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CPH exists to research and advance understanding of the history of the American presidency. The Article II Society is a giving society for loyal supporters who contribute \$2,500 or more each academic year to CPH, helping ensure the work and this organization can continue.

From The Director

Dear Friends,
Welcome to a new semester, a new year, and indeed a new presidential administration. One thing for sure about presidential history...it keeps going! We're thrilled as always to have you with us on this journey, and thrilled too for the wonderful semester of programming we have on tap. We'll be going from election data to cigarettes to McDonald's golden arches and back again through George Washington and the (much later) development of our current health care system. Goodness knows we'll also be throwing in more and more spontaneous teach-ins and Third Rail debates, like our recent discussion of former President Trump's current legal issues, because see above: presidential history keeps moving!

So thank you as always for your friendship and support, and take a moment to peruse this new newsletter for more on our events, post-docs, podcast, and TRAVEL!



Jeffrey A. Engel

EXCLUSIVE EVENTS

From the Program
Director

Hello- I'm looking forward to seeing more of you – and hopefully the meetings can be in-person soon! I work closely with Jeff Engel to design and offer programs exclusively for our Article II Society supporters. We began January 2021 with a Salon and launched High Table with Historians. We plan to do more similarly intimate events in the coming months. Please keep an eye out for continuing communications from me. In case we haven't had the chance to meet yet, here's a quick self-introduction: I hold a PhD from Yale and am the lead scholar for two CPH oral history projects about US foreign policy under President George W. Bush. In addition to teaching in the Political Science department and the Tower Scholars Program, I oversee CPH's undergraduate and high school internships. Please feel free to reach out (lleong@smu.edu). See you at our next event!



LaiYee Leong
Fellow and Article II Society
Program Director

High Table with Historians

CPH is planning more exclusive events for our supporters. High Table with Historians is one of them. You may be familiar with the tradition at older universities in the UK where scholars in academic robes sit at a long table on a raised platform and dine together while discussing esoteric matters. For the time being, the pandemic makes it impossible for us to sit together at a real table, but we can still engage in scintillating conversation on Zoom

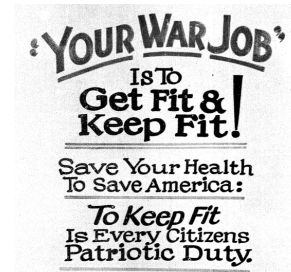
High Table with Historians showcases three of our postdoctoral fellows this semester. We're very proud of our fellows and we're excited for them to share their scholarship with you. Before each event, the fellow will share some materials related to her subject – optional readings – to jumpstart discussion. We're aiming for a casual, friendly exchange more than a formal seminar. No academic robes required!

Kaete O'Connell hosted the first High Table on January 27. She

led a conversation about her research on food diplomacy in postwar Germany, or how the US used food campaigns to win hearts and minds through people's stomachs.

You are invited to the following High Tables (held virtually):

**Wednesday, March 31, noon –
Amanda Regan: *Fitness and the Body in 20th Century American Culture.***



"A Poster from the Indiana State Defense Council's Physical Fitness Program. Circa 1942. National Archives and Records Administration. Records of the Office of Community War Services, Records of the Physical Fitness Committee, College Park, Maryland."

**Wednesday, April 28, noon –
Sharron Conrad: "A Wave of Pessimism and Dejection:"
African Americans, LBJ, and the Transition of Presidential Power.**



Cecil Stoughton. *White House Photographs.*
John F. Kennedy
Presidential Library and Museum, Boston

PEOPLE *at the* CENTER

Introducing New Postdoctoral Fellows

Paul Behringer and **Amy Zanoni** joined CPH in Fall 2020.

Paul received his PhD from American University. Paul's current research explores U.S. and Japanese intervention in the Russian Civil War. It scrutinizes the connections among violence, perception, and military intervention, and studies the Russian Civil War's impact on U.S.-Soviet-Japanese relations and international politics in Northeast Asia.



Amy received her PhD from Rutgers University. Amy is a historian of social movements, health care and welfare policy, and political economy in the twentieth century United States. Her book manuscript, *Poor Health: Retrenchment, Resistance, and the Safety Net below the Safety Net*, examines competing visions of the public sector and health care provision in the late twentieth century.



Mentoring Undergraduates

CPH expands hands-on learning opportunities at SMU by offering internships and research assistantships.

This Spring, **Taylor Enslin** works under the guidance of Sharron Conrad to index interviews and locate supplementary materials for the Center's podcast series. She also conducts independent research on how race and foreign policy intersect in American history under the direction of LaiYee Leong. Taylor, who hails from Garland, Texas, majors in History and Political Science and minors in Public Policy and International Affairs.



Tyler McCall supports CPH's outreach efforts. She conducts preview interviews with invited speakers, sources additional materials to enhance resources on the Center's website, and helps produce this newsletter. Tyler is a Dallas native and majors in Political Science and Business Management and minors in Law & Legal Reasoning and Spanish.



BEHIND THE SCENES

with Dr. Sharron Conrad

One of the hosts of CPH's *The Past, The Promise, the Presidency, Season One: Race and The American Presidency* discusses its making

Why did you choose to focus on the subject of race?

The initial idea for the podcast came from Lindsay Chervinsky and Jeff Engel, but I think the key motivation was to find a creative way to fulfill the Center's mission of engaging the public and advancing understanding of the history of the presidency, even in the midst of the global pandemic. A podcast seemed like the perfect vehicle for reaching audiences confined to their homes and already tethered to their devices. Of course, because that work was happening amid a national conversation about race, confederate memorials, the legacy of police violence targeting people of color, and related lack of law enforcement accountability, "Race and the American Legacy" seem like a good place to start. And let's not forget that, simultaneously, the nation was deciding one of the most consequential presidential elections in generations—one in which questions of diversity, immigration, economic disparity, and inclusion loomed large. This simply reinforced our commitment to adding historical context to the mix.



How does producing a podcast offer opportunities that are different from writing a book or article?

One of the ways the podcast offers an opportunity that books and articles cannot address stems from the fact that the hosts and guests are responding in real time to issues as they unfold. So, for example, when President Trump announced that he had contracted COVID and would enter Walter Reed Military Medical Center for treatment, Lindsay and Jeff arranged an emergency episode in which they spoke to Richard Immerman of Temple University to place Trump's hospitalization into the context of how his predecessors handled medical emergencies. Similarly, when the insurrection of the U.S. Capitol happened in early January, Jeff and Sharron could quickly schedule a conversation with historians Timothy Naftali of NYU and Adrian Lentz-Smith of Duke University to grapple with how we should understand that event. Both episodes were envisioned as "first drafts of history," in which historians processed significant historical events as they happened.

Has anything surprised you as you've learned more about each president from the interviews?

One of the great surprises is that that presidents we knew the least about often seem to be the most fascinating when we sit down with our guests and learn more about them. The podcast team—from the co-hosts to our extraordinary editors—really enjoyed the joint episode on James Garfield and Chester Arthur. Our guests, National Park Service Park Ranger Todd Arrington and Georgetown University's Katie Benton-Cohen, taught us to appreciate these presidencies and the way race factored into both. Similarly, while Theodore Roosevelt remains endlessly fascinating to scholars, our discussions on TR's legacy and oratory with Michael Cullinane of the University of Roehampton and Texas A&M University's Leroy Dorsey, actually deepened our interest in him.



Theodore Roosevelt with Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee University. Photo from the Yale University Library Collection.

Is there one takeaway about race and the presidency that you think the podcast conveys?

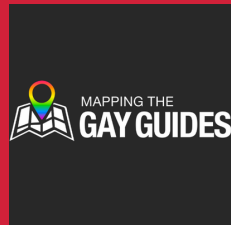
One takeaway about race and the presidency that our podcast conveys over and over again seems to be that—whether they want to address race relations or not—every chief executive is forced to respond to the issue. As of today, we are up to episode 17, and we have covered the Lincoln administration up through the Truman administration. No president has been able to avoid the debate, and looking ahead to what's on the agenda for President Biden, the country's complicated history of race relations will continue to be front and center at the White House for the foreseeable future.

Sharron's chapter, "He Gave His Life for Us": The Civil Rights Martyrdom of John F. Kennedy and Its Implication for Lyndon Johnson," will appear in Mourning the Presidents (edited by Lindsay Chervinsky and Matthew Costello), a book to be published by the University of Virginia Press this November.

IN THE NEWS

Accolade

Amanda Regan's project, *Mapping the Gay Guides* (a collaboration with Eric Gonzaba at Cal State Fullerton), received the 2021 Emerging Open Scholarship Award from the Canadian Social Knowledge Institute. The award recognizes "open scholarship that incorporates open access, open data, open education, and other related movements that have the potential to make scholarly work more efficient, more accessible, and more usable by those within and beyond the academy. By engaging with open practices for academic work, open scholarship shares that work more broadly and more publicly."



Check out the project at
<http://mappingthegayguides.org/>

Public Engagement

Paul Behringer published an op-ed on History News Network, titled "Biden's Inaugural and the Return of History." It argues that Biden's speech signals a better understanding of history and that applying history offers a way out of our current "uncivil war," as he called it.

Sharron Conrad joined a History Channel podcast, HISTORY This Week, to discuss "The Capitol Riots in Context." It aired on January 19. *KERA Think with Krys Boyd* also featured Sharron as the solo guest on January 7 to comment on the attack at the Capitol.

Jeffrey Engel explored the ramifications of former president Donald Trump's second impeachment with Krys Boyd on *KERA Think* on January 14. The *Dallas Morning News* published Jeff's op-ed, "Biden Must Offer America a New Definition of Itself, a Broader Idea of Freedom," on January 17.

Brian Franklin appeared on KTLA5 (Los Angeles news) and on NBCIx News on Inauguration Day to discuss the historical context and precedents for Biden's inauguration.

Want to see more of the Center for Presidential History? Follow us on social media:

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and check out our webpage:
smu.edu/cph

TRAVEL

and

EVENTS

Testimonials

"I simply cannot imagine choosing any other...now that I know what an educational trip can provide."

"The tour was life-changing.... The group on the tour was a terrific mix of students, alumni, and friends of the University."

-Participants on previous CPH trips

For more information:

Contact Ronna Spitz at
rspitz@smu.edu

or call 214.768.3210, or explore
this link:

www.historyexp.com/events/partnershipssmu/

Texas Presidential Tour: May 17-22, 2021

This trip visits the rolling Hill Country, Austin, Washington-on-the-Brazos, Huntsville, College Station, and select locations in Dallas for a comprehensive tour of all things presidential history in Texas.



Pearl Harbor 80th Anniversary: December 2-8, 2021

This Pearl Harbor guided tour will take us to the island of Oahu in Hawaii, visiting many places associated with Hawaiian history, and time for relaxation and fun at its gorgeous beaches and small towns.

Czech and Germany in World War II and the Cold War: May 16-26, 2022

This trip offers an on-site exploration of Prague, Nuremberg, Dresden, Leipzig and Berlin, walking the cities and fields where soldiers fought for Europe's liberation and spies schemed for generations to create a new world order.

2021 Speaker Event Schedule

March 2021

Sorting Out the Mixed Economy: The Rise and Fall of Welfare and Developmental States in the Americas

Amy Offner: March 18th, 6:00-7:30 pm

Engaging the Evil Empire: Washington, Moscow, and the Beginning of the End of the Cold War

Simon Miles: March 22, 6:00-7:30 pm

April 2021

Stranger Danger: Family Values, Childhood, and the American Carceral State

Paul Renfro: April 8, 6:00-7:30 pm

April 2021 (cont'd)

The Cigarette: A Political History

Sarah Milov: April 22, 6:00-7:30 pm

Cold War in Chinatown: Fighting for Chinese American Rights in the 1950s

Charlotte Brooks: April 28, 6:00-7:30 pm

May 2021

Rethinking American Grand Strategy

Jeffrey A. Engel, Andrew Preston, Christopher Nichols, and Liz Borgwardt: May 6, 12:00-1:30 pm

*TO BE RESCHEDULED

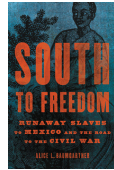
The Middle Way: How Three Presidents Shaped America's Role in the World

Derek Chollet

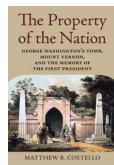
THE BOOK NOOK

Looking for reading suggestions? CPH scholars share a few of their recent favorite reads.

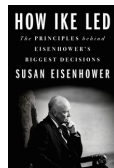
Baumgartner, Alice. *South to Freedom: Runaway Slaves to Mexico and the Road to the Civil War*. Basic Books, 2020.



Costello, Matthew. *The Property of the Nation: George Washington's Tomb, Mount Vernon, and the Memory of the First President*. University Press of Kansas, 2019.



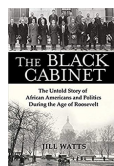
Eisenhower, Susan. *How Ike Led: The Principles Behind Eisenhower's Biggest Decision*. Thomas Dunne Books, 2020.



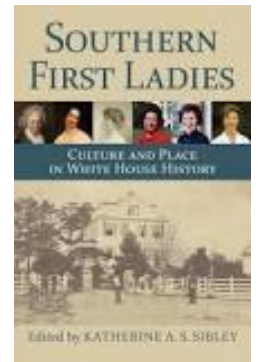
Rauchway, Eric. *Winter War: Hoover, Roosevelt, and the First Clash Over the New Deal*. Basic Books, 2018.



Watts, Jill. *The Black Cabinet: The Untold Story of African Americans and Politics During the Age of Roosevelt*. Grove Press, 2020.



CPH hosted a conference in March 2019 that examined the significance of “Southernness” in the history and work of seventeen first ladies. The conference led to the publication of *Southern First Ladies: Culture and Place in White House History*, edited by Katherine A. S. Sibley (University Press of Kansas). As described by the publisher, the book “explores the ways in which geographical and cultural backgrounds molded a group of influential first ladies.” The contributors use the lens of “Southernness” to define and better understand the cultural attributes, characteristics, actions, and activism of seventeen first ladies from Martha Washington to Laura Bush.... *Southern First Ladies* is the first volume to comprehensively emphasize the significance of Southernness and a Southern background in the history and work of first ladies, and Southernness’ long-standing influence for the development of this position in the White House as well as outside of it.”



The University of Virginia Press will publish Kaete O'Connell's book in 2023: *Tasting Freedom: U.S. Occupied Germany and the Origins of Cold War Food Diplomacy* offers the first in-depth study of food policy in post-World War II Germany. It examines how relief practices, gustatory preferences, and the politicization of hunger shaped U.S.-German relations during the occupation and subsequent division into East and West Germany. Food, it argues, was a formidable weapon in the American fight against communism.



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