

# NATIONAL HUMANITIES CONFERENCE

Salt Lake City - 2016

Thursday, November 10th- Sunday, November 13th

## In This Issue

[Registration Hours](#)  
[Welcome Breakfast](#)  
[Schwartz Prize](#)  
[Capps Lecture](#)  
[Island Soldier Film](#)  
[Session Highlights](#)

## The NHC Daily

Welcome to the 2016 *National Humanities Conference Daily*, a daily recap of news and images from the conference. In addition, please check out the [National Humanities Conference Facebook Page](#) and the [conference website event page](#). To follow the conversation on social media, please use #NHCSLC.

## Thank You!



Routledge for its sponsorship of the 2016 National Humanities Conference.

## Friday

### Welcome Breakfast

Federation board chair Peter Torkildsen kicked off the breakfast with a warm welcome to attendees and an acknowledgment of the hard work of the 2016 Conference Planning Committee. David Marshall, NHA board president thanked both NHA executive director Steve Kidd and Federation president Esther Mackintosh before offering words of encouragement and inspiration to the group.

Following David's comments, both Steve and Esther shared results from the kickoff orientation on the challenges and benefits of collaboration between academic institutions and state humanities councils, including the opportunities that collaboration offers for innovation, community reach, impact, and accessibility.

**"It is clear that humanities partnerships and advocacy will be more important than ever."**

*- David Marshall*

## Registration Desk

**Sat. Nov. 11th** 8:00  
am to 5:30 pm

## Schwartz Prize

Congratulations to the 2016 Schwartz Prize winner - Michigan Humanities Council for ["Heritage Grants: Exploring the History of All Michigan's People."](#) The judges praised the programs for its variety, "innovative approach to grant making that seeks to diminish inherent bias and ensure that all voices and stories are heard," and its "thorough and deliberate process which

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resulted in a much wider field of applicants and projects." Another judge applauded the council for "working with organizations tied to social justice and racial equality at a time when our nation so desperately needs to engage its citizens on these topics." [Click to view the press release.](#)

The event was livestreamed on the National Humanities Conference Facebook page and included a video featuring interviews with the Schwartz Prize nominees.

## Capps Lecture with Danielle Allen

Tonight we were honored to have Dr. Danielle Allen speak to us about the ever increasing importance of the humanities and the public's engagement with the humanities. Dr. Allen provided exceptional insight into the two distinct and very much separate modes of conversation that have silently dominated our national cultures, but that have only recently been dragged into the spotlight and forced to interact. She explained that the two modes are the TV watchers and the readers.

### **"We don't understand each other because we don't speak in the same conversation stream"**

She noted the difference between Trump's campaign and everyone else's was that he only campaigned to people that watch television, while everyone else primarily campaigned to those that read text. This is particularly interesting as 60 percent of people prefer to get news from the TV, spending approximately 3.5 hours with TV while only 20 minutes in reading activities. Allen commented that reading has become a "cultural minority practice" and discussed America's movement toward an oral culture. She highlighted the advanced society of ancient Athens as an example of an oral culture, but stated that there wasn't the bifurcation in Athens that exists today in America. She encouraged attendees to think about programs and projects that straddle the line between people who are readers first and those who are TV watchers first and pressed for dialogue and discussion on how we can understand the two conversations and bring them together.

## Island Soldier Film (special session)

[Island Soldier](#), a documentary film by Nathan Fitch and sponsored by Humanities Guahan, was shown to conference attendees in a special preview screening at the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art. The film follows the story of three Micronesian soldiers from the island of Kosrae in the Federated States of Micronesia. A powerful look into the lives of veterans and active duty servicemen from the small island nation, the film enabled attendees to dive into the lives of these soldiers and their struggles to be given the same recognition and benefits as any other member of the United States military.

### **"The best way to get people to help reform**

**the system is to tell them about the FSM [Federated States of Micronesia]. Show them that this is a real place and these are real people."** -*Nathan Fitch, Director*

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## Concurrent Sessions' Highlights

### **Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation in the United States - 9:30 Session**

**"If we stand together to do this work, it doesn't matter how the sand shifts, we will continue to stand tall" -**

*Political refugee from Laos*

With people filling the room and spilling into the hallway, Gail Christopher and representatives of five organizations that partner with Kellogg on the *Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation* initiative gave powerful and moving accounts of the work their groups are conducting to heal racial divisions in our nation. Dr. Christopher outlined the origins and goals of the initiative and expressed hope of joining with councils and the Federation to expand the networks and impact.

**"The imperative of human life is love, but it is a continuous journey of affirming and being affirmed" -**

*Gail Christopher*

### **The Local Humanities Community: Lessons in Partnership-Building and Advocacy from the Humanities Working Groups for Community Impact Initiative - 9:30 Session**

This session highlighted the importance of listening to and engaging small communities. Attendees were encouraged to think beyond academic projects and were reminded of the importance of having a persistent presence and asking "what does the public think, want, and need?"

### **Interdisciplinary Humanities & Faculty Public Engagement in NC - 9:30 Session**

Panelists shared two successful efforts to embed publicly engaged humanities work in the University of North Carolina Greensboro: The Humanities Network and Consortium and the Human Rights and Literature program.

The Human Network promotes the value of publicly engaged humanities work, supports faculty research, and recognizes exceptional publicly engaged work on campus. The Human

Rights and Literature program teaches about human rights through literature and in discussion with students from another nation providing many of the horizon-expanding opportunities of a study abroad experience.

### **Case Making for the Humanities - 9:30 Session**

**"The humanities teach us to answer the question, why?"**

According to funders, for humanities organizations to access big gifts, the approach has to be collaborative, and has to be project-based. The session walked attendees through how to approach creating a compelling case for supporting the humanities. Points included how to show the "so what?" of your work, and how to show the challenge and solution so clearly that the donor grasps it immediately. Discussion also centered on framing the humanities as habits of mind, rather than as a subject.

### **People Not Property: A National Register of Deeds of the Enslaved - 11:00 Session**

The Buncombe County Slave Deeds Project is a powerful, well-conceived initiative to have high school students in Georgia work with UGA and UNC-Asheville to explore registers of deeds to reconstruct life stories of the enslaved.

**"When young people can see relevance to where they live, they put history in a different place."**

Discussion about the importance of further exploring the stories of the enslaved centered on how it helped promote a better understanding of the overall narrative of American history and that the stories help to humanize those who have been consistently dehumanized.

**"Many students were descendants of the slaves in Putnam County and felt that they were the beginning of righting a wrong."**

Attendees believed that this project could be replicated in many states to create relevant, student-driven narratives at a pivotal point in our history.

**"If we don't tell these stories, who will?"**

## **Humanities and Philanthropy: Partners for Social Change - 11:00 Session**

**"Family foundations offer more possibilities than large bureaucratic foundations. They are flexible if they can be convinced!"**

*-David Leckey, Orton Family Foundation*

Two state humanities councils shared their experiences partnering with foundations. The Michigan Humanities Council discussed its partnership with the Kellogg Foundation for "Heritage Grants: Exploring the History of All Michigan's People," noting that being a technical expert in grant-making made the council an attractive partner for reaching small and grassroots organizations.

The Pennsylvania Humanities Council discussed its partnership with the Orton Family Foundation and how it positioned the council to take a leadership role and empower the community to shape their futures. Both initiatives were rooted in storytelling.

**"If you have a relationship with a foundation, ask them to introduce you to other foundations. They like to spread innovative ideas." - David Leckey**

## **Bridging Troubled Waters: Promoting Understanding & Dialogue between Muslims & Other Americans - 11:00 Session**

**"These [Muslim] veterans are in a space where they can speak to other Americans who wouldn't otherwise want to listen to their story"**

*-David Washburn*

Given the current tensions surrounding Muslims, panelists detailed projects they are working on to educate non-Muslims about the true culture and religion Muslim Americans celebrate and practice, and detailed the challenges in doing so. Panelists then offered suggestions of how others can structure events to help educate others about this community.

**"A distinction has to be made between these [hateful] groups and Muslim Americans, and all Muslims"**

*- Zaki Hamid*

## **K-12 Education Working Group - 1:30 Session**

The K-12 working group session began with NEH Chairman William Adams summarizing the importance of the humanities in schools. Julie Ziegler of Humanities Washington followed by sharing results of a survey of humanities programs done by state councils. Carol Peters described programs affiliated with the NEH EdSitement program, and David O'Fallon of the Minnesota Humanities Center discussed

a new approach the council is taking to reshaping education. Participants continued the conversation in small group discussions.

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## NOTICE: Live Stream Tomorrow!

**Reminder!** Tune in tomorrow morning to the [National Humanities Conference Facebook page](#) to watch the live stream conversation between NEH Chairman William Adams and Virginia Foundation for the Humanities President and CEO Rob Vaughan.

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## Submit Content to *The NHC Daily*!

Your thoughts and images could be featured on the next NHC Daily. Select sessions will be requesting volunteers to draft content for the NHC Daily. To submit content, [click here](#) or pick up a form at the Registration Desk.

**Alternatively, tag us on Facebook and Twitter or use #NHCSLC when posting on social media.**

### **Upcoming Events (Saturday, Nov. 12)**

- 8:00 AM - Registration Desk Opens (closes at 5:30 pm)
- 8:45 AM - Breakfast with NEH Chairman (Grand Ballroom, Facebook LIVE)
- 10:00 AM - Constituent Group Sessions (various meeting rooms)
- 11:30 AM - *Hope, Heart, and Humanities* Book Signing (Grand Foyer)
- 11:45 AM - Diversifying Council Boards Lunch (Grand Ballroom)
- 1:00 PM - Concurrent Sessions I (various meeting rooms)
- 2:00 PM - NHC 2017 Welcome Table & Coffee Break (Grand Foyer)
- 2:30 PM - Concurrent Sessions II (various meeting rooms)
- 4:00 PM - FSHC Annual Business Meeting (Alpine Ballroom)
- 4:00 PM - Concurrent Sessions III (various meeting rooms)
- 5:30 PM - Closing Event and Book Signing with Elizabeth Fenn (Grand Ballroom)
- 9:30 PM - Hospitality Suite!

*Thank you for being a part of the 2016 National Humanities Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. We'd like to say a special thank you to Utah Humanities for hosting, the 2016 Conference Planning Committee for their ideas, organization and leadership, and to those who are working to support and promote the value and the importance of the humanities across the nation and globe.*

***#humanitiesmatter, #NHCSLC***