



# Digging up the Past

Welcome to the fall issue of *Digging Up the Past*. At WSU we are gearing up for Latinx/Hispanic Heritage month, which, in the US, has its roots in the late twentieth century's Public Law 90-498. Representative George Edward Brown (D-California) proposed the national celebration in 1968, and the Senate approved it and President Lydon B. Johnson signed it into law that same year.[1] PL 90-498 called on "the people of the United States, especially the education community, to observe such week with appropriate ceremonies and activities." [2] They chose the week including September 15-16 because four Latin American countries celebrate Independence on those dates: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Mexico and Chile's independence days are on the 16th.



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Of course, our histories in the US predate the declaration by centuries, with Spain and Mexico claiming lands in what is now the South and the Southwest long before Euro-Americans arrived on the continent. St. Augustine, Florida was founded in 1565, preceding the arrival of British settlers on the continent by over forty years. In the Southwest the departments of New Mexico, Alta California, Arizona, and Texas were founded generations before the US invasion of 1846-48. Hispanic and Latinx peoples remained on the land, as did the First Nations who preceded both Hispanic and American settlers. And so, in this issue we celebrate Latinx history and heritage and our deep roots in the US and in the larger hemisphere—from settler culture to immigrants to a land that “was Mexican once, Indian always.”[3] Latinx history is layered and complex, filled with revolution, accommodation, protest, and coalition. Today both First Nations and Hispanic and Latinx communities continue to build and rebuild. History does not stand still, but instead moves with us. We shape it, it shapes us.

This issue of *Digging up the Past* includes a short essay on Emma Tenayuca, a Chicana labor organizer of the 1930s. While many of us grow up knowing the names of Dolores Huerta, Cesar Chávez, or Samuel Gompers, often our high school history classes (and some of our college classes) do not address the life of this powerful mujer who became a labor activist while she was still a teen. In this issue we also introduce *history haiku*: short poetry-pictures of the past. Look on the haiku pages for information on how you can submit your own history haiku for publication in one of our next issues. As always, we include abstracts of the many history projects in which the undergraduate students of Washington State University are engaged.

I hope that you will enjoy *Digging Up the Past*,

Prof. L Heidenreich Zuñiga, PhD  
Department of History, WSU

[1] Mary Ann Cooper, “do You Know Me?,” *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*, Oct 23, 2006, 9-11, <https://www.proquest.com/magazines/do-you-know-me/docview/219234875/se-2>; “Hispanic Heritage Month,” History.com, <https://www.history.com/topics/hispanic-history/hispanic-heritage-month>.

[2] PL 90-498, Joint Resolution, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-82/pdf/STATUTE-82-Pg848.pdf>

[3] Gloria E. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 2012), 25.

# The Department of History Welcomes Dr. Marlene Gaynair



Dr. Gaynair received her PhD in History at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey in 2021, and was the William Lyon Mackenzie King Postdoctoral Fellow in the Canada program at Harvard University's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs in 2021 - 2022. She is a social and cultural historian of the Black Atlantic, with specialization in the United States, Canada, and Anglo Caribbean during the long twentieth century. Her research interests cover twentieth century popular culture, identities, citizenship, diasporas, public memory, immigration, transnational studies, cultural studies, business studies, ethnic groups, and urban spaces.

Gaynair is working on several cutting-edge history projects. Her current book project is a comparative transnational study of Jamaicans in Toronto and New York City in the long twentieth century. Dr. Gaynair uses "infrapolitics" to examine the social, cultural, and political building of community institutions in major cities, and how Jamaicans in the diaspora challenged what it meant to be "Black" "American" and "Canadian" on a global level. In addition, Dr. Gaynair continues to engage in Digital History and Digital Humanities projects, as a way to explore other dimensions of historical scholarship and public engagement. Her ongoing digital project, Islands in the North, is an interactive, curated exhibit which looks at the growth and dispersion of Black Toronto over space and time. You can explore that project at <http://about.islandsinthenorth.com/>.

In addition to researching and writing, Dr. Gaynair enjoys teaching and learning from her students inside and outside of the classroom. Outside of school, she loves to travel to new cities and countries, and attend concerts, music festivals, and live sporting events. She is very excited to see the World Cup matches in Canada, the United States, and Mexico in 2024, and believes that the Toronto Raptors are the greatest basketball team in the NBA. We can debate this during office hours.

# College-level history courses enable you to explore aspects of the past that are important and interesting to you.

## The field of history allows you to ... "dig up the past."

### *The Origin of Modern Climate Change, by Diana Grein, History 105*

In this essay I argue that today's climate crisis was kickstarted by the British Industrial Revolution. As you will read there are many harmful practices that originated in this time period. One notable contributing factor that was popularized was the use of coal. Today we know this to be extremely harmful to our environment. In order to find this information, I used a variety of sources including primary sources dating back to the Industrial Revolution and recent reports of greenhouse gas emissions and other forms of pollution. This essay can bring attention to our current behaviors and why we might want to re-think them.

### *Ellen Made Gay Okay, by Mo Osman, History 369*

For my research timeline, I decided to learn more about Ellen DeGeneres because she is one of the most influential queer people in the media. In completing my project, I learned many things about her life and career that I had no clue about. She was the first woman in the industry to come out as gay on national TV and her show, the Ellen DeGeneres Show was cancelled after that because its ratings went down. She gained an immense amount of support, so the hate mail and messaging she received was overpowered with love and support. While losing the support of advertisers and having her show cancelled was devastating, she went on to push more doors open. After her show was cancelled, other shows began to have gay characters and hosts. DeGeneres would go on to become one of the highest paid television hosts in the world, Forbes listed her as having a net worth of six hundred million dollars as of 2020. Ellen DeGeneres's bravery inspired many people around the world making her a household name and many people look to her as a hero.



### *Examining History Through the Life of James Baldwin, by Gloria Demissie, History 369*

"History does not refer, merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do." [1] Throughout his life, James Baldwin grappled with the long-lasting effects of American history and challenged the social structures produced by that history. His legacy encourages us to do the same. In this project, I wanted to look closely at Baldwin's life and the intersections of his identity. As a gay Black man who came from a working-class family, he experienced discrimination and oppression. Through his writing, he addressed these oppressions and spoke out against systems that created inequality. Prior to my research, most the articles I read about Baldwin tended to leave out his sexuality from the narrative. In my research, I focused on how his sexuality contributed to his criticisms of gender constructs such as masculinity and manhood. Most of the sources I used were scholarly articles that gave me insight on Baldwin's background such as the religious influence on his writing. Baldwin's life and legacy are a testament to why we should look closely at our history and not only to examine it but also to challenge it.

[1] James Baldwin, "The White Man's Guilt," *Collected Essays*, (New York: Library of America, 1998), 722-3.

# Here you have a sampling of the many history projects completed by undergraduate students at Washington State University in Fall of 2021.

## *The Development of Masculinity, by Jonny Steger, History 105*

In this paper, I show the variability in different forms of masculinity over time and how Eugene Sandow and the portrayal of the perfect man in the early 1900s dramatically changed the way people in the UK, as well as around the world, viewed acceptable male behavior. The purpose of this project is to explain how people, over time, have dramatically influenced understandings of masculinity. It is also to give a history of the sport I am most passionate about which is bodybuilding.

From my research I learned how the modern machines that we see in the gyms today had a starting place of a prototype almost unrecognizable from today's machines. I also learned about how Eugene Sandow was one of the first to write training programs for people to get more into shape and how he used his physique as an advertisement. In my research I studied newspapers from the 1900s when strongmen were viewed more as freaks of nature rather than humans. I had pictures of Sandow's programs he gave to his clients. I also had included historical context sources giving the circumstances of where and how Sandow became the man that he was. Sandow's life story is inspiring and changed the way the west understands health and masculinity. This project might be useful to health professionals because it shows the roots of all things bodybuilding and overall physical fitness, which can have a therapeutic effect on people.



## *No Fish No future, by Zane Thornton for History 105*

What if I told you that the world's oceans will be emptied by 2048? Well, we have overfished our world's oceans and that is exactly the focus of my topic. This global issue did not appear unexpectedly but has its roots in our earliest times. It will create dramatic changes to our world if left unnoticed. As the world moves on and our advancement gets greater, so do our voices and actions! Imagine our next generation not being able to understand and experience aquatic animals.

Through researching overfishing, I learned many important facts to share with you. Bycatch from global fishing production increased by over 2 billion tons! The aquatic animals caught during a bycatch and the ones that are thrown back into the ocean seldom survive. Another fact is that shark species are going extinct because of excessive human fishing and predation. Our favorite marine life animals are getting overfished each and every day! You are the generation for change and our world health and climate depend on you! Be the voice!

# Emma Tenayuca and the Labor Movidas of the 1930s

"I was pretty defiant. I fought against poverty, actually starvation, high infant death rates, disease and hunger and misery. I would do the same thing again."

Emma Tenayuca, reflecting on the Pecan Sheller's Strike, fifty years later



Emma Tenayuca at a Workers Alliance rally (1937). Image available online (Univ. of TX, San Antonio) and included in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107.

By 1930, race and gender structured the US labor force and its larger socio-economic systems. Many Mexicanx and Chicanx children attended segregated schools. Whether in integrated or segregated schools, they were forbidden to speak Spanish and subjected to a racist curriculum.[1] 41% of all Chicanos and Mexican men worked in agriculture, 88% worked in low-status, or what sociologists call secondary labor sector jobs - jobs that require little (acknowledged) skill, pay poorly, and provide little opportunity for promotion. Chicanas also labored in the secondary labor sector, 20% as agricultural laborers, 45% in domestic/personal service, and 30% in textile and food processing.[2] As Denise Segura has argued, the segregation of Raza into the secondary labor sector was particularly debilitating because, for most of the twentieth century, one had to be a white male in order to move effectively from the secondary to the primary labor sector.[3]

## 1930s: Chicana Labor Distribution

Agriculture: 20%

Domestic Service: 45%

Textile/Food Processing: 30%

In this climate of struggle, a new generation of women's leadership emerged. The Chicana activists of the 1930s were activists, inspired by the political environment they experienced in their youths. Manuela Solis Sager spent her young adult years organizing among garment workers and agricultural workers in her hometown of Laredo. In 1934 she left for Mexico City to attend La Universidad Obrera, an openly leftist institution.[4] Emma Tenayuca first participated in labor activism at the age of seventeen, when she joined the striking Finck Cigar Company workers in 1932.[5] Luisa Moreno was the international representative of the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA), the first CIO local with a Mexican female majority membership.

Emma Tenayuca was born in San Antonio, Texas. Her maternal grandparents raised her and some of her siblings. Her grandfather worked as a carpenter and followed politics. Tenayuca developed an early understanding of transnational politics when, from age seven, she was taken to the Plaza del Zacate (the public square) on Sunday outings to listen to Magonistas who sought to address the rights of working-class families on both sides of the border.[6] As a teen, Tenayuca became an activist. She attended Brackenridge High School in depression-era San Antonio and, while still in high school, joined a reading group that discussed the works of Karl Marx; they discussed socialist ideas and economic systems that might better protect worker rights than the systems their parents worked in. These are considered radical ideas now, and they were considered radical ideas then.

In 1933, while just 17 years old, Emma Tenayuca joined the Finck Cigar Strike. She participated in the picket line and was arrested. During the strike, she met Mrs. W.H. Ernst and together they formed an organization for unemployed workers called the Workers Alliance. Through the Workers Alliance Tenayuca protested the beatings of immigrants by the Border Patrol and deportations, and fought for a minimum wage, for the right to strike, for equal rights for immigrant workers. Employers felt so threatened by the successes of the Worker's Alliance that they began to use police to break up meetings, and called in the Immigration Service to threaten workers with deportation. The Worker's Alliance argued that citizenship requirements only weakened unions and that all workers had a right to unionize. [7]

Emma Tenayuca is best known as the leader of the 1939 pecan sheller's strike where over 6,000 workers participated, making it the largest labor strike in San Antonio up until that time. Yet her entire adult life, from high school to the time of her retirement from teaching, was dedicated to making the world a better place. Her niece would later reflect:

she was compelled to do something about the human suffering she witnessed. She was aware of human injustice—even as a child... Because of her deep compassion, she couldn't ignore it. It happened that she was a gifted speaker and organizer, and could mobilize workers. She was able to communicate to people that by working together, they could change their condition.[8]

Tenayuca was known as La Pasionaria (the passionate one), a name that would later be awarded to Dolores Huerta, one of the co-founders of the United Farm Workers. Historian Gabriela González notes "...[Tenayuca] organized men and women, formed a coalition across ethnic lines, stormed the mayor's office, lead a historic strike, banged on the door of politicians, and stirred up large crowds with inspirational speeches that earned her the nickname La Pasionaria." [9] And so the struggle for justice continues. Rest in Power Emma Tenayuca.

[1] Juan Gómez-Quiñones, *Roots of Chicano Politics, 1600-1940* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1994), 360-361.

[2] Roberto R. Calderón and Emilio Zamora, "Manuela Solis Sager and Emma Tenayuca: A Tribute," in *Chicana Voices: Intersections of Class, Race, and Gender*, ed. Teresa Córdova, et al. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1986), 31.

[3] Denise A. Segura, "Chicanas and Triple Oppression in the Labor Force," in *Chicana Voices: Intersections of Class, Race, and Gender*, ed. Teresa Córdova, et al. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1986), 47-63.

[4] Calderón and Zamora, 32-33.

[5] Calderón and Zamora, 33; Vicki L. Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University, 1988), 79.

[6] Ricardo Romo, "Emma Tenayuca: A Warrior for Working Women," *La Prensa Texas*, March 12, 2021, <https://laprensatexas.com/emma-tenayuca-a-warrior-for-working-women/>.

[7] Zaragosa Vargas, "Tejana Radical: Emma Tenayuca and the San Antonio Labor Movement during the Great Depression," *Pacific Historical Review* 66 no.4 (1977): 560-562; Gabriela González, *Redeeming La Raza: Transborder Modernity, Race, Respectability, and Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press), 149-152.

[8] Gabriela González, "Carolina Munguía and Emma Tenayuca: The Politics of Benevolence and Radical Reform," *Frontiers* 24 no.2/3 (2003): 211.

[9] González, "Carolina Munguía and Emma Tenayuca," 221-222.



## Further Reading

Gonzalez, Gabriela. "Carolina Munguía and Emma Tenayuca: The Politics of Benevolence and Radical Reform." *Frontiers* 24, no. 2/3 (2003): 200–229. <https://doi.org/10.1353/fro.2004.0013>.

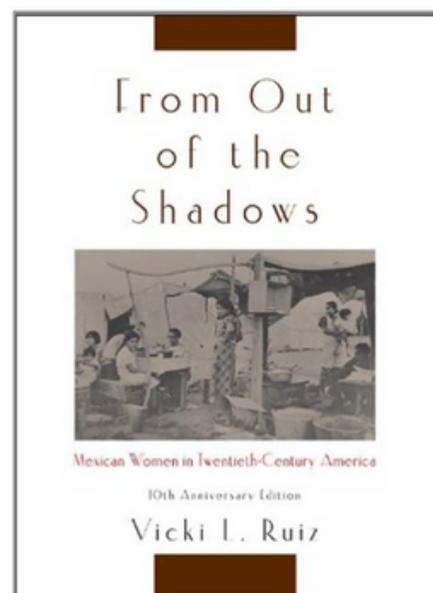
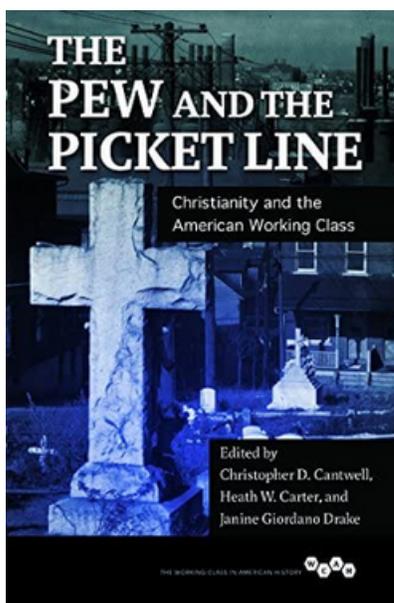
Joseph, Harriett Denise. *From Santa Anna to Selena: Notable Mexicanos and Tejanos in Texas History Since 1821*. Denton, Texas: University of North Texas Press, 2018.

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Tafolla, Carmen. "La Pasionaria." *Frontiers* 24, no. 2/3 (2003): 233–236. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/3347359](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3347359).

Vargas, Zaragosa. "Tejana Radical: Emma Tenayuca and the San Antonio Labor Movement During the Great Depression." *Pacific Historical Review* 66, no. 4 (1997): 553–80. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3642237>.



## History Haiku: Get Published!



**Haiku:** Poems that have five syllables in the first line, seven in the second, and five in the third (a total of seventeen syllables). Their lines do not rhyme. *They recreate a single image/moment in time.*

Haiku is a form of poetry that uses few words to create a vivid image of a snapshot in time. It was popularized by Matsuo Basho in seventeenth-century Japan. In history classes at WSU, students sometimes write “history haiku,” short poems of three lines, capturing a specific moment/historical event from the past.

While “American haiku” sometimes plays loose and free with the number of syllables in each line of poetry, in Dr. H’s classes, students adhere to the traditional 5-7-5 standard: line one of the haiku must be five syllables, line two seven, and, line three five.

**A method for crafting history haiku:**

- Sit and reflect on a specific moment in history, picture that moment in your mind. What does it feel like to be in that moment? What do you see?
- Pick up your pen and write three lines to paint the image. Do not worry about syllables, simply write three lines that capture that moment in time.
- Edit each line for syllables and imagery. Is there a word that brings out your image more vividly than the words in your draft? If so, bring those words into your poem. Does your poem have 10 syllables in line two? Then you must find synonyms for some of your words that have fewer syllables.
- While editing, be sure to keep the image fresh and vivid in your own mind.
- Enjoy!

Below are two poems by history major Catrin Chitwood, class of 2022. Cat’s research project focused on the US Invasion of 1846-48 and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the war.

Words promised in fire  
A treaty forged and burned  
The land turned to ash

My soul longs for peace  
Guadalupe Hidalgo  
A promise broken

Would you like to see your creative work in print? Craft a haiku for a project you are researching and send your polished work to Dr. Heidenreich Zuñiga at [Lheidenr@wsu.edu](mailto:Lheidenr@wsu.edu). In the subject line, be sure to write “history haiku.” Our editing team will pick the top submissions to publish in the winter edition of *Digging up the Past*.



## Digging This Day

**Aug. 8, 2009:** Sonia Sotomayor is sworn in by Chief Justice John Roberts as the first Latinx Supreme Court justice and the third woman to serve on the court. Raised in a housing project in the South Bronx, NY, she earned a degree in history from Princeton University, while serving as co-chair of the Puerto Rican activist organization Acción Puertorriqueña. She went on to earn her JD from Yale, and after serving in private practice, was appointed to the US District Court for the Southern District of New York. Six years later, in 1997, she was appointed to the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, where she heard more than 3,000 cases and wrote 380 majority opinions (History.com; Oyez).

**August 24, 1950:** President Truman appoints Judge Edith S. Sampson (the first woman to earn a master's degree in law from Loyola University) as an alternate delegate to the United Nations. Sampson served for three years and was later the first African American representative to NATO (Black History Today).

**September 2, 1885:** Rock Springs Massacre, Rock Springs, Wyoming. White coal miners attack Chinese laborers, murdering 28 people and injuring 15. A mob of white men and women set fire to China town, looting, and burning 79 homes to the ground (History.com; WyoHistory.org).

**September 8, 1965:** Facing the threat of pay cuts and demanding improved working conditions, the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), made up mostly of Filipino farmworkers, begins the five-year-long Delano Grape strike. Led by Filipino-American Larry Itliong, the workers are soon joined by the National Farm Workers Association, led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta; the two unions ultimately joined to form United Farm Workers (History.com).

**September 15, 1821:** Leaders and Revolutionaries from the former Viceroyalty of New Spain meet in Guatemala, declare their independence from Spain, and develop a blue-print for moving forward. In the next decades, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras develop unique histories that weave through each other and the larger hemisphere (Historyfiles.co.uk).

**September 16, 1821:** Father Miguel Hidalgo and Ignacio Allende lead the Indigenous, criollo, and mestizo people of Mexico in revolt against the Spanish empire. Under the banner of the Virgin of Guadalupe, they fight for their independence from Spain (Latinopia.com).

**September 26, 1942:** Gloria E. Anzaldúa is born in Rio Grande Valley of South Texas. Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987) became one of the most widely read Chicana texts on the continent, serving to inspire activists and to shape the fields of Chicana studies, American Studies, and Gender studies. Her work, *This Bridge Called My Back*, edited with Cherríe Moraga, won the Before Columbus Foundation American Book Award. The Society for the Study of Gloria Anzaldúa holds a biannual conference in honor of her legacy (Legacy Project; Society for the Study of Gloria Anzaldúa).

**October 6, 1917:** Fannie Lou Hamer is born in Montgomery, Mississippi. Hamer grew up in a sharecropping family and had to leave school to work at the age of 12. In 1961 she became active in the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and in 1964 she helped found the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. That same year she helped organize Freedom Summer, bringing hundreds of college students to the south to register voters. In 1968 she founded the Freedom Farm Cooperative (National Women's History Museum).

**October 26, 1911:** Mahalia Jackson, "The Queen of Gospel," born in New Orleans, Louisiana. Of her Dr. Martin Luther King said, "A voice like hers comes along once in a millennium" (NMAAHC). She sang both at the 1963 march on Washington and at the funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King. She was the first gospel singer to perform at Carnegie Hall (National Museum of African American History and Culture; Black History Today).

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## National Honor Societies



Turn the page to take our quiz - bring your answers to the Department of History Office in Wilson-Short 301 for your **LOADED HISTORY MUG!**

Quiz Out! Bring your completed quiz to the Department of History office in Wilson-Short 301 and receive a loaded history mug.

.....

In 1906 the women of Mexico founded Club Hijas de Cuauhtémoc. Whose government did they seek to overthrow? Hint: his last name starts with "D".



This US Senator was an ally of the United Farm Workers. Before serving as a US Senator, he served as Attorney General of the United States (while his brother was president). He was assassinated in 1968.

.....

As an undergraduate, the future Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote her senior thesis on Luis Muñoz Marín, the first elected governor of Puerto Rico. What was her major?



He had to flee Cuba after arguing for independence and the end of slavery. He is the author of Jicoténcal (1826), the first Hispanic novel published in the US. Who is he?