A Vermont Humanities Program

1st Wednesdays

Online and at nine libraries around Vermont 7:00 PM monthly on first Wednesdays, October 2021 – May 2022

Statewide Underwriter:

This program is supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal agency, through the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Vermont Department of Libraries.

The fourteen talks presented in partnership with The National Endowment for the Humanities—A More Perfect Union Initiative are part of an effort to deepen public understanding of the American experience—in all its complexities—and enhance the knowledge, skills, and capacities needed to sustain a thriving republic and to commemorate our 250th anniversary as a nation.

The ten talks presented in partnership with Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation are part of Listening and Speaking in Public Spheres, an initiative that calls upon students, faculty, and the broader community to strengthen capacities for productive discourse in the public sphere by developing new tools for engagement.

Thirteen talks are supported through the University of Vermont for Community Engagement. Four are part of the Fall Conference 2021, “This Mazed World: The Humanities and Climate Change” and the other nine feature UVM faculty as speakers.

Ten talks are supported through the Anne Commire Fund for Women in the Humanities, for projects created by, led by, or benefiting women writers or scholars.

Vermont Humanities is under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

Any views expressed in this program do not necessarily represent those of the NEH or Vermont Humanities.

Please contact us for information on disability services. To request a specific accommodation, contact us at least three weeks prior to the event. Vermont Humanities strives to provide accommodations whenever possible. All event locations are ADA accessible.

Vermont Humanities

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CREDITS

Dear Friends,

During these tumultuous times, we hope that you can count on Vermont Humanities’ First Wednesdays humanities lecture series. Last season thousands of Vermonters joined us on Zoom for our first-ever, all-virtual events. We were deeply touched by the commitment that Vermonters showed to lifelong learning in the midst of the pandemic and lockdown. Over 45% of you attended a First Wednesdays lecture or discussion for the first time last season.

For this 2021-2022 season, we have once again booked 72 lectures at nine libraries across Vermont, taking place from October to May. Browse this catalogue for ways to learn about women and Islam, Marvin Gaye’s seminal album *What’s Going On* (50 years old in 2021!), and the history of Burlington’s “Little Jerusalem.” Experts from varied humanities fields will talk about the resurgence of the Abenaki language, the poetry of Walt Whitman, and the women of the Revolutionary War. We’ll welcome back National Book Award winner and Vermont Reads 2019 author Andrew Aydin to discuss his new graphic novel, *Run*, about John Lewis’ story after the signing of the voting rights act. And our Vermont Reads 2021 author, Sarah Henstra, will visit from Toronto to discuss the concerns of LGBTQ+ youth as depicted in her young adult novel *We Contain Multitudes*.

We hope that you will also notice our strengthened commitment to highlight the role of women in the humanities. We are grateful to the new Anne Commire Fund for their support of women scholars and scholarship about women.

Finally, it is our desire that this series will be more accessible than ever before. Many of you asked us to continue to present events with writers, scholars, and leaders on Zoom. At least three events will be held on Zoom every month from October through March, but more talks may be switched to this virtual format as the season progresses. Visit vermonthumanities.org or our social media channels for the latest updates on the schedule.

We are deeply grateful for your ongoing commitment to this project, and we look forward to seeing you in person at the libraries and also on Zoom from your living room.

Sincerely,

Christopher Kaufman Ilstrup
Executive Director

Rachel Edens
Program Officer for First Wednesdays
OCTOBER 6 · Jane Beck
Daisy Turner’s Kin
Folklorist Jane Beck shares the story of the Turner family, a saga that spans four generations and two centuries. This rare account of the Black experience in New England covers capture in Africa, the Middle Passage, two generations of enslavement, escape from bondage, and eventually a family farm on a Vermont hilltop. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/brattleboro)

Underwriter: Preservation Trust of Vermont
Partner: Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

NOVEMBER 3 · Stuart Comstock-Gay
Philanthropy and Civil Society in Challenging Times
The pandemic year of 2020 challenged every aspect of modern community, including our visions of equality, civility, health, and democracy. Stuart Comstock-Gay, former president of the Vermont Community Foundation, discusses how civic engagement can help us rebuild our communities and reclaim our dreams. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/brattleboro)

Underwriter: Peter Gilbert Endowment Fund

DECEMBER 1 · Laura Jiménez
Learning Hidden History with Picture Books and Graphic Novels
The current renaissance of picture books and graphic novels written by and about marginalized communities provides new ways to engage with history. Latinx scholar Laura Jiménez describes how contemporary authors and illustrators use visual literature to center narratives previously unseen in mainstream publishing. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/brattleboro)

Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative

JANUARY 5 · Jarvis Green
Atlantic Is a Sea of Bones
Jarvis Green, founder of the Black theatre company JAG Productions, invites us to reflect individually and collectively on the afterlives and the legacies of the transatlantic slave trade. Green will explore how Black queer and feminist artists have created ways to honor this history and heal ancestral trauma.

Underwriter: The Samara Fund for LGBTQ Issues
FEBRUARY 2  ·  David Mills

*Boneyarn: New York Slavery Poems*

The oldest and largest slave cemetery in the United States is located in the shadow of Wall Street. Actor and poet David Mills reads from and discusses his award-winning poetry collection, *Boneyarn*, featuring groundbreaking poems about a topic rarely addressed: slavery in New York City. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/brattleboro)

**Partner:** A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative

MARCH 2  ·  Linda Radtke

*From the Parlor to the Polling Place: Stories and Songs from the Suffragists*

Singer and historian Linda Radtke, in period garb and a “Votes for Women” sash, celebrates the centennial of the passage of the 19th Amendment, which gave the right to vote to white women. Radtke highlights the decades-long persistence of Vermonters, both women and men, in expanding the franchise.

**Underwriter:** Anne Commire Fund for Women in the Humanities

APRIL 6  ·  Shanta Lee Gander, Diana Whitney, and Christal Brown

*The Poetics of Girlhood and Womanhood in America*

Poets and writers Diana Whitney and Shanta Lee Gander join Christal Brown, associate professor of Dance at Middlebury College, in a conversation that explores how girlhood and womanhood in America are manifested across the boundaries of poetry, dance, and lived experience.

**Underwriter:** Anne Commire Fund for Women in the Humanities

**Partner:** Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

MAY 4  ·  Anne Moore

*The Force of a Story in Parts: Star Wars, Fandom, and Seriality*

From Dickens to *Game of Thrones*, stories told in piecemeal style have shown their power to command a reader’s attention. In this apt talk for “Star Wars Day,” author Anne Moore examines how Star Wars’ serialized structure encourages readers to fill the gaps between installments with their own imaginative play.

**Underwriter:** Peter Gilbert Endowment Fund
**OCTOBER 6**  ·  Reuben Jackson  
**All The Imagination Can Hold: The Other Side(s) Of Quincy Jones**  
While Quincy Jones may be best known as a record producer for superstars like Michael Jackson, jazz archivist and poet Reuben Jackson highlights Jones’ work as a film composer, a Big Band arranger, and a collaborator with legendary vocalists like Sarah Vaughan. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/essexjunction)  
**Underwriter:** Husky Injection Molding Systems, Inc.

**NOVEMBER 3**  ·  Susan Evans McClure  
**Why We Eat What We Eat at Thanksgiving**  
How did America’s most iconic food holiday come to include green bean casserole? What did the Wampanoag people and the Pilgrims really eat in 1621? Susan Evans McClure, executive director of the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, serves up the story of Thanksgiving foods and how they help us understand our American identity. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/essexjunction)  
**Underwriter:** Lisa Schamberg and Pat Robins

**DECEMBER 1**  ·  Geza Tatrallyay  
**What Inspires the Mind to Create?**  
Olympic fencer and author Geza Tatrallyay draws on his writing across multiple genres and his varied life experiences to explore the nature of creativity. Referencing his short stories, poetry, memoirs, and thrillers, he shows how deeply an author’s life is interwoven with the works they create. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/essexjunction)  
**Underwriter:** Peter Gilbert Endowment Fund

**JANUARY 5**  ·  Natalie Neuert  
**From German Expressionism to Film Noir: How the Extraordinary Weimar Directors Forever Changed Hollywood**  
Fritz Lang, Billy Wilder, Ernst Lubitch, and Josef von Sternberg were all extraordinary film directors who fled Germany during the rise of the Nazis. Natalie Neuert, director of UVM’s Lane Series, explores how these filmmakers profoundly influenced Hollywood and made movies that altered the American cultural landscape. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/essexjunction)  
**Underwriter:** University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement
FEBRUARY 2  ·  Ellery Foutch

Vermont Hairwork: Connecting Past and Present

19th century Americans often saved or exchanged locks of hair, constructing jewelry or keepsake wreaths of their kinship networks. In more recent decades, hair has become a powerful political medium. Middlebury professor Ellery Foutch shares the research about hair-based works in local collections and explores the meanings of hair in American culture, past and present.

Partner: Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

MARCH 2  ·  Jay Wahl

(Un)Common Spaces

People gather in public spaces for many reasons, including expressing pride in their community, celebrating major milestones, and protesting. Jay Wahl, executive director of the Flynn Center, considers how the arts can rewrite the cultural memory of public spaces and help overcome barriers of access and equity.

APRIL 13 (SPECIAL DATE!)  ·  Sarah Henstra

Vermont Reads: We Contain Multitudes

Author and professor Sarah Henstra visits Vermont to discuss her novel in letters, We Contain Multitudes. Our Vermont Reads 2021 choice tells how two very different teenage boys fall in love after being paired as pen pals. While it touches on domestic violence, bullying, and opioid addiction, the novel is also a beautiful story of friendship.

Partner: Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

MAY 4  ·  John Cameron Turner

The Power of Persuasion

Members of Dartmouth’s National Championship policy debate team and director John Cameron Turner discuss the role of research and persuasion in a liberal arts education. They’ll describe how students explore topics related to our responsibilities as informed citizens and delve into how rhetoric intersects with the humanities and social sciences.
OCTOBER 6 - Bill Mares

Bees Besieged by Our Changing Climate

All 20,000 species of bees worldwide are at risk as global climate change affects their forage, reproduction, and behavior. Based on his 50 years as a backyard beekeeper, author Bill Mares addresses the macro and micro effects of a rapidly warming planet on Vermont’s bees, particularly Apis mellifera, the common honeybee.

Underwriter: University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement as part of the Fall Conference 2021, “This Mazed World: The Humanities and Climate Change”

NOVEMBER 3 - Veronica Limeberry

Global Food Sovereignty, from Resilience to Reclamation

The global food system is marked by Black land loss, the dispossession of Indigenous territory, and violence against land defenders. But grassroots movements around the world are building communities of care against these harmful systems. Foodways researcher Veronica Limeberry describes how these communities honor the sovereignty of their peoples and ecologies.

DECEMBER 1 - Ed Gendron

War Reenactors: Who Gets to Tell History?

Artist Ed Gendron shares and discusses images from his photo project about World War II reenactors in the United States. Gendron also produced Playing Soldier, a feature-length documentary on the same topic. “The re-enactors assert that ‘history is a personal thing,’ says Gendron. “And for them, it may be quite true.”

Underwriter: Peter Gilbert Endowment Fund

JANUARY 5 - Charlene Galarneau

The Ethics of Vermont Eugenics Past and Present

In the name of “human betterment” a century ago, public institutions and private organizations in Vermont chose some of the state’s most marginalized persons for institutionalization, sterilization, and family separation. Harvard Medical School lecturer Charlene Galarneau explores the factors that led to Vermont’s distinct expression of eugenics, and its continuing legacies today.

Underwriter: Burr & Burton Academy
Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative
FEBRUARY 2  ·  Huck Gutman
Walt Whitman: American Poet
Walt Whitman was a great poetic innovator, the poet who best sums up what it is to be an American, and his *Song of Myself* is the most majestic poem written in our nation. And yet, for all this, UVM professor emeritus Huck Gutman finds Whitman to be wonderfully approachable.

*Underwriter:* University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement

MARCH 2  ·  Kemi Fuentes-George
“Rebel Music:” Afro-Caribbean Music and Political Thought
Middlebury College professor Kemi Fuentes-George traces the development of pan-African political theory in the early 20th century and discusses how Afro-Caribbean “rebel music” helped these ideas challenge established assumptions about nonwhite people and global relations. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/Manchester)

*Underwriter:* Woolmington, Campbell, Bent & Stasny, P.C.
*Partner:* Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

APRIL 6  ·  Bridget Butler
Birding Her-Story: The Lost Legacy of Women in Ornithology
In this celebration of paying attention to female birds, “Bird Diva” Bridget Butler examines new scientific studies on female birds and shares stories of the “Mothers of Ornithology.”

*Underwriter:* Anne Comмир Fund for Women in the Humanities

MAY 4  ·  Nora Jacobson and Chard DeNiord
“Vast Library of the Female Mind:” the Life and Poetry of Ruth Stone
Acclaimed Vermont poet Ruth Stone transformed her intense grief into poetry, using simple yet startling language. Nora Jacobson’s film “Vast Library of the Female Mind” provides an intimate look into Stone’s life and family. This screening will include a panel discussion with Jacobson, former Vermont Poet Laureate Chard DeNiord, and a member of Ruth’s family.

*Underwriter:* Anne Comмир Fund for Women in the Humanities
OCTOBER 6  Elizabeth Yeampierre
The Path to Climate Justice is Local
Location: Wilson Hall, Middlebury College
Puerto Rican climate justice leader Elizabeth Yeampierre has helped pass climate legislation at all levels, including New York’s progressive Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. In this talk she describes how intergenerational BIPOC activists are changing the landscape of national climate priorities by speaking up for themselves and their neighborhoods.
Underwriter: University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement as part of the Fall Conference 2021, “This Mazed World: The Humanities and Climate Change”
Partner: Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

NOVEMBER 3  John R. Killacky
A Life in Art and Activism
Artist, legislator, and former director of the Flynn Center in Burlington, John R. Killacky draws on commentaries from his book Because Art to relate his experiences as a dancer in New York in the 1970s and ‘80s, the maelstrom of the Culture Wars of the 1990s, and his work advocating for artists with disabilities.

DECEMBER 1  Aaron Goldberg and Jeff Potash
From Little Jerusalem to the Lost Mural: Preserving Jewish and Immigrant Heritage
In 1885, a group of Lithuanian immigrants settled in Burlington’s Old North End, where they transplanted their religious traditions and culture. Archivists Aaron Goldberg and Jeff Potash describe the “Lost Mural,” a rare survivor of the lost genre of European painted synagogues and tell the story of conserving the mural in Burlington.
Underwriter: Peter Gilbert Endowment Fund
Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative

JANUARY 5  Carol Berry
From Rembrandt to Vincent Van Gogh and Beyond
Author and artist Carol Berry describes how Rembrandt, Delacroix, Millet and other artists inspired Vincent Van Gogh to develop a personal and universal language that ultimately resonated with 20th century artists.
Underwriter: Tapia & Huckabay, P.C.
Reuben Jackson

Sermon From the Studio: Marvin Gaye’s What’s Going On

Fifty years after its release, vocalist/composer Marvin Gaye's What’s Going On, an extended work addressing societal (and personal) challenges, has grown more pertinent and haunting with age. Jazz archivist and poet Reuben Jackson shares tracks from and discusses this riveting recording.

Underwriter: A Friend of the Series

Carol Berkin

“It Was I Who Did It:” Women in the American Revolution

Why were women originally left out of the Revolutionary War narrative, and how did they eventually get written back in? Author Carol Berkin provides a close examination of the vital roles that women played in pre-war protests and in the Revolution itself, and describes how their participation helped create a new gender ideology. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/middlebury)

Underwriter: Anne Commire Fund for Women in the Humanities
Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative

Sarah Henstra

Vermont Reads: We Contain Multitudes

Location: Wilson Hall, Middlebury College

Author and professor Sarah Henstra visits Vermont to discuss her novel in letters, We Contain Multitudes. Our Vermont Reads 2021 choice tells how two very different teenage boys fall in love after being paired as pen pals. While it touches on domestic violence, bullying, and opioid addiction, the novel is also a beautiful story of friendship.

Partners: Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Natalie Neuert

The Jewish Diaspora in 20 Recipes

Food—like music and language—is a strong link to our past, no matter the shores on which we arrive. Natalie Neuert, director of UVM’s Lane Series, explores the recipes that Jews took with them to the Balkans, Europe, North Africa, and America, from British fish and chips to Bubbe’s brisket to the ubiquitous Shabbos supper of cholent.

Underwriter: University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement
OCTOBER 6 · Charlene Galarneau
The Ethics of Vermont Eugenics Past and Present
In the name of “human betterment” a century ago, public institutions and private organizations in Vermont chose some of the state’s most marginalized persons for institutionalization, sterilization, and family separation. Harvard Medical School lecturer Charlene Galarneau explores the factors that led to Vermont’s distinct expression of eugenics, and its continuing legacies today.

Underwriter: Leonine Public Affairs, LLP
Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative

NOVEMBER 3 · Bryan Blanchette and Melody Walker Mackin
We are the Land: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Abenaki Sovereignty
Although four bands of the Abenaki were recognized by the state of Vermont ten years ago, the bands continue to face challenges. Bryan Blanchette and Melody Walker Mackin discuss the historical ramifications of colonialism, contrast the traditional Abenaki connection to the land with contemporary ideas, and consider concepts for reciprocity and reconciliation.

Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative

DECEMBER 1 · Sarah Rooker
Mad for Mid-Century Modern
In the years following World War II, a circle of artists and architects came to the area around Dartmouth College, bringing an infusion of modernism to an otherwise traditional setting. Sarah Rooker, director of the Norwich Historical Society, explores the art and architecture of these newcomers and their influence on the community.

Underwriter: Margot George Fund

JANUARY 5 · Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst
Thinking Race, Religion, and Gender: Muslim Women and Islamophobia
As “critical race theory” and “intersectionality” move out of academia and into public conversation, what do these theories tell us about actual people? UVM professor Ilyse Morgenstein Fuerst examines how race, religion, and gender affect the lives of Black Muslim women in the US. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/montpelier)

Underwriter: University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement
Underwriter: Anne Commire Fund for Women in the Humanities
FEBRUARY 2  ·  Andrew Aydin

John Lewis and **RUN!**

**Location:** Vermont State House Chamber, 7:30 pm

Andrew Aydin, co-author of *The March Trilogy* with civil rights icon John Lewis, returns to Vermont to describe the creation of the next book in series, **RUN!** In this Farmers’ Night presentation, the National Book Award winner also relates becoming an author, how he became involved in politics, and his experiences working with Congressman Lewis.

**Underwriter:** Cabot Creamery Cooperative  
**Partner:** Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

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MARCH 2  ·  John R. Killacky

**Leaving the World of the Temporarily Abled**

Artist and legislator John R. Killacky shares his journey of overcoming paralysis from spinal surgery complications 25 years ago. He also reflects on how reentering the world in a disabled body radically changed his perspective in his artistic practice as well as in his advocacy for artists with disabilities.

**Underwriter:** Pomerleau Real Estate

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APRIL 6  ·  Jay Parini

**A Reading from New and Collected Poems**


**Underwriter:** Bear Pond Books

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MAY 4  ·  Ilan Stavans

**What Makes Jewish Literature Jewish?**

Jewish literature is unlike many other literary traditions in that it can be written anywhere. Amherst College professor Ilan Stavans leads us on a journey through Jewish literature from the expulsion from Spain in 1492 to the creation of the state of Israel. Protagonists include Sholem Aleichem, Anne Frank, Elie Wiesel, Grace Paley, Philip Roth, and Amos Oz.

**Underwriter:** Peter Gilbert Endowment Fund
October 6 · Reuben Jackson
All The Imagination Can Hold: The Other Side(s) Of Quincy Jones
While Quincy Jones may be best known as a record producer for superstars like Michael Jackson, jazz archivist and poet Reuben Jackson highlights Jones’ work as a film composer, a Big Band arranger, and a collaborator with legendary vocalists like Sarah Vaughan. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/newport)
Underwriter: Passumpsic Bank, Member FDIC

November 3 · Daniel Mark Fogel
Realism and the Supernatural in Henry James
UVM English professor and former UVM president Daniel Mark Fogel introduces Henry James and the exceptional American family in which James was raised, focusing on two of his great novellas, Daisy Miller and The Turn of the Screw, each of which can be read in a few hours.
Underwriter: University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement

December 1 · David Moats
A Journalist’s “Unique Corner” on Vermont History
Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist David Moats has covered Vermont news for more than 45 years. In this talk, he shares up-close experiences and broad observations of the historical trends that have shaped the state for the past half-century.
Underwriter: Chris Hadsel and Bill Mares

January 5 · Richard Wright
21st Century Refugees
Even as more people have become unwilling migrants, international borders have hardened in the last two decades, restricting refugee resettlement and making asylum claims more difficult. Dartmouth professor Richard Wright traces recent changes in border policy and the implications for asylum seekers and refugees in the years ahead.
FEBRUARY 2  ·  Ilan Stavans

Rethinking the Classics

How does a book become a literary classic? And what do the classics say about who we are? Author Ilan Stavans meditates on how literary classics become the collective memory of a culture and suggests that as society changes so must our literary canon.

(Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/newport)

MARCH 2  ·  Keiselim Montás

The Art of the Haiku

Poet Keiselim (Keysi) Montás discusses how to read the traditional Japanese poetic form of haiku, illustrated with works from his haiku collection, Like Water.

Underwriter: Peter Gilbert Endowment Fund

APRIL 6  ·  Bryan Blanchette

A Living Abenaki Culture

Colonialism creates a division within the culture that is being colonized, a tendency seen in Europeans’ early contact with Algonquin tribal groups. Abenaki singer-songwriter Bryan Blanchette demonstrates a living vision of modern Indigenous culture through contemporary and traditional Abenaki songs, showing how our cultural similarities can foster unity.

Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative

MAY 4  ·  Maura Campbell, Ray Merrill, and Howdy Russell

Standing in This Place: Growing Up LGBTQ in Vermont

Playwright Maura Campbell wove the stories of 15 LGBTQ+ Vermonters, old and young, into the book Standing in This Place: Growing Up LGBTQ in Vermont. Campbell joins two people from different generations who shared their personal stories in the book as they discuss their challenges growing up LGBTQ+ in Vermont and respond to audience questions.

Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative
OCTOBER 6
Susan Evans McClure and Christopher Sabick

History in Hot Water: Climate Change and the Shipwrecks of Lake Champlain

Lake Champlain is home to hundreds of well-preserved shipwrecks that help tell the story of our region. But climate change is altering the lake’s underwater cultural heritage. Susan Evans McClure and Christopher Sabick from the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum consider the impact of historical objects changing before our eyes.

Underwriter: University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement as part of the Fall Conference 2021, “This Mazed World: The Humanities and Climate Change”

NOVEMBER 3
Peter Levine

What Should We Do? The Civic Question, and How More Americans Can Ask It

Americans are now less likely to belong to groups that ask of their communities, “What should we do?” This decline weakens our society and threatens our democracy. Tufts University professor and author Peter Levine reflects on how we can reverse the trend and revive civic life.

Underwriter: Otto & Associates
Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative

DECEMBER 1
Don Hooper and Bill Mares

Vermont Humor: “I Could Hardly Keep from Laughing”

Author Bill Mares and cartoonist Don Hooper share drawings and tales that illustrate the understatement, comeuppance, and subtlety of Vermont humor. Enjoy this ramble through the decades as the pair show how Vermont’s true character shines in dry (and occasionally tables-turned) jokes and stories.

Underwriter: Stave Puzzles

JANUARY 5
Barry Deitz

Sherlock Holmes: The Game’s Afoot

Scholar Barry Deitz looks at the life and times of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes. He discusses the inspiration for Holmes and examines what other writers, actors, and directors have done with the character over the past 30 years.

Underwriter: Crossroads Academy
FEBRUARY 2 - Bob Pepperman Taylor

My John Dewey Problem

What are the ways that John Dewey, America’s greatest democratic philosopher, still speaks to us—or fails to speak to us—at a moment of great peril for our democratic society and political institutions? UVM professor Bob Pepperman Taylor explores the relevance of Dewey’s political and educational ideas in the 21st century.

Underwriter: University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement

MARCH 2 - Aaron Goldberg and Jeff Potash

From Little Jerusalem to the Lost Mural: Preserving Jewish and Immigrant Heritage

In 1885, a group of Lithuanian immigrants settled in Burlington’s Old North End, where they transplanted their religious traditions and culture. Archivists Aaron Goldberg and Jeff Potash describe conserving the “Lost Mural” in Burlington, a rare survivor of the genre of painted synagogues.

Underwriter: The Preservation Trust of Vermont
Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative

APRIL 6 - Judy Chalmer, with Deborah Lisi-Baker, Eli Clare, and Toby McNutt

Disability and the Poetry of Natural and Supernatural Worlds

Four poets—Eli Clare, Judy Chalmer, Deborah Lisi-Baker, and Toby McNutt—reflect on the ways disabled poets write about natural and supernatural spaces. In this wide-ranging discussion, they consider how poetry invites us into an embodied experience, and how supernatural poetry can expand or question traditional understandings of the “natural.”

Underwriter: The Norwich Book Store

MAY 4 - Rolf Diamant

Civil War, Emancipation, Reconstruction and America’s National Parks

Central Park and Yosemite Valley became public parks during the tumultuous years before and during the Civil War. Former National Park Service superintendent Rolf Diamant explains how war and the remaking of the federal government gave rise to national parks.

Underwriter: Otto & Associates
Underwriter: University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement
OCTOBER 6  ·  Veronica Limeberry
Global Food Sovereignty, from Resilience to Reclamation

The global food system is marked by Black land loss, the dispossession of Indigenous territory, and violence against land defenders. But grassroots movements around the world are building communities of care against these harmful systems. Foodways researcher Veronica Limeberry describes how these communities honor the sovereignty of their peoples and ecologies.

NOVEMBER 3  ·  Eric and Shoshana Bass
The Refugee Journey

Putney’s Sandglass Theatre helped create the board game “Refugee Journey,” which illustrates the challenges of refugees attempting to find safety. In the game, trained facilitators personify border guards, smugglers, and immigration officers as players draw cards describing actual refugee experiences. Sandglass members talk about the impact of the game as audience members are invited to play.

Underwriter: The Marble Valley Regional Correctional Facility

DECEMBER 1  ·  Joy Facos
Responsible Investing: One Tool in the Toolbox to Fight Climate Change

We need to use every means at our disposal to alter the current trajectory of climate change and stave off the most devastating effects of a warming planet. Financial services professional Joy Facos explains that responsible investing—along with innovation, creativity, compassion, and hope—can serve as an effective instrument of change.

Underwriter: Phyllis Wells

JANUARY 5  ·  Susan Clark
Slow Democracy and the Power of Community

Author and advocate Susan Clark explains the Slow Democracy movement in which ordinary people mobilize to find local solutions to local problems. In the process some find they can bridge the “us/them” divide so prevalent in our national politics today.

Underwriter: Peter Gilbert Endowment Fund
FEBRUARY 3 (SPECIAL DATE!)  · Andrew Aydin

John Lewis and RUN!

Andrew Aydin, co-author of *The March Trilogy* with civil rights icon John Lewis, describes the creation of the next book in the series, *RUN!* The National Book Award winner also relates becoming an author, how he became involved in politics, and his experiences working with Congressman Lewis.

Partner: Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

MARCH 2  · Ellery Foutch

The Glass Ballot Box and Political Transparency, 1856-2021

In response to concerns about election tampering in the 1850s, New Yorker Samuel Jollie proposed a novel solution: a ballot box made of glass. Emphasizing glass’s transparency and purity, Jollie suggested that his box would ensure fair and just elections. Middlebury professor Ellery Foutch illuminates the contemporary resonance of Jollie’s invention. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/rutland)

Partner: Middlebury College and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

APRIL 6  · Adrie Kusserow

What is Ethnographic Poetry?

Cultural anthropologist Adrie Kusserow illuminates her research by sharing poems from her latest manuscript, *Ethnography of a Feverish World.* Kusserow focuses on refugees and the globalizing spread of Western ideals, and considers how the environments we evolved to inhabit can be a mismatch for new technologies.

Underwriter: Anne Commire Fund for Women in the Humanities

MAY 4  · Charlene Galarneau

The Ethics of Vermont Eugenics Past and Present

In the name of “human betterment” a century ago, public institutions and private organizations in Vermont chose some of the state’s most marginalized persons for institutionalization, sterilization, and family separation. Harvard Medical School lecturer Charlene Galarneau explores the factors that led to Vermont’s distinct expression of eugenics, and its continuing legacies today.

Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative
**OCTOBER 6** • Meg Mott

**Are “We the People” Up to the Task?**

In the United States, all power is derived from the people. While this sounds noble in theory, can we expect the American public to have the wits and self-control to meet the demands of climate change? Constitutional scholar Meg Mott explores the paradox of self-governance when the natural foundations of life itself are changing. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/stjohnsbury)

*Underwriter: Peter Gilbert Endowment Fund*

*Underwriter: University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement as part of the Fall Conference 2021, “This Mazed World: The Humanities and Climate Change”*

**NOVEMBER 3** • Luis Vivanco

**When Bicycles Came to Vermont**

UVM Professor Luis Vivanco explores the fascinating early history of the bicycle in Vermont, an invention that generated widespread curiosity when it arrived in the 1880’s - helping spark important changes in industrial production, consumerism, road policies, gender relations, and cultural ideas. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/stjohnsbury)

*Underwriter: University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement*

**DECEMBER 1** • Damian Costello

**The Legacy of Nicholas Black Elk**

Historian Damian Costello explores the life of the man behind the famous book *Black Elk Speaks*. Nicholas Black Elk’s Lakota philosophy can help us see the natural world as a unified whole, and his continued hope amidst great tragedy can inform how we approach contemporary crises. (Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/stjohnsbury)

*Underwriter: Passumpsic Bank Member FDIC*

*Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative*

**JANUARY 5** • Ilan Stavans

**One Hundred Years of Solitude: The Bible of Latin America**

Gabriel García Márquez established the aesthetics of Magical Realism through his novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which reintroduced Latin America to the rest of the world. Author Ilan Stavans, professor of Latin American and Latino Culture at Amherst College, describes how Márquez became a spokesperson for a continent besieged by inequality, corruption, and dictatorship.

*Underwriter: Peter Gilbert Endowment Fund*
FEBRUARY 2  ·  Shanta Lee Gander

Lucy Terry Prince: Witness, Voice, and Poetics within the American Tradition

Beginning with Vermonter Lucy Terry Prince, the first known African American poet in the US, poet Shanta Lee Gander explores creative lineage within poetics. Surveying the work of Phillis Wheatley, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Rita Dove, and slam poet Dominique Christina, Gander considers the poetic arc from the past to the modern moment.

Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/stjohnsbury

Underwriter: Anne Commire Fund for Women in the Humanities
Partner: A More Perfect Union - An NEH Special Initiative

MARCH 2  ·  Nora Jacobson and Chard DeNiord

“Vast Library of the Female Mind:” the Life and Poetry of Ruth Stone

Acclaimed Vermont poet Ruth Stone transformed her intense grief into poetry, using simple yet startling language. Nora Jacobson’s film “Vast Library of the Female Mind” provides an intimate look into Stone’s life and family. This screening will include a panel discussion with Jacobson, former Vermont Poet Laureate Chard DeNiord, and a member of Ruth’s family.

Underwriter: Anne Commire Fund for Women in the Humanities

APRIL 6  ·  Huck Gutman

Walt Whitman: American Poet

Walt Whitman was a great poetic innovator, the poet who best sums up what it is to be an American, and his Song of Myself is the most majestic poem written in our nation. And yet, for all this, UVM professor emeritus Huck Gutman finds Whitman to be wonderfully approachable.

Underwriter: University of Vermont Center for Community Engagement

MAY 4  ·  Annelise Orleck

The Legacy of the “The Notorious RBG”

Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg was a feminist superhero who could still do a plank at 87 and who survived pancreatic cancer long beyond expectations. Dartmouth history professor Annelise Orleck examines the life of the brilliant jurist who remained fiercely progressive, unapologetically liberal, and committed to equality to the end, and who loved her status as a pop culture idol.

Underwriter: Anne Commire Fund for Women in the Humanities
DIGITAL EVENTS
vermonthumanities.org/digital

These First Wednesdays talks will be presented only on Zoom. Advance registration is required.

All of the talks in Norwich, and the October through December talks in Brattleboro, Essex Junction, and St. Johnsbury will be digital-only.

The digital-only talks are also listed on the host library pages.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, other talks may switch from in-person to digital-only during the season. Sign up to receive our emails at vermonthumanities.org and follow our social media channels to learn about such changes.

OCTOBER 6 - Jane Beck
Daisy Turner’s Kin
Hosted by the Brooks Memorial Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/brattleboro

OCTOBER 6 - Reuben Jackson
All The Imagination Can Hold: The Other Side(s) Of Quincy Jones
Hosted by the Brownell Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/essexjunction

OCTOBER 6 - Susan Evans McClure and Christopher Sabick
History in Hot Water: Climate Change and the Shipwrecks of Lake Champlain
Hosted by the Norwich Public Library and the Norwich Historical Society
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/norwich

OCTOBER 6 - Meg Mott
Are “We the People” Up to the Task?
Hosted by the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/stjohnsbury

NOVEMBER 3 - Stuart Comstock-Gay
Philanthropy and Civil Society in Challenging Times
Hosted by the Brooks Memorial Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/brattleboro

NOVEMBER 3 - Susan Evans McClure
Why We Eat What We Eat at Thanksgiving
Hosted by the Brownell Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/essexjunction

NOVEMBER 3 - Peter Levine
What Should We Do? The Civic Question, and How More Americans Can Ask It
Hosted by the Norwich Public Library and the Norwich Historical Society
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/norwich

NOVEMBER 3 - Luis Vivanco
When the Bicycle Came to Vermont
Hosted by the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/stjohnsbury
DECEMBER 1 · Laura Jiménez
Learning Hidden History with Picture Books and Graphic Novels
Hosted by the Brooks Memorial Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/brattleboro

DECEMBER 1 · Geza Tatrallyay
What Inspires the Mind to Create?
Hosted by the Brownell Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/essexjunction

DECEMBER 1 · Don Hooper and Bill Mares
Vermont Humor: “I Could Hardly Keep from Laughing”
Hosted by the Norwich Public Library and the Norwich Historical Society
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/norwich

DECEMBER 1 · Damian Costello
The Legacy of Nicholas Black Elk
Hosted by the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/stjohnsbury

JANUARY 5 · Natalie Neuart
From German Expressionism to Film Noir: How the Extraordinary Weimar Directors Forever Changed Hollywood
Hosted by the Brownell Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/essexjunction

JANUARY 5 · Ilyse Morganstein Fuerst
Thinking Race, Religion, and Gender: Muslim Women and Islamophobia
Hosted by the Kellogg-Hubbard Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/montpelier

JANUARY 5 · Barry Deitz
Sherlock Holmes: The Game’s Afoot
Hosted by the Norwich Public Library and the Norwich Historical Society
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/norwich

FEBRUARY 2 · David Mills
Boneyarn: New York Slavery Poems
Hosted by the Brooks Memorial Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/brattleboro

FEBRUARY 2 · Ilan Stavans
Rethinking the Classics
Hosted by the Goodrich Memorial Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/newport

FEBRUARY 2 · Bob Pepperman Taylor
My John Dewey Problem
Hosted by the Norwich Public Library and the Norwich Historical Society
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/norwich

FEBRUARY 2 · Shanta Lee Gander
Lucy Terry Prince: Witness, Voice, and Poetics within the American Tradition
Hosted by the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/stjohnsbury

MARCH 2 · Kemi Fuentes-George
“Rebel Music:” Afro-Caribbean Music and Political Thought
Hosted by the Manchester Community Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/Manchester

MARCH 2 · Carol Berkin
“It Was I Who Did It:” Women in the American Revolution
Hosted by the Ilsley Public Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/middlebury

MARCH 2 · Aaron Goldberg and Jeff Potash
From Little Jerusalem to the Lost Mural: Preserving Jewish and Immigrant Heritage
Hosted by the Norwich Public Library and the Norwich Historical Society
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/norwich

MARCH 2 · Ellery Foutch
The Glass Ballot Box and Political Transparency, 1856-2021
Hosted by the Rutland Free Library
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/rutland

APRIL 6 · Judy Chalmer, with Deborah Lisi-Baker, Eli Clare, and Toby McNutt
Disability and the Poetry of Natural and Supernatural Worlds
Hosted by the Norwich Public Library and the Norwich Historical Society
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/norwich

MAY 4 · Rolf Diamant
Civil War, Emancipation, Reconstruction and America’s National Parks
Hosted by the Norwich Public Library and the Norwich Historical Society
Register for this talk at vermonthumanities.org/norwich
1st Wednesdays
2021-22 Humanities Lecture Series
Online and at nine libraries around Vermont

Brattleboro • Essex Junction • Manchester • Middlebury
Montpelier • Newport • Norwich • Rutland • St. Johnsbury