

# Montana State University

## HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT 2016-2017 NEWSLETTER



## Welcome!

Thank you for taking the time to read our annual newsletter. As an interdisciplinary department, we offer three majors that can be tailored to fit student interests, and several exciting minors. We value internships at all levels and encourage students to make them a part of their educational experience. Students have the opportunity to work directly with faculty members on topics ranging from urban coyotes to the Butte Copper mines. The department hosts both history and philosophy honor societies, as well as a philosophy ethics debate team. At all levels of the curriculum, the department provides students with the tools to think rigorously, to research and thereby generate knowledge empirically, and to articulate their thoughts coherently.

Please feel free to drop by Wilson Hall 2-155 to see what new and exciting things the History & Philosophy Department is doing. If you have questions, give us a call at 406-994-4395 or email us at [history@montana.edu](mailto:history@montana.edu).



Montana State University Campus Panorama 1910 (photo from "In the People's Interest")

# In This Issue

- The 39th Annual Hausser Lecture Synopsis
- Stories from the classroom: Building a WWI Trench
- Wallace Stegner Lecture and Malone Conference synopsis
- Stories from students in El Salvador
- Dr. Tim LeCain's research in Norway
- Dr. Jim Meyer's Fulbright Award
- Undergraduate Conferences & Research
- Faculty Awards & Announcements
- Graduate Student News



Students and Faculty mingled at the Department's annual award ceremony last April honoring both undergraduate and graduate students.

Photo by Ty Hardin.



Last fall, students in Dr. Mary Murphy's Food in America class visited the Tinsely Homestead at the Museum of the Rockies. Costumed interpreters showed students around the house.



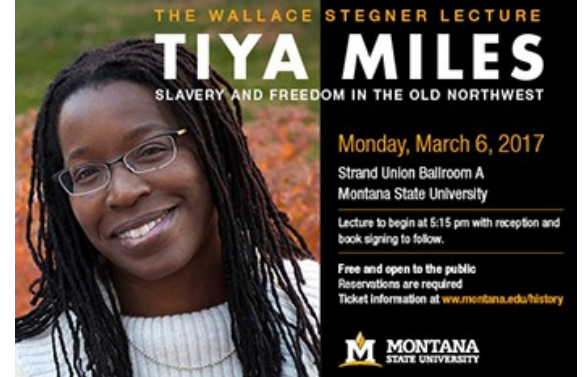
# Wallace Stegner Lecture with Tiya Miles

## Slavery and Freedom in the Old Northwest

By Mark Fiege

This spring, the Department of History, Philosophy, and Religious Studies was honored to host Dr. Tiya Miles, a renowned scholar of African American and American Indian history, who delivered the 2017 Wallace Stegner Lecture on March 6 to a large and appreciative audience. Her lecture, "Slavery and Freedom in the Old Northwest," discussed the American Indian enslavement of African Americans in old Detroit. Prior to her lecture, Dr. Miles conducted a master's seminar for graduate students and faculty on the topic of how historians can engage public audiences and partners. Mark Fiege, the Wallace Stegner Chair in Western American Studies, and the Stegner Committee are grateful to Dr. Miles and to everyone at MSU who made her visit possible.

The Wallace Stegner Lecture memorializes the life and work of the distinguished western writer and conservationist Wallace Stegner. The Stegner Committee is pleased to announce that on the evening of Thursday, October 5 at the Ellen Theater in downtown Bozeman, the geographer Dr. Carolyn Finney of the University of Kentucky, author of *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors*, will present the 2017-2018 Stegner Lecture. Please contact the Department of History, Philosophy, and Religious Studies or the College of Letters and Science for further details as the date approaches.



# Hausser Lecture with Angela Davis

## Democracy, Freedom and The Black Radical Tradition in the 21st Century

Held at the Ellen Theatre to an enthusiastic audience, the 39th Annual Margaret and Harry Hausser Lecture was deemed a success. This year's speaker, Angela Davis gave a talk to the Bozeman community about critical contemporary issues of race and politics. The lecture began with Davis acknowledging that the event was taking place on colonized land, and payed tribute to the Native Americans who lived on the land first. Her lecture emphasized the importance of understanding the history of America from every angle, regardless of how diverse an area is.

Dr. Davis also spent a portion of the lecture discussing the flaws in the prison system, as well as the death penalty. She discussed her time in prison and called for the abolition of prisons. She cited that the root of the problem needs to be fixed, and the root of the problem is that flawed institutions need to be improved. As the country was in the middle of elections at this time, then-Presidential Candidate Donald Trump was also mentioned and how immigrant reform is deeply rooted in the history of racism in America and that we have not even begun to understand the impact of the degree to which racism is embedded in America. Dr. Davis's lecture also touched on other topics, like the Haitian Revolution and how far our society has come in discussing race relations in the media. Dr. Davis ended her lecture with a quote from Nina Simone, an American singer, "I wish I knew how it would feel to be free."

39<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MARGARET & HARRY HAUSSER LECTURE

**DEMOCRACY, FREEDOM AND  
THE BLACK RADICAL TRADITION  
IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

**DR. ANGELA DAVIS**  
DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR EMERITA  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA CRUZ

**SEPTEMBER 27, 2016**  
EMERSON CULTURAL CENTER, BOZEMAN  
6 TO 8PM | DOORS OPEN AT 5:45PM

TICKETS ARE FREE, BUT REQUIRED FOR ENTRY.  
GET YOURS AT CALENDAR.MSU.MONTANA.EDU/EVENTS/17378.  
SEATING IS FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE.

CONTACT BRENNA SCOTT, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, WITH QUESTIONS AT BRENNA.SCOTT@MONTANA.EDU



The Department is thankful to Mrs. Margaret Hausser in the continued support of the Hausser lectures.



## Building a WWI Trench

By Samuel Van Kirk

When students from Dr. Amanda Hendrix-Komoto's Public History: Religion and War were given a project for the spring semester, their aim was to give people new and innovative ways to experience the past. When planning their project, students Zeke Snoozy and Samm Van Kirk had the idea to recreate a trench from World War I to give people a better idea of the conditions and emotions soldiers faced during the war. Van Kirk and Snoozy decided the best way to construct the trench was to build it inside a huge dumpster. Working with the City of Bozeman, and Montana State, the project was approved, and the dumpster was moved to the Centennial Mall. Facility Services from MSU filled the dumpster with dirt, and Van Kirk recruited volunteers from both the class and campus to help with the digging and building of the trench. To make the experience more authentic, the class only used tools that would have been available to WWI soldiers, and spent six hours in 10-degree weather building the base of

the trench. Van Kirk and Snoozy spent an additional thirty hours stacking sand bags and nailing planks together. While the trench was under construction, other student groups in the class researched and created posters about Montana's role in the World Wars, covering



everything from pacifism to social change, which were then hung on the outside of the dumpster trench. The project was deemed a success; the unique dumpster trench and the eye-catching posters brought in people who would normally see a history exhibit and pass by without a single thought.

## El Salvador Memory Project

By La'Trelle Scherffius

In late 2015, Dr. Todd and a Canadian colleague initiated a new international research project focusing on the memories and stories of former El Salvadoran war-refugees. To date, the team has collected and digitized approximately 3,000 photographs, children's drawings, songs, and other materials.

In January 2017, MA student Guthrie Meeker and Annie Holland, a senior in History, traveled to El Salvador with Dr. Todd. There they met with members of Salvadoran Memory Committees and shared materials with former refugees. Several hundred people participated in the four-day event, and the response from locals was overwhelmingly positive. Many had never seen pictures of the camps; others recognized relatives or recalled events from their time in the camps.

Both Holland and Meeker describe their participation as an important step in defining their future plans. Meeker is off to Latin America for the year to study intensive Spanish before pursuing his PhD and Holland hopes to become a civil rights attorney. Back at Montana State, PhD student La'Trelle Scherffius has been working with a team of five talented undergraduate interns (Tyler Kirby, Annie Holland, Ann Rupert, Mikaela Byers, Addie Donaldson, and Sarah Vangi) to digitize, examine, and place the growing

archive into a searchable, digital format. Using standard archival practices and protocol, the interns capture key information and engaged keywords and important metadata that will aid researchers and local communities in identifying materials.

As Dr. Todd seeks funds to expand this project beyond the pilot stage, she continues finding new ways to engage MSU students. The project will serve as a base for the undergraduate capstone class in fall 2017, and numerous internship opportunities.



*By Birdie Kushner*

This summer, I had the immense honor of being accepted to the University of Pittsburgh's first undergraduate summer program for the History and Philosophy of Science, a specialized discipline still uncommon to most US universities. For a week, I attended lectures by prominent philosophers, including one of my empiricist heroes Dr. John D. Norton, a historian and philosopher of physics who notoriously refers to the concept of causation as a "folk science". I also made great friends with wonderful and bright undergraduate students from a huge variety of backgrounds and interests. It was humbling to connect with other "kids" who love philosophy as much as I do. After, I traveled to a conference at Oxford University to present a paper I wrote evaluating basic epistemological assumptions of American psychiatry through Buddhist philosophy. Visiting and participating in a conference at Oxford was quite literally a dream come true; I will never forget walking around the botanical gardens, hearing my favorite Canned Heat song in a 300 year old pub, or the brilliant people I met and continue to stay in contact with. Finally, I spent eight days in London doing research on the history of American public health (or lack thereof) at the legendary Wellcome Institute, arguably *the* best medical history library in the world. I have returned to Montana hell-bent and determined to publish a paper on my research in the next year. Most importantly, I am humbled by the incredible time, support, and dedication provided to me by the *entire* history and philosophy department. These opportunities do not just fall out of the sky; they come with my dedication and the dedication my professors show every day to their students. I am proud to represent the humanities at this university, and will continue to advocate the crucial role philosophy and history play in the survival of civil society.

**The Department would like to  
congratulate the undergraduates who  
attended conferences this year!**

***Joey Morrison & Erin Dockins - Max  
Planck Institute in Germany***

*By Nolan Grunska*

In as few months as I could count on one hand attending Montana State University, I was shocked to have already met with success in my field of study. I had written a paper titled "The American Neuroses" vaguely inspired by Viktor Frankl's *Man's Search For Meaning*, in an attempt to philosophically propose a possible tributary cause of the obscenely high rates of depression and neurotic disorders in the United States of America. I whipped up the paper over the Thanksgiving holiday and with a keen 'why not' attitude I went ahead and submitted the draft to two conferences and a journal. Texas State University, and the University of North Texas each accepted my paper and invited me to attend their philosophy conferences to present my work.

I showed up to the campus early in the morning, and was greeted by some of their philosophy department staff and a few of the other students in attendance. As warm as they were, and as comfortable the forum was, I have to admit, once introductions were made it was one of the most intimidating settings I had ever been in. The conference was open to students of all statuses, but felt as though I was the only undergraduate there, and a freshman no less. I was honored to have my paper regarded in the same light from students such as these. This experience proved invaluable to me when, a few weeks later, I traveled to Texas yet again, this time to Denton, for an undergraduate conference at the University of North Texas. Unlike the Texas State conference, which was annual and put on by the local chapter of Phi Sigma Tau, this conference was a one-time event, put on and organized by a less traditional philosophy club. The conference proceeded incredibly smoothly, I was much more confident in my presentation and I believe it was very clearly a better presentation of the work I had done.

I would like to extend my thanks to everyone involved in helping my academic career get off to such a great start. With any luck, I'll be attending some conferences this upcoming year as well, though probably presenting a completely different paper. As of right now, I'm hoping to have "The American Neuroses" published before then.



## Research in Norway

By Tim LeCain

Tim LeCain traveled to the extreme far northeastern tip of Norway to join with a team of archaeologists and other scholars working on the project Object Matters. Organized by the archaeologist Bjørnar Olsen of the Arctic University of Norway in Tromsø, the team met in the isolated fishing village of Vardø to discuss ways in which scholars can give a greater role and agency to objects and other things in our understanding of the past.

The village of Vardø provided a powerful illustration of the way the past persists into the present. Houses, ships, and other artifacts testify to earlier days when the village had been the home to a vibrant fleet of small-scale fishing boats. The arrival of massive combined trawling, processing, and canning ships largely wiped out these small fisheries in the later decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, forcing many residents to flee. Yet others have stayed and are now seeking to make new uses of the things from the past that persists into the present.

The team also visited the remnants of World War II in the area. Planning to use northern Norway as a jumping off point for the northern pincer of his fateful invasion of the USSR, Hitler directed the Wehrmacht to occupy much of the region. Besides building many of the first modern roads and airports in the area, the German army also installed huge concrete gun bunkers along the coastlines of the fjords. Largely forgotten today, these bunkers are still filled with the rusted remnants of guns, machinery, beds, and other remains of the occupying army. World War II thus remains as an ever-present material force on the otherwise wild and windswept landscape of arctic Norway.

As a continuation of his work with Olsen, LeCain also joined the “After Discourse” team in Oslo, Norway, for the spring semester of 2017. Funded by the Center for Advanced Study in the Norwegian Academy of Science, the “After Discourse” project sought to develop new theories and methods for engaging with those material and affective experiences of the world that cannot be reduced to discourse or culture.



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### Did you Know?

- The Museum of the Rockies has one of the largest collections of dinosaur fossils. It's also home to 13 T-Rex specimens, more than anywhere else in the world.
- Jeannette Rankin from Montana was the first woman elected to the United States Congress, before women could vote!
- The fastest completion time recorded on the Bridger Ridge Run (19.65 miles from Sacajawea Peak to the start of the “M” Trail) is 3 hours and 24 seconds.
- The Old West comes to life through the brush and sculpture of famed western artist Charlie Russell at the Charles M. Russell Museum Complex in Great Falls. The museum contains the world's largest collection of Russell's work, his original log-cabin studio and his Great Falls home.



Dr. Catherine Dunlop has received an eight-week fellowship from the Camargo Foundation to study at the foundations campus in Cassis, France.



Congratulations to Dr. Billy Smith, Dr. Catherine Dunlop and Dr. Sara Waler on receiving sabbaticals for the 2017-2018 school year!

Dr. Mary Murphy was honored with the Women's Faculty Caucus Distinguished Mentor Award for 2016-2017!



Molly Todd is collaborating with Canadian and Salvadoran colleagues to begin project in El Salvador that focuses on Salvadoran refugee camps in Honduras during the Salvadoran Civil War.



Dr. Robert Rydell was honored by the American Studies Association with the Turpie Prize for Excellence in American Studies!

Dr. Rydell has also been named as the Director of American Studies.

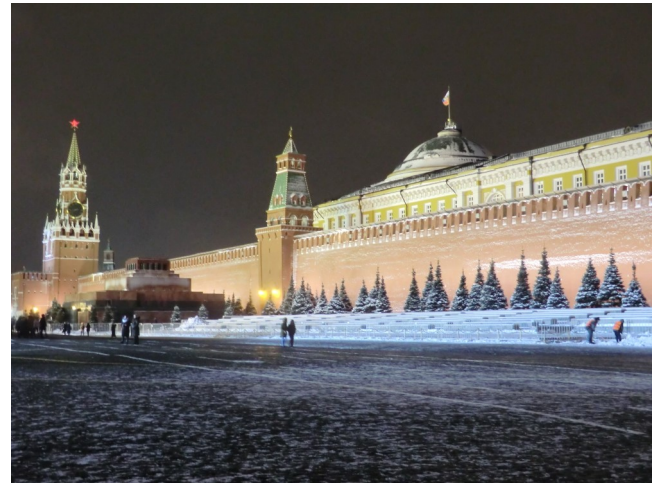


Congratulations to Dr. Sanford Levy on his retirement! Dr. Levy retired at the end of spring 2017 after teaching for many years. We appreciate his contributions to the Department!

Have some interesting news or a picture to share that should be in the Department newsletter? Remember to send it to [history@montana.edu](mailto:history@montana.edu)!

By Dr. Jim Meyer

The 2016-17 academic year was a busy and unusual one for me. I was on sabbatical, and spent nearly nine months researching in Russia, in addition to two months in Istanbul and Amsterdam. The reason behind all of this travel was the fact that I'm writing a book about the Turkish poet Nâzım Hikmet, who spent much of his adult life traveling between Turkey and the Soviet Union. The Russian side of my research was supported by a fellowship from the Fulbright program, while my research in Turkey and the Netherlands was made possible by a Scholarship and Creativity grant from MSU. I feel an enormous sense of gratitude to both entities for making this past year possible. The research was fascinating. One of the reasons why I find someone like Nâzım Hikmet so intriguing is that—apart from his having led an incredibly colorful life—he spent so much of his time negotiating between two countries. Nâzım was born in the Ottoman Empire in 1902 and died in Cold War-era Moscow in 1963, having spent two long stretches—from 1921 to 1928, and again from 1951 to 1963—living in the USSR. So, I was particularly interested in the ways in which Nâzım both benefited and suffered from the fact that he spent so much of his life as an outsider, living between countries—as the best-known defender of the USSR in



Turkey and, in the final years of his life, as the most famous Turk in the Soviet Union. The main focus of my activity in Russia consisted of working in two archives: the party archive, where thousands of pages relating to the activities of Nâzım and other Turkish communists can be found, and the literature archive, which possesses Nâzım's personal papers. The party archive is located about a half mile from the Kremlin and had enormous windows overlooking the neighborhood—often in the wintertime I would grab a hot chocolate and walk through Red Square and cross the Moscow River on my way home from the archive in the evening. To work on Nâzım's file in the literature archive, meanwhile, I needed the permission of Nâzım's step-daughter, with whom I had the chance to meet. In Istanbul and Amsterdam, I worked in the Ottoman and Turkish Republican archives, as well as with smaller holdings related in Nâzım, his friends, and the Turkish Communist Party. All in all, the year felt like a dream come true. As I work on Russian and Ottoman/Turkish history, I had spent time in these countries before, but this year was definitely special. To have the chance to retrace Nâzım's steps and story in 2016 and 2017 was without question a fascinating opportunity—one that affects my work in more ways than one. As I'm teaching classes on both Russia and Turkey this fall, I can already see some of the ways in which my day-to-day experiences in these two countries over the past year have already begun to re-shape the ways in which I see both their histories and present-day circumstances.



Dr. Meyer making pancakes in Moscow



## PhDs in History:

- Betsy Gaines
- Cheryl Hendry
- Gary Sims

## Masters in History:

- Amanda Hardin
- Guthrie Meeker
- Shauni Tigue

**Congratulations to our Ph.D. and M.A. graduates in History!**

## Willson in Wilson

By Richard Brown

During the spring semester, Masters student Richard Brown put together an exhibit on Fred Willson, a noted Bozeman architect. Displayed in the entrance of Wilson Hall on the MSU campus, Richard featured a selection of Willson's work at MSU which included banners for each era highlighting the events going on at the time. The exhibit will be on display throughout the summer.

Sponsored by the Center for Western Lands and Peoples, Richard also held a reception for faculty and graduate students where they could see the display and learn a little bit about Fred Willson's Montana legacy. Born in Bozeman City, Montana Territory, Fred Willson traveled the world before finally settling right back in Bozeman in 1910. He received several commissions from Montana State College, including Hamilton Hall, Roberts Hall and the Strand Union Building. He also designed several private homes around town which display his ever-changing eclectic style.



## Student Spotlight: Anthony Wood

In January 2014, I began research into Montana's Historic black community as part of the African American Heritage Resources project at the Montana Historical Society. My work entailed compiling, coding, and analyzing census records, addresses, places of employment, birth and marriage certificates, city directories, and oral histories of black Montanans from 1890-1930. While researching twelve communities, dozens of businesses, nearly one hundred families, and over a thousand individuals spanning a period of four decades, my role in this project perhaps naturally lead me to search for ways to tell such an expansive, yet intricately connected history. The challenge is how to articulate Montana's black history as not only part of, but vital to, Montana's past. This has been my goal here at Montana State University.



In my writing, I emphasize the points of social and cultural contact between the black community and the dominant white society at the time. This challenge has led my area of study to include topics and issues beyond African American history, reaching into the fields of critical race theory, gender studies, environmental history, and settler colonialism. My thesis attempts to reconcile these varying fields to better explain the complexity and vibrancy of the African American experience in Montana.

# Meet the Office Staff!



## Susan Cohen—Department Chair

After receiving her PhD in 2000, and a year of postdoctoral work in Jerusalem, Dr. Susan Cohen joined the department at MSU in fall 2001, and became Department Chair in December 2015. Dr. Cohen has worked for over thirty years as a field archaeologist in the Middle East; and her research focuses on urban development and international contacts in the Bronze Age of the ancient Near Eastern world.



## Pearl Michalson—Business Operations Manager

Pearl moved to Bozeman with her husband (a Bozeman native) and family in 2012. She earned her bachelor's from MSU-Billings in Organizational Communication and went on to get her master's degree in Organizational Leadership from Gonzaga University. Pearl is a Midwest native who enjoys watching her kids track meets or superhero movies. In her free time she can be found drafting short stories, exploring various parts of Montana, or rooting for the Chicago Cubs.



## Kori Robbins—Student Services Coordinator

Growing up a Griz fan in the small community of Anaconda, Kori shocked her family by coming to Montana State, and earning her bachelor's in history. Currently, she is a graduate student in the American Studies Program.

Kori grew up with a fishing pole in one hand and a book in the other. She is a volunteer at the Museum of the Rockies' Living History Farm, and spends her summers dressing in 1890s clothes, and entertaining tourists. Reading is her escape, and you can often find her at the library or local bookstores, finding a new adventure.

## Contact Us!

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If you wish to contribute to the Department of History and Philosophy, and its many student opportunities, here are two options available to you. To contribute online, please see [www.msuaf.org](http://www.msuaf.org) and click "Give to MSU." From there follow the instructions listed.

If you have questions about donating, please speak with Kelly Meredith at the MSU Alumni Foundation. She can be reached at 406-994-2902 or [kelly.meredith@msuaf.org](mailto:kelly.meredith@msuaf.org).

If you would like to contribute by check, please make your check payable to MSU Alumni Foundation, noting in the memo line that it is for History & Philosophy, and send to:

**MSU Alumni Foundation**  
**PO Box 172750**  
**Bozeman, MT 59717**

We welcome your feedback and comments! If you'd like to comment on our newsletter, recommend articles for next year, or have questions about the Department or its programs, please give us a call at 406-994-4395 or email us at [history@montana.edu](mailto:history@montana.edu).