

EVAN FRISS

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PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

(Assistant Professor, 2012-18; Associate Professor, 2018-24)

EDUCATION

Ph.D. History, The Graduate Center, City University of New York, 2011

M.A. History and Certificate in Archival Management/Historical Editing, New York University, 2005

B.A. History, University of Maryland (College Park Scholar), 2002

BOOKS

The Bookshop: A History of the American Bookstore (New York: Viking, 2024;
Translated versions forthcoming in Spanish, Russian, Chinese, and Japanese).

New York Times Bestseller

Time's 100 Must-Read Books of 2024

The New Yorker's Best Books of 2024

Christian Science Monitor's Best Books of 2024

People magazine's Book of the Week

Literary Hub's Best Reviewed Nonfiction of 2024

On Bicycles: A 200-Year History of Cycling in New York City (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019).

The Cycling City: Bicycles and Urban America in the 1890s (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015).

EXHIBITION

Guest Curator, "Cycling in the City," Museum of the City of New York, March-October 2019.

ARTICLES

"Where Did All the Black Bookshops Go," *Washington Post*, August 6, 2024.

"The Bookstore That Helped Create Modern American Literature," *Wall Street Journal*, August 2, 2024.

"Bike Booms Come and Go, So Mayor Adams Must Make Transformative Change," *StreetsblogNYC* (December 2021).

"Bicycling through the Pandemic," *Columbia University Press Blog* (September 2020).

"Where Do Bikes Belong? They Usually Don't," *The Metropole* (April 2020).

- “Historians’ Books: The Cycling City,” *History & Policy* (April 2016).
- “Writing Bicycles: The Historiography of Cycling in the United States,” *Mobility in History*, 6 (2015): 127-33.
- “The Future History of MOOCs: Archivists, Historians, and the Digital Classroom,” *The American Historian* (May 2015).
- “The Path Not Taken: The Rise of America’s Cycle Paths and the Fall of Urban Cycling,” in Sanderson, Gary W., ed., *Cycle History 20* (Cheltenham, England: John Pinkerton Memorial Publishing Fund, 2010): 67-72.
- “Blacks, Jews, and Civil Rights Law in New York, 1895-1913,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* (Summer 2005): 70-99.
- “From Cooperstown to University Heights: Halls of Fame and American Memory,” *Journal of Archival Organization*, 3, no. 4 (2005): 87-104.

INVITED LECTURES & TALKS

- “Benjamin Franklin & The Rise of the American Bookstore,” American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia, PA), January 2025.
- “The Bookshop,” Colony Club (New York), January 2025.
- “The Power of Books,” Miami Book Fair, November 2024.
- Malkin Lecture: “The Bookshop,” Park Avenue Armory (New York), November 2024.
- “The Bookshop: In Conversation with Nancy Bass Wyden,” Strand Bookstore, November 2024.
- “Benjamin Franklin and Bookstores,” Benjamin Franklin House (London), November 2024.
- “Books & Brews,” Pale Fire Brewing (Harrisonburg, VA), November 2024.
- “The Bookshop,” American Moscow Center (Russia), October 2024.
- “The Bookshop: In Conversation with Joe Fassler,” October 2024.
- “History of the Bookshop,” Staunton Books & Tea, October 2024.
- “The Bookshop: A History of the American Bookstore,” New Dominion Bookstore (C-SPAN Book TV), September 2024.
- “The Bookshop,” Bookselling Research Network, September 2024.
- “Author Talk,” Massanutten Regional Library, September 2024.
- “The Bookshop,” Ashland Library, September 2024.
- “The Bookshop: In Conversation with Isabel Banta,” Books Are Magic (Brooklyn, NY), August 2024.
- “The History of America’s Bookshops: In Conversation with Ann Patchett,” American Inspiration Series, August 2024.
- “The Bookshop: In Conversation with Bradley Graham,” Politics & Prose (Washington, DC), August 2024.
- “Harrisonburg Bike Month,” Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition, May 2024.
- “Cycling City,” Landmark West, April 2024.
- “Cycle Town USA,” Reconnect Rochester, April 2023.

- “The Bookshop: A History of the American Bookstore,” Edna T. Shaeffer Humanist Award Symposium, James Madison University, April 2021.
- “New York Mobilities, Past and Present,” Lyft Inc. (New York Headquarters), September 2019.
- “From Cobblestones to Citi Bikes: The 200-Year History of the Bicycle in NYC,” Rapha Cycling Club, New York, NY, July 2019.
- “*On Bicycles*: In Conversation with Jody Rosen,” McNally Jackson Bookshop, New York, NY, May 2019.
- “Publishing and the Promotion of Research and Scholarship,” James Madison University, College of Arts & Letters Humanities Colloquium, March 2019.
- “Sport Landscapes: Bicycles and Urban Space,” Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, March 2018.
- “Why Digital History?” Institute for Visual Studies, James Madison University, November 2017.
- “On-Again, Off-Again: Americans and their Bicycles,” Transylvania University, April 2017.
- “The Cycling City,” Massanutten Regional Library, June 2016.
- “New York City as a Cycling City,” Gotham Center for New York City History, April 2016.
- “Bicycles in Environmental History,” George Washington University, February 2015.
- “The Cycling City,” Edna T. Shaeffer Humanist Award Symposium, James Madison University, March 2015.
- “Bicycling: Past, Present, and Future” (Guest Lecture via Skype), University of Wisconsin, March 2014.
- “Clybourne Park: A Historical Context,” James Madison University School of Theatre and Dance, March 2014.
- “Wheelwomen of the 1890s,” Montgomery College, March 2012.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

- “Transportation Infrastructure across the Globe,” (Panel Commenter) Society for American City and Regional Planning History, October 2024.
- “The Neighborhood Bookstore,” Urban History Association, October 2023.
- “Planning Regional Compromise: Agencies, Individuals, and Landscapes,” (Panel Commenter) Society for American City and Regional Planning History, November 2019.
- “Robert Moses and the Bicycle: A New York Love (And Hate) Story,” Urban History Association Conference, October 2018.
- “Between the Booms: Bicycle Planning in Twentieth Century New York,” Transportation Research Board Ninety-Seventh Annual Meeting, January 2018.

- “Teaching Urban History in the Digital Age,” Urban History Association Conference, October 2016.
- “Contested Cyclescapes: Where Bicycles Belong (and Don’t Belong) in New York, 1880-2013,” Society for American City and Regional Planning History, November 2015.
- “Digital Learning and Scholarship: A Reflection,” Teaching and Learning with Technology Conference, October 2015.
- “Creating and Assessing Authentic Learning Environments,” Digital Learning Research Network, October 2015.
- “The Future History of MOOCs: Archivists, Historians, and the Digital Classroom,” American Historical Association Conference, January 2014.
- “Planning Mobility: The Built Environment and Perceptions of Space in the Modern Metropolis,” James Madison University History Forum, October 2013.
- “The Crash: The Collapse of Urban Cycling in the United States,” Society for American City and Regional Planning History, October 2013.
- “Cycling Cities, Utopian Cities: Bicycles and Urban Design in the 1890s,” Society for American City and Regional Planning History, November 2011.
- “The Cycling City in History: Bicycles, Sustainability, and 1890s Urban America,” Urban History Association Conference, October 2010.
- “Bicycle Paths and the Transformation of Urban America,” Twentieth International Cycling History Conference, July 2009.
- “Andrew Haswell Green and a Greater New York,” Graduate Center History Conference, May 2006.
- “Casting Urban Utopias in Concrete: James Rouse and the Revitalization of the City,” Mid-Atlantic Popular/American Culture Association, November 2005.

PEER REVIEWER

Book Manuscripts: Columbia University Press, Georgetown University Press, Johns Hopkins University Press, Palgrave Macmillan, University of Illinois Press, University of Pennsylvania Press.

Articles: *Gender & History*, *Journal of American Studies*, *Journal of Transport History*

BOOK REVIEWS

Reviewed Henk-Jan Dekker, *Cycling Pathways: The Politics and Governance of Dutch Cycling Infrastructure, 1920-2020* in *Technology and Culture*, 63 (July 2022).

Reviewed Sonja Dümpelmann, *Seeing Trees: A History of Street Trees in New York City and Berlin* in *H-Environment Roundtable*, 10, no. 2 (2020).

Reviewed Roger Gilles, *Women on the Move: The Forgotten Era of Women’s Bicycle Racing* in *Missouri Historical Review*, 113, no.3 (April 2019).

Reviewed Robert L. McCullough, *Old Wheelways: Traces of Bicycle History on the Land in Buildings & Landscapes*, 24, no.2 (Fall 2017).
Reviewed Ocean Howell, *Making the Mission: Planning and Ethnicity in San Francisco* in *Pacific Historical Review*, 86, no.2 (May 2017).
Reviewed Ruth Oldenziel and Helmuth Trischler, eds., *Cycling and Recycling: Histories of Sustainable Practices* in *Environmental History*, 21, no. 4 (2016).

AWARDS, GRANTS, & RECOGNITIONS

Goodreads Choice Award for History (*The Bookshop*), (2024)
College of Arts and Letters Faculty Educational Leave (2024)
MacDowell Fellowship (2022)
General Education Council Collaboration Grant (2022)
College of Arts and Letters Mini-Grant (2019, 2020, 2022, 2023)
College of Arts and Letters Summer Research Grant (2017, 2021)
Edna T. Shaeffer Humanist Award (2014, 2020)
“Cycling in the City” Named One of the Best Art Exhibitions on View and an NYC-Arts Choice (*New York Times*, *amNewYork*, and WNET PBS Television, 2019)
Excellence in Historic Preservation (for the Bird Haven Oral History Project), Shenandoah County Historical Society (2018)
4-VA Grant, “Digital Humanities and Public Writing Collaboration: A Graduate-Level, Campus-Community Engagement Model” (2018)
Provost’s Faculty Development Award (2018)
School of Liberal Arts Alumni Legacy Fund Award (2016-18)
New York Public Library Pick (*The Cycling City*), Read Harder Challenge (2015)
Furthermore Grant, J.M. Kaplan Fund (2014)
Neil Harris Endowment Fund, University of Chicago Press (2014)
E.P. Thompson Fellowship (2010-11)
Doctoral Student Research Travel Grant, Graduate Center (2010)
Graduate Writing Fellow, Interdisciplinary Studies, John Jay College (2009-11)
Departmental Distinction, Ph.D. Oral Exams, Graduate Center (2007)
Chancellor’s Fellowship, Graduate Center (2005-11)
Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (Madrid, Spain—Summer 2004)
NYU Bobst Fellowship (2003-5)

SELECT MEDIA COVERAGE

“Bibliomania,” (London) *Times Literary Supplement*, November 15, 2024.
“La fin de la librairie americaine,” (Paris) *Books*, November 2024.
“100 People to Meet in 2025,” *Virginia Business*, November 2024.
“Inside the Nooks of ‘The Bookshop,’” *Maryland Today*, August 6, 2024.
“JMU prof’s book on bookshops makes NYT bestseller list,” *Harrisonburg Citizen*, September 2, 2024.

“Bill’s Books,” NBC Today New York, September 2024.

“How bookstores became cornerstones of American Culture,” *Christian Science Monitor*, August 29, 2024.

“Are Bookstores Just A Waste of Space?” *New Yorker*, August 19, 2024.

“Biblioracle: ‘The Bookshop’ Taught Me Something New About Bookstores,” *Chicago Tribune*, August 17, 2024.

“‘Shopkeeping’ and ‘The Bookshop’: A Business for Bibliophiles,” *Wall Street Journal*, August 9, 2024.

“What Should You Read Next? Here Are the Best Reviewed Books of the Week,” *Literary Hub*, August 9, 2024.

“Browsing Is a Pleasure in This History of the Bookstore,” *New York Times*, August 4, 2024.

“Serious browsers will love this history of American bookstores,” *Washington Post*, August 1, 2024.

“10 books to add to your reading list in August,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 31, 2024.

“20 Best Books to Read in August,” *Kirkus Reviews*, July 29, 2024.

“Most Anticipated,” *The Millions*, July 3, 2024.

“The 39 Must-Read Books of Summer 2024,” *Town & Country*, June 3, 2024.

“The Bookseller Who Brought Hardcover to America’s Most Famous Bookstore,” *New York Times*, May 24, 2024.

“The Next Big Idea Club’s August 2024 Must-Read Books,” The Next Big Idea Club, June 2024.

“L’Allure Des Messengers,” *l’Étiquette*, Spring-Summer, 2023.

“Is NYC About to Get its First Bike Mayor,” *Gothamist*, October 19, 2021.

“The US Wasn’t Equipped for 2020’s Cycling Boom. Its Failures Stem from A Century of Leaving Bikes Behind,” *Business Insider*, December 26, 2020.

“Can the Bike Boom Keep Going?” *CityLab*, October 29, 2020.

“Thousands Join N.Y.C. Bike Protests: ‘It’s Like Riding in the Cavalry,’” *New York Times*, July 3, 2020.

“The Shortlist,” *New York Times Book Review*, September 1, 2019.

“The Secret History of the Future: Dots, Dashes, and Dating Apps,” *Slate* and *The Economist*, August 7, 2019.

“We’ve Blamed Traffic Deaths on Bicyclists Since 1880. What About Drivers?” *New York Times*, August 2, 2019.

“Lessons From the History of Cycling in NYC,” *amNew York*, July 31, 2019.

“‘Can I Make My Boyfriend Wear a Helmet?’: A Few More of Your Bike-Related Questions Answered,” *Gothamist*, July 19, 2019.

“Is Féidir Cathair Ar Bith A Chur In Oiriúnt Don Rothaíocht,” *Nós*, July 10, 2019.

“NYC-ARTS Choice: ‘Cycling in the City: A 200-Year History,’” WNET TV, June 13, 2019.

- “Bicycle Diaries: Two Centuries of New York City History,” *New York Times*, May 23, 2019.
- “It’s Been a Bumpy 200-Year Ride for NYC’s Historically Hated Bikes,” *New York Post*, March 20, 2019.
- “How Bicycles Ignited 200 Years of Controversy in New York City,” *Curbed*, March 14, 2019.
- “New Exhibition Tracks the Centuries-Old Urban Debate Over Bicycles,” *Metropolis*, March 2019.
- Greg Miller, “Mapping the Urban Bike Utopias of the 1890s,” *National Geographic*, February 24, 2017.
- “The Suburbs: A Lecture by Professor Evan Friss,” C-SPAN’s Lectures in American History Series, January 2017.
- Rob Walker, “Adventures with Objects,” Smithsonian National Museum of American History, 2016.
- Adam Gopnik, “Naked Cities: The Death and Life of Urban America,” *New Yorker*, October 5, 2015.
- Rebecca Onion, “Photos of Late 19th Century Bicycle Clubs Riding Their Penny-Farthings Around the Bay Area,” *Slate*, June 5, 2014.
- J. David Goodman, “The Bittersweet History of Bike Clubs,” *New York Times* (online), January 19, 2010.

INTERVIEWS, RADIO, & PODCASTS

- “Why bookstores Still Maintain their Magic, Against the Odds,” CBC *The Sunday Magazine*, November 2024.
- “Exploring the American bookstore with JMU history professor Evan Friss,” NPR WMRA, November 2024.
- “The Bookshop,” Georgia Historical Society Podcast, October 2024.
- “This Bookstore Historian Sees Bookselling as Activism,” *The Millions*, October 2024.
- “Mountain Money,” NPR KPCW, September 2024.
- “Evan Friss on the Enduring Power of the Bookshop,” KQED (NPR), Forum, August 2024.
- “The Past, Present, and Future of our Favorite Bookstores,” 1A (NPR), August 2024.
- “For ‘*The Bookshop*’ author, bookstores were ‘sites of resistance’” *Christian Science Monitor*, August 2024.
- “Evan Friss Traces the History of American Bookstores,” The Book Case with Charlie Gibson, August 2024.
- “The History of American Bookshops,” Daily Stoic, August 2024.
- “Evan Friss on *The Bookshop*,” Turn the Page Podcast, August, 2024.
- “Bike New York,” Open House New York, October 2021.
- “Cycling in the City: The History of Bicycles in the Big Apple,” Everyday Environmentalism, June 2021.

“The Cycling City,” New Books Network, March 5, 2021.
 “Cycle of Life,” With Good Reason (NPR), June 12, 2020.
 “On Bicycles,” Gotham Center for New York City History, January 16, 2020.
 “200 Years of NYC Cycling,” FOX5NY 6PM News, September 20, 2019.
 “ ‘Critical Mass’: The Bike Ride That Changed the City,” WNYC (NPR), July 25, 2019.
 “The Bike Show,” KBOO Radio Portland, July 3, 2019.
 “The Outspoken Cyclist,” WJCU Radio, June 15, 2019.
 “200 Years of Bicycle History,” The Bike Nerds Podcast, June 10, 2019.
 “200 Years of Bicycles History in NYC,” WFUV (NPR), May 15, 2019.
 “On Bicycles,” All of it With Alison Stewart, WNYC (NPR), May 10, 2019.
 “New Yorkers and our Bicycles, Past and Present,” Rediscovering New York with Jeff Goodman, Talk Radio NYC, April 30, 2019.
 “Cycling in the City: Exploring a Contentious Past (and Present) in New York,” Uptown Radio, April 1, 2019.
 “200 Years of Bike History,” The Cats Roundtable with John Catsimatidis, March 2019.
 “Episode 59: Evan Friss,” The Bike Nerds Podcast, May 2017.
 “Bicycle Fever at the Turn of the Century,” With Good Reason (NPR), July 2016.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

James Madison University (2012-)

US History

US Urban History

Digital History

Oral History

Introduction to Archives and Manuscripts

History of Today

In the Year 2000

Critical Issues in Recent Global History

Digital History (Graduate)

Introduction to Archives and Manuscripts (Graduate)

Seminar in US History: Recent Period (Graduate)

Seminar in Historical Research Methods (Graduate)

Research and Writing Seminar (Graduate)

Chancellor’s Fellow Lecturer, City College of New York (2006-11)

American Urban History: New York City

The Modern American City: A Global Perspective (Graduate)

The United States since 1865 (Graduate)

The Development of the United States and its People

The New Nation: Slave and Free

The American Presidency

Adjunct Assistant Professor, John Jay College (2011)
*Sounds of the City: Musical History of New York
Assassinations*

Instructor, New York University, Abu Dhabi, UAE (Summers 2011, 2012)
Critical Thinking and Writing

DIGITAL PROJECTS

The Bookshop: An Oral History Archive

Harrisonburg Walking Tours

Harrisonburg Oral History Project

Director, writer, and producer of a thirty-minute documentary film, "A Gentlemen's Agreement: Blacks, Football, and Protest at NYU"

"A Window into the Past: NYU in Retrospect" (Web exhibit)

THESIS ADVISING

Director of M.A. Theses

Erin Kelly, "Immigration After the Great Famine: A Case Study of the Passengers of the S.S. Canadian," 2021.

Dale Cook, "Bohemian Bolsheviks: *The Masses* and *The Liberator*," 2020.
(Winner of the Carlton B. Smith Best Traditional Thesis Award)

Kayla Heslin, "Exploring Rockingham's Past: A Digital Project," 2020. (Winner of the Carlton B. Smith Best Non-Traditional Thesis Award)

Joel Webster, "Coolidge Against the World: Peace, Prosperity, and Foreign Policy in the 1920s," 2017.

Ellen Blackmon, "We Need a Little Christmas: Christmas at Home in Mid-Twentieth-Century America," 2016.

Peter Bonds, "Stonewall on the Potomac: Gay Political Activism in Washington, DC, 1961-1973," 2016. (Winner of the Carlton B. Smith Best Thesis Award)

Hope Byers, "The Science of Charity: The Social Network that Restructured Law and Order in Baltimore, 1881-1901," 2014.

Reader of M.A. Theses

Subat Matin, "I Belong Here Too: An Oral History of the Immigration of Bangladeshis to New York City," 2023. (Winner of the Carlton B. Smith Award)

Thomas Kidd, "Republican Party Doctrine and the West Virginia Coal Mine Wars," 2023.

Kade Kahanek, "In Search for a Better South: President Johnson's Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in the Lone Star State," 2023.

Jennifer Taylor, "Exploring Rockingham's Past: Criminal Court Records," 2021.

Rachel Childers, "Serialized Soldiers and the New Archetype," 2020.

Craig Schaefer, "Prohibition in Rockingham County: Exploring a Digital Archive," 2019. (Winner of the Shenandoah Valley Technology Council's "Innovation in Community Impact Award," 2019.)

Trevor Cooper, "Middle-Class Millions: The Creation of Atlantic City's 'Modern' Image, 1890-1910," 2018.

David Le Moal, "Consolidation: Race, Politics, and Urbanism in the Newport News-Warwick Merger," 2018.

Marvin Chiles, "Richmond's Urban Crisis: Civil Rights America in Richmond, Virginia, 1960-1977," 2016.

Hannah Moses, "Ang Buhay sa Nayon/Life in the Valley: An Oral History Project with the Shenandoah Living Archive," 2015. (Winner of the Carlton B. Smith Award)

Mary Ann Mason, "Stokesville, Virginia: An Enduring Depot for an Ephemeral Town," 2015.

Paula Weddle, "'Damage Without Parallel': An Analysis of the Virginia Flood of 1870," 2015.

Lauren Fleming, "Utopia for the Mind: American Treatment of Insanity in the Nineteenth Century," 2014.

Undergraduate Honors Theses

Haley McAlister, "From the Virginia State Epileptic Colony to the Central Virginia Training Center," 2021. [Director]

James D. Brady, "Anti-Transgender Discrimination and Oppression in New York City and San Francisco during the Gay Liberation Movement, 1965-1975," 2015. [Reader]

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Director, Urban History Association (2024-)

Member, Dean of the College of Arts and Letters Search Committee (2024)

Co-Chair, SACRPH Program Committee (2023-24)

External Consultant, NEH Fellowship Programs at Independent Research Institutions (2023)

Member, Urban History Association, Best Book in North American History Prize Committee (2023)

Chair, John Reps Prize (Best Dissertation in American City and Regional Planning History) Committee (2021, 2023)

Member, Department of History Curriculum Committee (2021-)

Member, Department of History Faculty Leave Committee (2023)

Member, College of Arts and Letters Digital Humanities Director Search Committee (2021-22)

Member, University Writing Center Advisory Board (2018-)

Member, Department of History Personnel Advisory Committee (2018-21)
Member, Department of History Graduate Program Academic Program Review
(2020-21)
Member, Department of History Academic Unit Head Search Committee (2018-19)
Chair, Academic Program Review, Department of History Internal Self-Study
Committee (2017-18)
Grant Review Panelist, National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of
Preservation and Access, Humanities Collections and Reference Resources
(2017)
Faculty Associate, JMU Libraries Innovation Services (2015-19)
Co-Chair, Department of History Faculty Awards Committee (2015-18)
Department of History Website/Social Media Manager (2015-18)
JMU GenEd Student Conference Panel Organizer and Moderator (2015-17)
Member, College of Arts and Letters Faculty Assistance Committee (2015)
Reviewer, Wikipedia Primary School Research Project (2015)
Member, Edna T. Shaeffer Humanist Award Selection Committee (2015-16)
Grant Review Panelist, National Endowment for the Humanities, Media Projects in
History (2014)
Member, Provost's Award for Excellence in Scholarship Committee (2014)
Member, Faculty Research Council (2013-18)
Member, Department of History Graduate Committee (2013-)
Member, Tenure-Track Public History Position Search Committee (2013-14)
The Humanities and Technology Camp Participant (2013)
Member, Department of History Website/Tech. Committee (2013-15)
Member, Department of History US Committee (2013-)
Member, JMU Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (2013-)
Member, Northend Greenway Steering Committee (2012-19)
Historical Consultant, Dog Green Productions, Documentary Films (2010-11)
Scholar-in-Residence, Historical Society of the Courts of the State of New York
(2009-10)
Director, Calvert Vaux Preservation Alliance (2008-16)
Graduate Assistant, New York University Archives, New York, NY (2003-5)
Archival Intern, New York Public Library, New York, NY (2003-4)
Writer/Historical Consultant, NYU Today, New York, NY (2003-5)
Archival Assistant, Columbia Archives, Columbia, MD (2002-3)

MEMBERSHIP

Society for American City and Regional Planning History (Board of Trustees, 2019-)
Urban History Association (Board of Directors, 2024-)