

HISTORY HONORS CONFERENCE

ANNUAL SHOWCASE OF UNDERGRADUATE HONORS STUDENT THESES



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
— Liberal Arts *and* Sciences

APRIL 6, 2025 | SMATHERS LIBRARY EAST | [HISTORY.UFL.EDU](https://history.ufl.edu)

Cover Image: "Oliver W., the famous trotting ostrich, Florida Ostrich Farm, Jacksonville, Florida." Detroit Publishing Company, 1900-1910. Library of Congress, LC-D4-33097.



WELCOME!

For nearly 20 years, the History Honors Conference has showcased the remarkable accomplishments of our most talented undergraduates. These scholars-in-training have worked diligently to identify interesting historical questions, sort through available evidence and produce engaging narratives to detail what they have learned.

The honors conference rightly highlights the ability and hard work of individual students. But it is also a tribute to the faculty mentors, graduate program assistant, Danielle Gibbs Barrientos, student peers, alumni and donors, family members and friends. Everyone gathered here today has provided crucial support to our honors students. So today is a moment to celebrate both individual accomplishment and the power of community.

Finally, a particular word of thanks to Dr. Sheryl Kroen, our honors program director. Dr. Kroen has been a part of our students' journey, from recruitment over a year ago to making today's presentations. She is stepping down from the directorship after this year, and I hope everyone will take a moment to offer some special thanks and appreciation.

Joe Spillane,
Professor and Department Chair

SCHEDULE

WELCOME 9:00-9:15AM

JOE SPILLANE & SHERYL KROEN

SESSION 1 9:15-10:00AM

GAINESVILLE & UF: RACE, POLITICS & SPORTS

Segregation by Another Name in Gainesville:

The Pupil Assignment Law

MIGUEL CELI (ALYSSA COLE)*

From Championships to Controversies: The Legacy of UF Athletics in the 1980s

MICHAEL HERSHFIELD (JACK DAVIS)

Constructing The System: The Development of Political Machinery at the University of Florida (1918-1945)

REY AUDREL ZETH ARCENAS (STEVE NOLL)

Faculty Discussant: STEVEN NOLL

SESSION 2 10:00-11:00AM

FLORIDA: VOICES, RESISTANCE AND COMMUNITY

Litigating Freedom: A Legal History of Emancipation Petitions in American Florida

SUSAN ROSSANO (JON SENSBACH)

James Weldon Johnson and Identity Politics

EMMA LEITZ (STEVE NOLL)

"Protest folklore" in the Work of the WPA Florida Negro Writers Unit

BECKETT PRICE (ALYSSA COLE)

From Groves to Growth: Examining the Impact of the Citrus Industry on Florida's Identity

WILEY JOHANNNESMEYER (STEVE NOLL)

Faculty Discussant: ALYSSA COLE

COFFEE & TEA BREAK 11:00-11:15AM

SESSION 3 11:15AM -12:15PM

BIOGRAPHY AND SELF-FASHIONING: WOMEN AND COMMUNITY

Threads of Lace, Legacy and Leadership: The Townsends and the

Professionalization of Women's Work in Museums (1872-1959)

LEAH MAZUR (PAIGE GLOTZER)

The Unsung Propagandists: The Women Who Wrote America's War

DALIA DOOLEY (STEVE NOLL)

Anne Olivier Popham: The Making of a Monuments Woman

SAMANTHA STRONG (SHERYL KROEN)

"The Town that Time Forgot": Black Oak, Arkansas told through Oral History Interviews

EMILY MIMS (ROBERT BILLUPS)

Faculty Discussant: ROBERT BILLUPS



SESSION 4 12:15-12:45PM

ABOLITION AND REVOLUTION

Paper Trails of Courage: New England's Black Pension Applications and the Struggle for Citizenship in the New Republic

CLARISSE FONTES (JON SENSBACH)

Between Paradox, Principle and Politics: Thomas Ritchie's Discussion of Slavery in the Richmond Enquirer, 1819-1836

MADELINE MURCH (DAVID SILKENAT)

Faculty Discussant: JON SENSBACH

LUNCH & HISTORY DEPARTMENT AWARDS 12:45-1:45PM

JESSICA HARLAND-JACOBS

SESSION 5 1:45-2:30PM

THE BODY POLITIC IN TRANSNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

America's Finest Crop: How the United States Eugenics Movement in the 1910s-1930s Influenced Marketing of American Household Products Towards Mothers

ASHLEY THEILACKER (STEVE NOLL)

Codifying Human Dignity: Medical Ethics, Human Rights and U.S. Reluctance Toward International Codification

MADISON FERGUSON (NATALIA ALEKSUN)

From Nameless to National Symbol: Yun Geum-i and the Construction of a Pure Daughter of the Nation

KATHRYN OROZCO (JAMES GERIEN-CHEN)

Faculty Discussant: JAMES GERIEN-CHEN

SESSION 6 2:30-3:15PM

CURATING AND CONSTRUCTING NATION AND CITIZEN IN THE AMERICAS

Founding Volumes: The Library of Congress and the American Identity of the Early Republic

WILLIAM FLETCHER (ANTON MATYTSIN)

Resistance Through Writing: A study of O Jornal Das Senhoras

ANA CAROLINA ROCHA (MAX DEARDORFF)

The Sound of Silencing: The Marimba, Ladino Appropriation and the Erasure of Black and Indigenous Culture in Guatemala

ANTHONY ESQUEVIL (HEATHER VRANA)

Faculty Discussant: HEATHER VRANA

SESSION 7 3:15-3:45PM

RE-THINKING MEDIEVAL RELATIONS: METHODS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Among Other Benefits: Oral Tradition and the Shaping of Æthelberht's Laws

JAMES RYAN SHEEHAN (FLORIN CURTA)

Pope, King and Emperor: Innocent III, Andrew II and Henry I

KEVIN GERRITY (FLORIN CURTA)

Faculty Discussant: FLORIN CURTA

*Names in parentheses notates advisors.

BRIDGET PHILLIPS AWARD

Each year, our department awards the Bridget Phillips Scholarship to students traveling for study or research. Bridget Phillips completed her BA degree in history at UF before starting a Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University in 1988. Tragically, she was murdered in her apartment in 1989 in an unsolved case. To honor her memory, her parents established this scholarship. In 2021, Tim Dean, a friend of Bridget's who is now James M. Benson Professor of English at the University of Illinois, made a generous contribution to increase the fund. At last year's honors conference, Professor Dean announced a new initiative to establish the Bridget Phillips Term Professorship, aimed at supporting the department's research and teaching efforts.

2024 RECIPIENTS



SAMANTHA STRONG

Samantha used her award to conduct research in the United Kingdom and undertake language study in Italy.

Samantha discovered a forgotten story of World War II, the history of the women workers in the Allies' Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives program in London archives and libraries. Samantha then went to Perugia, Italy, to study Italian. Samantha had just learned from her archival research that the women officers had restored church bells in Italy. Whenever she heard the bells ring, she thought of their efforts.



KATHRYN OROZCO

Kathryn traveled to Seoul, South Korea, to conduct research for her history honors thesis.

Kathryn's research explored the history of debates about Korean "comfort women," sex workers who lived in settlements attached to United States military bases in the region. She studied sources, archives and libraries and conducted interviews with activists from South Korean women's advocacy groups. "Seeing how passionate the members were," Kathryn said, "allowed me to connect with the archival research in a way I could have never imagined."

READ THE FULL STORY

history.ufl.edu/bridgetphillips

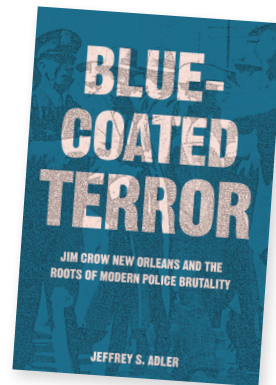


DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS



Fulbright to Slovakia: Zoe Golomb, an honors graduate in 2024, received a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship to Slovakia. The Fulbright program is a highly selective grant established in 1946 to promote international understanding through the mutual exchange. This year, Zoe took up this mission in Partizánske where she worked at a high school.

“Bluecoated Terror: Jim Crow New Orleans and the Roots of Modern Police Brutality,” Jeffrey S. Adler, University of California Press, 2024. Professor Adler’s latest book examines police violence in the 1930s and 1940s in New Orleans, Louisiana, showing how law enforcement pursued the goals of crime control and the enforcement of racial hierarchies simultaneously using the same coercive methods.



Award Winning Teacher: Each year the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences selects a handful of faculty members for its Teacher of the Year Award, including Assistant Professor Philip Janzen. The award is based on student nominations and is the major teaching award in the college. Professor Janzen is also an accomplished scholar and his first book, “An Unformed Map: Geographies of Belonging between Africa and the Caribbean,” will come out this summer.

RECENT ALUMNI



JENNY DEVINE

Jenny Devine was always interested in the history of legal systems, a curiosity that led her to become a public defender. In 1999 she graduated with honors from the history department with the first of her 3 UF degrees. She credits her studies with professors like Elizabeth Dale with inspiring her career.

Her next step was the combined MA-JD program. While pursuing her law degree, she wrote a history thesis called “An Execution By Slow Torture: The Death of Martin Tabert and Florida’s Convict-Lease System.”

Today, Jenny is senior appellate attorney in the Tampa division of the Federal Defender’s Office and Chair of the history department’s advisory board. She thinks of her legal and history training as intertwined. “As historians and lawyers, we speak for others. It’s a small act of humility that we approach with clarity and compassion.”



MATT HOWLAND

Matt Howland received a BA in history in 2009 from the University of Florida and applied his knowledge of the past to policy in the present. Matt served as trip lead for the White House, traveling in advance to prepare trips for President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff. He led over 40 domestic and international trips, including President Biden’s wartime visit to Israel.

Matt transitioned from the White House to the presidential campaign to serve as director of principal and surrogate trips for Pennsylvania where he oversaw the design and execution of more than 400 trips and 1,000 campaign events for both President Biden’s reelection campaign and Vice President Kamala Harris’s presidential campaign.

Today, Matt serves as Chief of Staff at Fenway Summer, an early-stage investment firm focused on financial technology.

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