Martina Saltamacchia, Sarah Lehn, Dr. Danielle Battisti, Treygan Russell, Alexis Ritterbush, Tyler Gillis, Jason Libby



**Dr. Danielle Battisti** with **Cody Jackson**, B.A. Cody will be relocating to and working in Pensacola. He intends to pursue a Ph.D. in History.



**Dr. Danielle Battisti** with **Raul Perez**, B.A. Raul will be starting his M.A. at UNO this fall and recently earned a Jo Ann Carrigan Scholarship.



**Dr. Danielle Battisti** with **Bryan Yumul**, B.A. Bryan will be starting his M.A. at UNO this fall and recently earned a Jo Ann Carrigan Scholarship.

**We want to hear from you! Send us your news and achievements to [history@unomaha.edu](mailto:history@unomaha.edu)**

## CONFERENCES, LECTURES & PROMOTIONS

### **Dr. Mark Celinscak**

Public Lecture: "Holocaust and Human Rights Education Through the Art of Samuel Bak." Silverman Latin American Institute, Holocaust Museum Houston (January 2025)

**Promoted to Full Professor (April 2025)**

### **Dr. David Korostyshevsky**

Joint SAHMS and Agnes Dillon Randolph Nursing History Conference, University of Virginia Nursing School (March 2025)

American Association for the History of Medicine, Boston (May 2025)

### **Dr. Martina Saltamacchia**

"Financing Faith, Negotiating Power: The Fabbrica and the Politics of Architectural Patronage in Renaissance Milan." Renaissance Society of America, Boston (March 2025)

Roundtable Plenary: "Creating Public, Community Programming." Medieval Academy of America Centennial Conference at Harvard University, Cambridge (March 2025)



***Dr. Martina Saltamacchia**, Associate Professor and History Department Graduate Chair*

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## FEATURED FACULTY DR. MARTINA SALTAMACCHIA

We are thrilled to share that Dr. Martina Saltamacchia has been selected as the recipient of the Outstanding Graduate Mentor Award!

Presented by the Office of Graduate Studies, this award recognizes faculty who demonstrate exceptional commitment to mentoring graduate students. Since its inception in 2002, the award has celebrated those who go above and beyond in fostering student success. Dr. Saltamacchia was chosen not only for her extensive mentoring activities, but also for the deep value she places on creating a supportive, collaborative environment. Her dedication to student growth and academic excellence truly sets her apart. She will be formally recognized at a ceremony this September. Congratulations, Dr. Saltamacchia, on this well-deserved honor!

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*"I was especially moved by the letters of support submitted by former students who testify to the difference you have made in their lives." - Dean for Graduate Studies, Juan Casas, Ph.D.*

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*Dr. Timothy Turnquist and daughter Willa*

## FEATURED ADJUNCT FACULTY DR. TIMOTHY TURNQUIST

This spring, we were delighted to welcome Dr. Timothy Turnquist as an adjunct professor.

Dr. Turnquist recently earned his Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where his research explores Holocaust studies, transatlantic antisemitism, Christian-Jewish relations, (im)migration, and the historical and cultural perceptions of "Semites" and "Aryans." During his time with us, Dr. Turnquist taught American History Since 1865 and The Emergence of Modern America. This fall, he will begin a new role as a professor of practice at UNL, where he will teach and advise students in the departments of Global Studies and Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. While we are sad to see him go, we are excited for what lies ahead and wish him every success in this next chapter.

**Wishing Dr. Turnquist all the best in his new role this fall!**

## FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

### **Dr. Danielle Battisti**

*Hidden Histories of Unauthorized Migrations from Europe to the United States.* Co-edited with S. Deborah Kang (University of Illinois Press, May 2025).

### **Dr. Mark Celinscak**

*Global Approaches to the Holocaust: Memory, History, Representation.* Co-edited with Mehnaz Afridi (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, approved and forthcoming November 2025).

"Reflections on the Art of Samuel Bak in North America." *Samuelis Bakas. Gydanys simboliai.* Edited by Ieva Šadzevičienė. VGMJH Samuel Bak Museum, Vilnius, 2025.

### **Dr. Jeanne Reames**

*Macedon and its Influences - Narratives of Politics and War in Honor of Edward M. Anson.* *Colloquia Antiqua 44.* Co-edited with Graham Wrightson (Peeters Pub. April 2025). Her chapter in it: "Appropriating Narratives of Empire: Alexander and the Destruction of the Branchidai." Earlier in January, she launched a YouTube Channel for public history: "*Let's Talk Alexander the Great and Ancient Macedonia.*" There, she discusses academic matters from difficulties with the sources to myth-busting, and sometimes interviews her Macedonianist colleagues on topics near and dear to their hearts.



## THE FRIED ACADEMY

In 2024-2025, the Department of History was honored to partner on several programs hosted by the **Sam and Frances Fried Holocaust and Genocide Academy**.

In April 2025, the Fried Academy organized two major events on campus. The first was a three-day regional institute titled, "Global Approaches to the Holocaust." The program brought together university educators and museum professionals to expand their knowledge about the global dimensions of the Holocaust. The program featured thirty-four participants, who arrived from across the United States, Canada, Mexico, Germany, North Macedonia and Columbia. The Institute's teaching faculty included Dr. Mehnaz Afridi (Manhattan University), Dr. Rebecca Erbelding (Holocaust historian and author), Dr. Yael Siman (Iberoamericana University), Dr. Ran Zwigenberg (Penn State), and Dr. Edward Kissi (University of South Florida) who delivered the opening keynote, "Africa and the Holocaust."

The Fried Academy then held its inaugural Holocaust and Genocide Studies Teacher Workshop, made possible by a grant to the Department of History's Louis and Frances Blumkin Professorship. Twenty UNO student-teachers and History MA graduate students participated in an all-day program to gain skills and knowledge to teach and discuss topics relating to Holocaust and genocide education, especially important after Legislative Bill 888 was introduced in 2022 requiring the State Board of Education to adopt standards for education on the Holocaust and other acts of genocide. Workshop sessions focused on a variety of frameworks for approaching the study of genocide and concrete activities to be used with students in the classroom.



*Dr. Monica Green presents at the 2025 R.D. Winchell Lecture.*

## DEPARTMENT EVENTS R.D. WINCHELL LECTURE

The Department of History welcomed Dr. Monica Green as this year's **R.D. Winchell Lecturer**.

In her engaging presentation, Dr. Green highlighted the interplay between humanities and scientific research in discussing how pandemics have long shaped human history. Dr. Green drew on the Black Death as a case study to show how modern genetic research has remade our understanding of the past, as well as to comment on how scientific research can be guided by humanistic inquiry. Emphasizing the intersection of human-driven networks, ecological factors, and cutting-edge genetic research, Dr. Green illustrated how pandemics gain global footholds and persist over time. Her talk also explored how these insights can inform present-day responses to emerging infectious diseases.

**"Pandemics, however, are unique in that they manage to exploit human networks to spread globally and, more often than not, sustain themselves." - Dr. Monica Green**

# AWARDS CEREMONY

We held our annual **awards ceremony** on April 17th in the Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center Commons, and we had much to celebrate this year!

We honored award winners, grant recipients, and graduating students. While the weather didn't cooperate, which is par for the course in Nebraska in April, we had a lovely turnout out with community members, family members, friends, and awardees.

We'd like to thank our students for all their hard work this year and to our donors who generously support our students and the department! Thank you!



Background: Graduate Teaching Assistant **Md Robiul Alam Roni** and his wife.

Foreground left to right: **Tyler Gillis, Sarah Lehn, Ben Lundstrom, Dr. Jeanne Reames.**



**Jo Ann Carrigan  
recipients and the  
Graduate Curriculum  
Committee at the  
Awards Ceremony in  
April**

## CARRIGAN RECIPIENTS

The Department of History offers the **Jo Ann Carrigan Scholarship** to incoming graduate students each fall and spring semester. Dr. Carrigan advocated for equity for women in the workplace, fought against inequalities inside and outside

of academia, and supported historical scholarship and public engagement. We are honored to award significant financial support to multiple graduate students each semester in her name. Pictured L to R: Dr. Mark

Celinscak, Dr. Martina Saltamacchia, Bryan Yumul (Carrigan 2025-2026), Emily Gaddy (Carrigan 2025-2026), Micaela Haffey (Carrigan 2025-2026), Kyleen King (Carrigan 2024-2025), Dr. Leo Barleta.



**Dr. Mark Scherer** circa 1999.

## DR. MARK SCHERER PROFESSOR EMERITUS

At the close of the spring semester, the Department of History celebrated Dr. Mark Scherer's retirement.

Originally from Ohio, Dr. Scherer earned his J.D. from The Ohio State University before making the bold decision to leave law practice and pursue a Ph.D. in History. His academic journey began at UNO, where he served as a graduate assistant and worked closely with Dr. Michael Tate, Dr. Jerold Simmons, and Dr. Charles Gildersleeve while completing his M.A. in 1995. While earning his Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Dr. Scherer taught as an adjunct at UNO. Known for his strong sense of community, he carpooled with fellow graduate students to Lincoln—an early sign of the camaraderie and mentorship he would later foster within the department. His classes on the American Revolution and Nebraska History have become student favorites.

Thank you for your 26 years of dedication and service to the University of Nebraska at Omaha, your colleagues, and your students. Your legacy of excellence will be remembered and cherished by all who had the privilege to work with you, Dr. Scherer!

## CLASSES

American History to 1865  
American History Since 1865  
History of Nebraska & the Great Plains  
American Revolutionary Era  
Federal Indian Law

## PUBLICATIONS

*Echo of Its Time: The History of the Federal District Court of Nebraska, 1867-1933*  
(University of Nebraska Press, 2019)

*Rights in the Balance: Free Press, Fair Trial, and Nebraska Press Association v. Stuart*  
(Texas Tech University Press, 2008)

*Imperfect Victories: The Legal Tenacity of the Omaha Tribe, 1945-1995* (University of Nebraska Press, 1999)

Additional journal articles, encyclopedia entries, and book reviews related to U.S., Great Plains, and Native American legal and political history



**Dr. Mark Scherer** is presented with a retirement plaque by Department Chair **Dr. Danielle Battisti** on May 3, 2025.

## Department of History

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