

Department of History Graduate Student Awards

SPRING 2021



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Edwin Erle Sparks Fellowship in the Humanities for Dissertation Research:

This award is given to incoming students or current students
who have exhibited exemplary academic achievement.

Paulina Rodriguez

Paulina is a doctoral candidate in History and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, pursuing minors in Latina/o Studies and Kinesiology. She is currently writing a dissertation titled, "Deportistas! Mexican American Women, Sporting Citizenship, and Belonging in the Twentieth Century," which recovers the overlooked history of Mexican American women athletes and demonstrates the meaning of their athletic participation for understanding American history, borderlands, the American West, and citizenship. Paulina has taught courses in Latina/o Studies and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and led workshops on oral history for members of the Penn State community. Additionally, she serves as a grad student coordinator for Em-Hoc in the Department of History.



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Edwin Erle Sparks Fellowship in the Humanities for Dissertation Research (continued):

Heather Walser

Heather Carlquist Walser is a doctoral candidate studying the intersection of United States politics, culture, and law in the 100 years following the Constitutional Convention. Her project, "Amnesty's Origins: Federal Power, Peace, and the Public Good in the Long Civil War Era," explores the roots of the amnesty crisis which occurred at the conclusion of the American Civil War. It examines how Americans understood and used amnesty—or the pardon and oblivion of past acts granted by a government—to resolve conflict, negotiate the meaning of "public good," and shape the development of the nation-state across the long nineteenth century. Her work has been funded by the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, the Kansas Historical Society, and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. She is currently a Fellow at the Center for Democratic Deliberation within The McCourtney Institute for Democracy.

E-tu Zen Sun Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award **Heather Walser**



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Knight Graduate Fellowship:

This award is given to recognize outstanding graduate students who are a candidate for a graduate degree in History.

Ugyan Choedup

Ugyan is a fourth-year History doctoral candidate in China subfield. Born and raised as Tibetan refugee in northern India, he has a master's degree in political science from Panjab University in India, and a master of philosophy degree in China studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University in India. His doctoral dissertation is titled "History of Modern Exile Tibetan Nationalist Thought: Tibet's Forgotten Past and Alternative Nationalist Imaginations (1940s–1980s)."



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Hill Dissertation Completion Fellowship:

Carolyn Levy

Carolyn Levy is a dual-title doctoral candidate in History and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies working under the guidance of Dr. Lori Ginzberg. Her dissertation, "Benevolent Surveillance: Prison Matrons and Women's Prison Reform in Nineteenth-Century America," focuses on the influence of women's prison reform on the carceral system in the United States. She has received fellowships from the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College and the Library Company of Philadelphia and Historical Society of Pennsylvania in support of her research.

Megan Kessler Hildebrand

Megan is a fifth-year doctoral candidate in U.S. History and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Her dissertation considers the relationship between women's reform and Christian egalitarianism in the early Woman's Christian Temperance Union.



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Charles and Harriett Pencak Endowment:

This award is given to enrich the College of the Liberal Arts by providing monies for support of graduate research and/or travel expenses related to research in the Department of History.

Tashi Namgyal

Tashi Namgyal is a doctoral student in the Department of History at Penn State. He holds a master of arts degree in international affairs from The George Washington University and a bachelor of arts degree in journalism from University of Madras. Tashi's research interests broadly center on late imperial and modern history of China within the framework of multiculturalism and borderland administration.

Richard Yoder

Rick is a second-year doctoral student in the early modern global area. His work focuses on the history of French Jansenism, Catholic missions, and the supernatural in the early modern world; he has also written on Catholicism and gender in the same period. Recently, he received two awards from the History Graduate Student Association for his papers "Hysterical Knowledge: Gender, Miracles, and Authority at Saint-Médard," and "Holy Entanglements: The Recent Historiography of Jesuit Accommodation in South India."



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Mark and Lucy MacMillan Stitzer Graduate Program Fund:

Moyra Schaufler

Moyra is a first-year doctoral student studying the nineteenth-century United States. Her research focuses on veterans' welfare, including institutional care, prosthetic device programs, and pensions. Central to her interests are considering the organization and construction of spaces dedicated to care and objects related to veterans and disability. Before coming to Penn State, Moyra earned a master of arts degree in history from Villanova University and a bachelor of arts degree in international studies from Dickinson College. In addition to being affiliated with the George and Ann Richards Civil War Era Center, Moyra is also a Center for Black Digital Research Fellow.

Jamie Henton

Jamie Henton is a second-year doctoral student working with Dr. Christina Snyder. Jamie received her master's degree in history and certification in public history at The University of Southern Mississippi in 2018. Influenced by her mixed heritage, Jamie's research interests include race relations between African Americans and Native Americans in the Twentieth-Century U.S. South, Native American experiences with Jim Crow and the Civil Rights Movement, issues of blood quantum and mixed-blood experiences in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and Federal Indian education policy in the mid- to late-twentieth century.



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Mark and Lucy MacMillan Stitzer Program Support Endowment in History:

Xiangyi Liu

Xiangyi is a second-year doctoral student in early modern global history. Her research focuses on French Jesuit missionaries in the eighteenth century, their scientific missions, and the cultural encounters between France and China during the same period. She is interested in the global circulation of science and technology, as well as the production of knowledge during the Enlightenment.

Matthew Douthitt

Matthew is a historian of early-twentieth-century China, specializing in the history of religion. His research focuses on popular Christianity and so-called “secret societies” and their interactions with the state. Prior to attending Penn State, he taught as an adjunct instructor for three years. A firm believer that education is a driving force of social change, Douthitt is particularly interested in expanding educational opportunities to incarcerated people.



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McCourtney Family Graduate Scholarship in American History

Scott Doeblér

Scott is a fifth-year Latin Americanist studying with Matthew Restall and Martha Few. He has a bachelor's degree from Gustavus Adolphus College, and master's degrees in education from Valparaíso University and history from Penn State. His dissertation is a social and environmental history of southern Yucatán and northern Guatemala during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with a tentative working title of "Connected Forests: Spanish, English, and Maya Commodity Ecologies in Southern Yucatán and Northern Guatemala, 1517–1717".

Hayden Lamphere

Hayden Lamphere is a graduate student in the Department of History at Penn State and joined the Center for Black Digital Research as a research scholar in the fall of 2020. She has a bachelor of arts degree from Beloit College, where she studied history and museum studies. Hayden is interested in studying twentieth-century U.S. Black female activism and organizing.



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McCourtney Family Graduate Scholarship in American History (continued):

Norma Watson

Norma is a graduate student studying Latin American History with a dual-title in African American Studies. Her subfields are race and transnationalism. Norma received a bachelor of arts degree in Spanish studies from Dominican University. Before coming to study at Penn State, Norma worked as a Spanish and English as a second language teacher for grades K-12. Norma's research centers anti-Blackness in education systems and curriculum requirements in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States, providing theoretical pedagogy to combat racism rooted in education.



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HGSA Ann Richards Paper Competition

In 2002, Ann and George Richards made an outstanding contribution to the Civil War Era Center that has enabled it to permanently fund faculty and graduate student research as well as public programming. The University named the Center in honor of their generosity. In January of 2013, Ann passed away, and in her memory the Ann Richards Award was created to celebrate the best work that our graduate students have to offer. The award comes with an honorarium that serves as an enduring tribute to Ann's passion for education and scholarship.

Best ABD Research Category

First Place: Frank Lacopo

Second Place: Seonghek Kang

Best Historiography Category

First Place: Zac Clark and

Rick Yoder



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HGSA Ann Richards Paper Competition (continued):

Best Pre-ABD Research

First Place: Rick Yoder

Second Place: Steven Casement



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Richards Center Endowments:

Lawrence J. and Gretchen McCabe Graduate Endowment:

Richard Daily

Rick is a doctoral candidate in the History and African American Studies dual-title program at Penn State. He is a Center for Humanities and Information predoctoral Fellow (2020–21) and the social media chair for the new Center for Black Digital Research housed in University Libraries. His research areas are in U.S. and African American history, gender and sexuality studies, carceral studies, and critical race theory. Rick enjoys bowties, comedy, and singing with his band.

Megan Hildebrand

*see previously posted bio

Paulina Rodriguez

*see previously posted bio



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Lynne G. and Laurence H. Brown Family Graduate Fund:

Edward Green

Ed is a second-year doctoral student in the Department of History working with Dr. Christina Snyder. He received a bachelor of arts degree in history and politics from the University of Oxford and a master of arts degree from the University of Missouri, where he was a Fellow in constitutional democracy at the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy. Ed's research examines nation building in the American West in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with a particular focus on the relationships between Native Americans, the U.S. federal government, the United States, and settlers.

Jamie Henton

*see previously posted bio



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Warren W. Hassler Graduate Fellowship:

Christopher Thrasher

Christopher is a second-year doctoral student in the Department of History. Before coming to Penn State, he studied and worked at the University of West Florida in Pensacola, Florida. He currently researches early America with a focus on Native American history, specifically the Creek Confederacy and their European neighbors in the American Southeast.

Heather Walser

*see previously posted bio



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James Landing Graduate Fellowship in History

Kellianne King

Kellianne is a doctoral student in nineteenth and twentieth century U.S. history pursuing a dual-title in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Her research interests include the history of science and medicine, particularly the professionalization of neurology and psychiatry in the latter half of the nineteenth century. She is interested in the ways diagnoses, treatments, and prognoses differed along race, gender, and class lines.

Hayden Lamphere

*see previously posted bio

A.J. Perez

A.J. is a third-year graduate student from Houston, Texas, where he earned a bachelor of arts degree in history and a bachelor of fine arts degree in painting. His primary field is U.S. history and his secondary fields are Latin America and race. Although early in its development, his dissertation project examines the proposed annexation of the Yucatán at the tail end of the Mexican-American War.



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