

2018 SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA

OAH
ORGANIZATION OF
American
Historians®

OAH PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

AND



ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

PROGRAM



SATURDAY, APRIL 14

HYATT REGENCY HOTEL
B/C — D/F

OAH PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Everyone Their Own Historian

Sponsored by W. W. Norton

Saturday, April 14, 5:15 pm–6:45 pm

Hyatt–Regency B/C

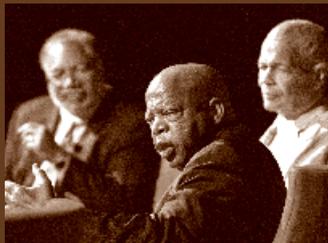
Edward L. Ayers

Tucker-Boatwright Professor of the Humanities
President Emeritus, University of Richmond

Edward Ayers has been named National Professor of the Year, received the National Humanities Medal from President Barack Obama at the White House, won the Bancroft Prize and Beveridge Prize in American history, and was a finalist for the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize. He has collaborated on major digital history projects, including the *Valley of the Shadow*, *American Panorama*, and *Bunk*, and is one of the cohosts for BackStory, a popular podcast about American history. He is Tucker-Boatwright Professor of the Humanities and president emeritus at the University of Richmond as well as former Dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Virginia. His most recent book is *The Thin Light of Freedom: The Civil War and Emancipation in the Heart of America*, published in 2017 by W. W. Norton, which received the 2018 OAH Avery O. Craven Award.



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AGENDA

- I. Confirmation of Quorum, OAH Parliamentarian, Jonathan Lurie
- II. Call to Order/Approval of Minutes from 2017 Meeting, Edward L. Ayers
- III. Report of the OAH President, Edward L. Ayers
- IV. Report of the OAH Executive Director, Katherine M. Finley
- V. Report of the OAH Treasurer, Jay S. Goodgold
- VI. Report of the OAH Executive Editor/Editor, *Journal of American History*, Benjamin H. Irvin
- VII. Report of the OAH Nominating Board, Margot Canaday
- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business
- X. Welcome Incoming OAH President and Adjournment

*Please silence your cell phones and mobile devices
during the business meeting and
presidential address.*

2017 OAH BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 8, 2017 · NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

I. OAH Confirmation of Quorum, OAH Parliamentarian, Jonathan Lurie

After OAH Parliamentarian Jonathan Lurie determined a quorum was present, OAH President Nancy F. Cott called the OAH Annual Business Meeting to order at 3:55 p.m. Twenty-six OAH members were present at the beginning of the meeting.

II. Minutes of the previous OAH Annual Business Meeting were presented, duly seconded, and approved.

III. Report of the President

OAH President Nancy F. Cott welcomed everyone and thanked the OAH staff, the Executive Committee, the Executive Board, all the committees, and the Distinguished Lecturers for all their hard work and service to the organization. The OAH hopes to have a balanced budget, and there has been careful management of the association. The OAH has a number of ongoing projects including the National Park Service Collaboration and Distinguished Lectureship series. Recently, the OAH started several new initiatives. The OAH offered travel funds this past year to assist part-time and adjunct professors with attending the conference. The OAH also enlisted 96 Distinguished Lecturers to speak when requested on "Historians' Perspectives on the Rise of Donald J. Trump." As an offshoot of this, the OAH is sending a list of members who are experts on timely subjects to the media. The OAH has been effective in its advocacy efforts this past year. With the help of the National Coalition for History, the OAH was able to prevent the closure of the NASA Johnson Space Center History Office. The OAH also weighed in on the appointment of the National Park Service Chief Historian and the Librarian of Congress and requested that Beaufort, South Carolina, be designated as the first historic site dedicated to Reconstruction (which was subsequently designated by executive order a national historic site by then President Barack Obama). After President Trump established a travel ban by executive order, the OAH joined with the AHA and several other associations to issue a statement in opposition to this ban. The OAH also issued a statement (which is posted on the American Council of Learned Societies website) urging that the National Endowment for the Humanities not be defunded. Cott noted, however, that we will be issuing statements very judiciously in the future.

IV. Report of the Executive Director

OAH Executive Director Katherine Finley began her report by noting that during the past presidential election, we heard much about the dystopian state of the nation. She noted that the OAH and the history profession are certainly faced with many challenges and sometimes it does seem “dystopian,” but there have been many positive results this past year.

OAH Annual Meeting. Finley thanked everyone including the staff, volunteers, sponsors, advertisers, and the members who made this year’s meeting successful. Attendance at the conference was 1,724, and the final program included 186 sessions/events, which consisted of 123 accepted sessions, 63 solicited sessions/events, and 780 program participants.

Finley noted that the OAH is well on its way to having an exciting 2018 annual conference and is grateful to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for awarding the OAH a two-year, \$150,000 grant to help remake this meeting. Through this Foundation grant, the OAH hopes to increase the reach of the 2018 annual meeting to the public, teachers, students, and scholars interested in American history. Presently, the meeting reaches primarily those teaching history at universities and colleges and is limited to those who attend the meeting in person. With this grant, we will be able to record, process, and reformat the content of the annual meeting to reach audiences that normally do not attend or are unable to attend.

Finley also announced that the OAH is tentatively scheduled to hold its 2026 annual meeting in Philadelphia (April 16–18). Since 2026 is the 250th anniversary of American independence, the OAH believes this is a most appropriate location.

Membership. Finley noted that members are the lifeblood of our organization. The OAH membership numbers are stable and on par with last year. Finley added that it is vital that we convey the importance of joining the OAH to be part of a community of historians. In today’s hostile environment, we are definitely stronger together.

The newly reconstructed Membership Committee met for the first time at this meeting and will be utilized to help increase membership in areas targeted in its membership marketing plan. This coming year, the OAH hopes to concentrate its membership efforts in three areas: increasing the retention rate of new members, increasing our market share of history department members, and determining how best to implement a plan for multiyear dues and automatic dues payments. Finley encouraged everyone to participate in our sponsored member program to make sure the next generation of historians becomes involved in our organization and the history profession.

IV. Report of the Executive Director, Cont.

Distinguished Lectureship Program. This program continues its recovery (from the loss of the *TAH* grant program several years ago) and now has over 500 lecturers (an all-time high) in the program. Using DLP lecturers, the OAH is working with the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) to pilot two webinars this spring—one on immigration and one on World War I. The first one on WWI was a great success with 365 attendees. The AASLH webinars are being offered for free, but if they go well, future webinars could potentially generate some revenue, but more importantly increase the reach of the OAH.

A new project this year proposed by OAH President Nancy F. Cott is entitled, “Historians’ Perspectives on the Rise of Donald J. Trump.” There are currently 96 participating speakers, and after one month, the OAH has scheduled two OAH Lectures for spring 2017 and one for fall 2017. The OAH is also preparing a list of experts on other topics to be distributed to the press.

Website. Over the coming year, Finley noted that the OAH website will be given a facelift to make the site more accessible. The OAH website remains popular with 147,180 views (compared to 111,328 last year), which represents over a 32% increase in traffic.

International Programs. Thanks to a three-year renewal grant from the Ford Foundation, the China residency program will continue, and a grant from the Thyssen Foundation will allow the OAH to continue with the Germany residency program. Again this year, the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission has funded the Japan residencies program.

Publications. Finley noted that the OAH Interim Executive Editor Stephen D. Andrews will report on the publications, but the OAH’s new magazine remains popular, as does the *Process* blog. As always, the *JAH* remains top notch and the leading journal in American history. The national office produces an e-newsletter and advocacy alert. The e-newsletter is now sent twice a month to members and recently, with all the political turmoil, the OAH has sent out more advocacy alerts than usual.

Finley concluded by saying that even with all the challenges that have arisen in both the history field and the nation, the OAH has scored some victories and has had some very positive outcomes. It’s not utopia at the OAH, but certainly the picture is not one of dystopia either. The OAH’s community of historians has risen to the challenges facing the profession and the world today and will hopefully continue to do so in future years.

V. Report of the Treasurer

Because of weather-related travel issues, OAH Treasurer Jay Goodgold could not attend the meeting. OAH Executive Director Katherine Finley read his report. In it, Goodgold noted that the OAH remains very stable, both financially and structurally. The organization is projecting a balanced budget for both Fiscal Year 2017 (ending June 30) and for the upcoming Fiscal Year 2018. A number of factors have been instrumental in the OAH maintaining its steady operation, including its continued excellent relationship with Oxford University Press, the strong management of the *Journal of American History (JAH)*, a stable level of dues collection, an improvement in the operations of our Distinguished Lectureship Program and National Park Service Collaboration, an improved management of the OAH Annual Meeting, a very careful monitoring of its expenses and resources, and a very dedicated staff in Bloomington.

According to Goodgold, the *JAH* finances remain solid. The *JAH* is expecting a small deficit of \$8,600 due to added costs. The journal's relationships with Indiana University, the Indiana University Department of History, and Oxford University Press continue to support the financial stability of the *JAH*. One area of promise is the potential proceeds from the sale of the Advanced Placement Exam Prep (*Past Forward*) series. Overall, the OAH is projecting a small level of revenue for this year from the sales of these books, but we will look to enhance the marketing of these books through Oxford University Press and other leaders in the AP field. Goodgold thanked Stephen Andrews, the Interim Executive Editor of the *JAH*, for his excellent work in overseeing the operation of the *JAH* and looks forward to Benjamin Irvin's assumption of the editorship in Fiscal 2018.

The Indiana University Foundation manages OAH's long-term financial assets. As of February 28, 2017, the organization's total assets managed by the Foundation was approximately \$1.81 million, of which the prize money accounts for 38% of the total, with the balance in the General Fund and the Fund for American History. Outside of the Prize Fund, the OAH has seen little external contributions to the funds. Legacy giving and outright gifts are the keys to improving the longer-term position with these funds.

The OAH Distinguished Lectureship and National Parks Service (NPS) operations have continued their steady improvement over the last several years thanks to the efforts of DLP Coordinator Annette Windhorn and Public History Manager Aidan Smith. The OAH's level of dues from members has remained flat at approximately \$600,000. This includes the amount that is transferred to support *The American Historian*. Our recent small increase in dues, the work of OAH Membership Director Elisabeth Marsh, and the revised national membership committee structure have helped us avoid the major downward trend seen in dues-paying organizations.

V. Report of the Treasurer, Cont.

Dues from our members remain one of the key revenue sources for the OAH, and its continued contribution to the financial health of the OAH is critical. Support for our membership operation and continued ideas to maintain and increase our dues-paying members are essential.

Overall, in Fiscal Year 2017 revenue and expense projections have been on target. The OAH is likewise projecting a 2018 budget very similar to Fiscal Year 2017. The staff in Bloomington has been very diligent in keeping the OAH on track and has allowed us to focus on its mission. Goodgold extended a very special word of great thanks to Nancy Croker, the OAH's Director of Operations, for her many years of service at the OAH. At the conclusion of calendar year 2017, Nancy will be retiring from the OAH as OAH Director of Operations and will be working on a consulting basis with the *JAH* and assisting Benjamin Irvin in his transition.

VI. Report of the OAH Interim Executive Editor/Editor, *Journal of American History*

Stephen Andrews noted that this past year has been one of transition—moving from the editorship of Edward T. Linenthal toward the arrival of incoming editor Benjamin H. Irvin. The *JAH* staff has wrapped up many of its outstanding projects and looks forward to launching new initiatives in the fall.

The staff has continued to refine the ways that the *JAH* works with the other parts of the publications office and has continued to reach out to the OAH membership and beyond. It has also come up with new features to enable the *JAH*, *The American Historian*, *Process—A Blog for American History*, the *JAH* Podcast, the "Teaching the *Journal of American History*" feature, Recent Scholarship Online, and OAH's social media outlets to work together. The publications office continues to work closely with OAH staff in the business office, especially membership, meetings, and the distinguished lectureship program, to provide a coherent and well-organized effort to enhance member benefits and produce world-class scholarship.

Journal of American History. The Publications Office continues to publish the best scholarship in American history. Over the past year, the *JAH* has published pieces that cover the full chronological range of that history and engage a wide variety of fields. The editorial staff has finished an Interchange conversation, "HIV/AIDS in U.S. History," with ten scholars that will appear in September 2017. Currently, the editorial staff is finishing a state-of-the-field essay by Michael Kazin on JFK studies entitled "An Icon and Once a President: John F. Kennedy at 100."

VI. Report of the OAH Interim Executive Editor/Editor, *Journal of American History*, Cont.

The creation and evolution of *The American Historian* (*TAH*) and *Process* have provided venues for pieces and features that are of high quality but might not have fit within the structure of the *JAH*. Having a place to feature these pieces has allowed the *JAH* to focus on its most important content—cutting-edge scholarship based on new research. While the *TAH* will continue to publish our many special sections, round tables, Interchanges, and other features, we can now make sure that the best material submitted to the *JAH* is published in a more timely fashion.

The American Historian. *The American Historian* has moved into its third year of publication and continues to expand the scope and variety of the pieces that it publishes. This past year's issues focused on "The History of Aging," "Writing History for a Popular Audience," "The Politics of Motherhood," and "Education and History." Some of the most popular featured pieces in each of those issues were a round table discussion featuring Danielle McGuire, Andrew Miller, and the Pulitzer Prize-winning author T. J. Stiles discussing their experiences with writing books geared toward a popular audience and navigating the unfamiliar terrain of trade presses; Barbara Keys's piece on "The Kissinger Wars;" and Sonya Ramsey's piece on the "Troubled History of American Education after the *Brown* Decision."

The writers for *TAH* range across the full spectrum of membership of the OAH. *TAH* has featured articles by public historians, tenured professors at a range of two- and four-year colleges and universities, K-12 teachers, graduate students, and those involved in publishing. The magazine is seeing an increase in the number of unsolicited pitches and manuscript submissions and are gratified that our colleagues are eager and excited to write for *TAH* when asked. All of these academic communities have found *TAH* to be a place where they feel comfortable contributing their words and ideas and where they can see discussions about topics important to them.

Process—A Blog for American History. Of all of the publications platforms, perhaps *Process* has had the most rapid and expansive growth this year. The staff has finished a complete redesign of the look and functionality of the blog, which has made the blog more readable and dynamic. With the benefit of this fast-moving and versatile platform, the OAH has been able to provide an increasingly popular space for historically grounded commentary on the present. For example, the blog arranged for reviews of the revived *Roots* series to be published on the blog as episodes aired, followed by a Reddit question-and-answer session about the series in the context of the history of American slavery. Social media has brought widely read works of cultural and political commentary to a new audience, beyond the existing OAH membership. *Process* has drawn people to *The American Historian* online, the *JAH* Editor's Choice articles available through the *Oxford University Press Journals* website, *JAH* podcasts, and the "Teaching the *JAH*" feature.

VI. Report of the OAH Interim Executive Editor/Editor, *Journal of American History*, Cont.

This has been enhanced by the decision to create “theme months” in which contributions relating to particular themes are invited. While every post will not relate to these themes, they have provided a strong sense of cohesion on the blog. The theme months started in November with “Politics” and have followed that with months organized around “Food,” “Health,” and “Education.” March will focus on “New Orleans” to coordinate with the site of the annual meeting. These theme months have produced a strong upsurge in submissions around the theme. In addition, the OAH editorial staff is being more aggressive in our use of Twitter, Facebook, and other social media to draw attention to the great work being done at the OAH and also to use these platforms to expand our reach.

We have been aided by a flexible and hardworking staff that has gladly added new duties to improve the OAH Publications Office. In particular, we say goodbye to several Editorial Assistants who gave long service to the *JAH*. Alexis Smith did a wonderful job as Managing EA and Justin Ellison helped with the book room and copyediting. Jordan Taylor’s help and leadership on the *Process* blog was invaluable. During this year of transition, Rachel Guberman worked far beyond her job description as Assistant Editor to help on the blog and many other special projects. Thanks to all of them for making this year of transition a success.

VII. Report of the OAH Nominating Board

Nominating Board Chair Joe Crespino gave the Nominating Board report. He noted that they have nominated George Sanchez, Professor of American Studies and Ethnicity and History at the University of Southern California, as Vice President (who will take office after the 2018 OAH Annual Meeting). Crespino explained that after serving one year as Vice President, Sanchez will become the President-Elect and then President. Sanchez will become OAH President after the 2021 OAH Annual Meeting.

VIII. Old Business—None

IX. New Business—None

President Nancy F. Cott adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m. and passed the gavel to incoming OAH President Edward L. Ayers.

2018 OAH PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

SATURDAY, APRIL 14 • 5:15 PM–6:45 PM • HYATT-REGENCY B/C

Everyone Their Own Historian**Edward L. Ayers***Tucker-Boatwright Professor of the Humanities
President Emeritus, University of Richmond*

It is a distinct honor to introduce Ed Ayers, President Emeritus of the University of Richmond, where he currently serves as the Tucker-Boatwright Professor of the Humanities. A southerner by birth as well as a student of the South, Ayers has redefined the contemporary meaning of the scholar-historian in the public square. Formerly a Dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Virginia, Ayers has won awards for his scholarship, for his teaching, and for his service to the profession and the nation.

After graduating from the University of Tennessee (1973) and earning his doctorate at Yale University (1980), Ayers set out on a career that had him scale three peaks of achievement, simultaneously: he flooded the profession and the general reading public with lucid, analytically sophisticated, and elegant historical studies; he excelled at teaching as it occurred in the classroom and through other media, especially in the digital world; and he moved into academic administration, proving that lending one's talent to the improvement of an institution was no flirt with the "dark side" but rather the intelligent decision to bring light, caring, and passion to the venerable places we call universities. The result has been a stockpile of accolades and awards.

Ayers, the scholar, burst onto the scene in 1984 with publication of *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the Nineteenth-Century American South*. This important book centered on the intersections between crime and region, race and class, and power and privilege. He followed with the groundbreaking interpretation of the New South—*The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction*. I served on the OAH Rawley book prize committee the year we praised the work. As I recall, the committee thought he put into play the contradictions and ambiguities that so vividly capture much of human history. In his telling, progress competed openly with repression and backward bigotry, technology freed some to earn fortunes and teetered others to indebtedness, and railroads rendered new cities such as Atlanta winners and by their absence turned others into afterthoughts. The breadth and grace of the book made it a finalist for the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize.

Ayers has been not only an imaginative scholar but also a forward-looking interpreter of history. Along with students and colleagues, he used the power of the digital to illuminate life during the Civil War from a Northern and a Southern perspective. *The Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War*, a combined CD-ROM and book project, brought into the open how historians could use digital tools to tell a story that words on a page alone could not. Today it exists as an online service, with millions of visitors. The Gilder Lehrman Institute and Gettysburg College recognized the effort with the E-Lincoln Prize for Best Digital Project. His interest in the Civil War culminated in the 2003 publication of *In the Presence of Mine Enemies: Civil War in the Heart of America*, the 2004 Bancroft Prize-winning study of the nation's moment of tumultuous internal conflict. A second book from that initiative appeared in 2017—*The Thin Light of Freedom: Civil War and Emancipation in the Heart of America*—and earned the Lincoln Prize from the Gilder Lehrman Institute and Gettysburg College and received the Avery O. Craven Award from the OAH.

At the same time his scholarship garnered him attention and acclaim, so too did his teaching. In 2003 the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching named him the National Professor of the Year for Research and Doctoral Universities. Soon thereafter he demonstrated teaching came in many forms and took place in many settings. Many Americans know Ayers as one of the co-hosts of the nationally syndicated radio show and podcast *Backstory*, which first aired in 2008. Ayers and colleagues sought a program that was “about how the past has shaped who we are today.” For many, it is a visible expression of public history.

Ed joined his scholarly interests with a keen understanding that institution building requires dedicated leadership. From 2007–2015 he served as president of the University of Richmond. During his tenure the university expanded its national profile, diversified its student body, and established a focused set of strategic priorities.

Through scholarship, digital experimentation, outstanding teaching and public service, Ayers has shown his commitment to the advancement of the profession. A fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the nation honored him in 2013 with the National Humanities Medal. Today we simply applaud his achievements, thank him for his leadership, and proudly proclaim him the 2018 President of the Organization of American Historians.

Earl Lewis
University of Michigan and OAH President-Elect

2019 OAH ANNUAL MEETING

April 4-6, 2019

The Work of Freedom



PHILADELPHIA MARRIOTT DOWNTOWN

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Philadelphia
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Plan Ahead



FUTURE OAH ANNUAL MEETINGS

2019	Philadelphia PENNSYLVANIA	April 4–6 Philadelphia Marriott Downtown
2020	Washington D.C.	April 2–4 Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel
2021	Chicago ILLINOIS	April 15–17 Sheraton Grand Chicago
2022	Boston MASSACHUSETTS	March 31–April 2 Sheraton Boston Hotel

Explore the meeting sites, participating hotels, and what the destination cities have to offer at www.oah.org/meetings-events/meetings-events/future-annual-meetings.

oah.org/meetings

OAH PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION

Sponsored by the University of Richmond

Saturday, April 14, 6:45 pm–8:30 pm

Hyatt–Regency D/F

You are cordially invited to
the OAH President's Closing Reception
in honor of OAH President
Edward L. Ayers.

Please join us in thanking him
for his service to the organization
and the history profession following
the OAH Presidential Address.





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UNIVERSITY OF
RICHMOND

