



2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT



*studying change
to make change*

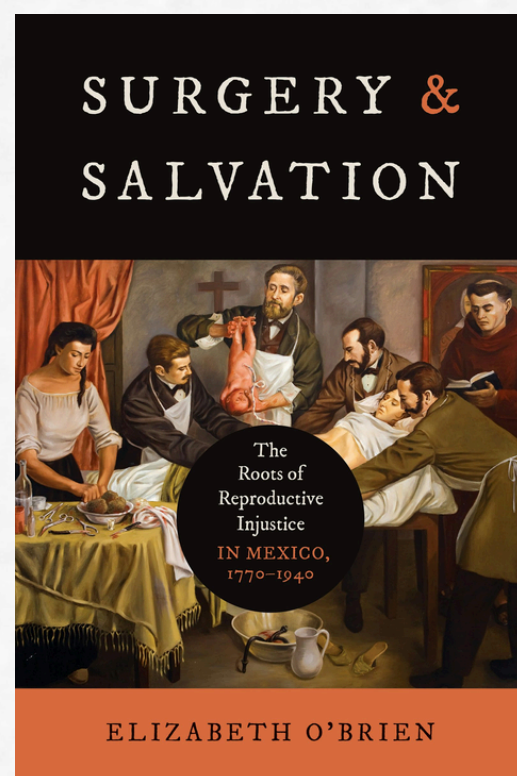


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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

The past year was one of dramatic change and challenge around the world. The devastation of Gaza, the punishing war in Ukraine, and the epoch-altering presidency of Donald Trump have placed the world on edge, leading many to feel as if it is spinning out of control. The galloping pace of AI and constancy of social media drive us ever more toward an “acceleration of time,” as the French historian Pierre Nora described the modern age. Keeping pace is exhausting and increasingly difficult.

Our goal at the Luskin Center is not to slow down time, but rather to take the time to analyze how the present emerged out of the past. Our wide-ranging research ranges from antiquity to the present, from the Middle East to the West Coast. An area of recurrent concern has been the university, to which previous LCHP research teams devoted studies. We encourage you to check out our previous reports on [UC Real Estate and Investments](#) as well as our 2022 report on [UCLA’s responses to crises](#) throughout its history; both reports are particularly salient in the present moment.

In response to the tumultuous events of 2023-24, the Luskin Center supported a year-long research project to study universities in crisis, with a particular focus on how administrators handled challenges both internal and external. In parallel, LCHP supported a public program series devoted to “The Past and Futures of Higher Education.” One of the first fruits of our work in this area is the report “[The Challenge to University Autonomy in an Illiberal Era](#).”

This report was co-authored by LCHP Post-Doctoral Associate Dr. Ben Zdenecanovic. For the past three years, Ben has been a wonderful researcher, teacher, and colleague at the Center. He has been a source of great wisdom, scholarly depth, and commitment to the work of using the past to understand the present better. We wish him the best of luck as he leaves UCLA to take up a position as a visiting professor at the University of Cambridge.

To the rest of our LCHP community, we welcome your feedback on our work and invite suggestions for how we might be more responsive.

Sincerely,



David N. Myers

Director, UCLA Luskin Center for History and Policy
Distinguished Professor and Sady and Ludwig Kahn Chair in Jewish History

ABOUT LCHP

Vision: The UCLA Luskin Center for History and Policy (LCHP) imagines a world in which leaders, policymakers, and citizens regularly use history as a guide to civic engagement, policy formation, and an alternative and better future.

Mission: The UCLA Luskin Center for History and Policy (LCHP) aims to bring vital historical knowledge, perspective, and analysis to bear on key contemporary issues and policy deliberations.

Approach: We approach our work in the following ways:

Research:

Conducting influential research that models a new form of historically grounded policy analysis.

Education & Training:

Training students and scholars to apply historical research to key present-day questions.

Public Outreach:

Promoting history as a central tool of informed public debate.

THE LCHP TEAM



David N. Myers
Director

David has been directing LCHP since its inception in 2017, and continues to host episodes of the LCHP podcast Then & Now as well as LCHP lectures and events. In addition to his LCHP work, David also directs the Initiative to Study Hate and coordinated the Pasts and Futures of Higher Education research project through LCHP.

Rose Campbell
Assistant Director



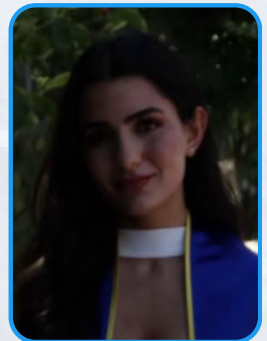
Rose has been the Assistant Director of LCHP since early 2023. Rose produces and sometimes hosts LCHP's podcast, organizes lectures and events, coordinates LCHP's grants as well as the research teams and employees, and handles all LCHP day-to-day logistics. In addition to her LCHP work, Rose researches state-sanctioned violence in the past through the archaeological study of human remains..



Ben Zdencanovic
Postdoctoral Research Associate

Ben has been a Postdoctoral Research Associate at LCHP since 2022. Ben is a historian of the United States in the world, domestic and international politics, and economic and social policy. In Fall 2025, Ben will join the University of Cambridge as a Visiting Assistant Professor of 20th Century U.S. History.

Emily Bejanyan
Undergraduate Student Worker



Emily Bejanyan is a recent UCLA graduate with a degree in Political Science and a minor in History. Throughout 2024-25, Emily designed new content for our social media accounts, including updated interviews with past grantees and guests from Then & Now. Emily graduated in June 2025, and we are incredibly proud of her achievements and grateful for her competence and insight over the past year!

Kylie Thomsen
Graduate Student Worker



Kylie is an Egyptology PhD candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at UCLA. Throughout 2024-25, Kylie adeptly managed all social media related to LCHP's podcast, Then & Now, as well as some of the behind-the-scenes work. Kylie will submit her dissertation in Fall 2025, so she won't be returning to LCHP, but we are immensely grateful for her hard work and thoughtful contributions to LCHP!

Mackenzie Moeller
Graduate Student Worker



Mackenzie is a second year history PhD student in the Latin American Department at UCLA. Mackenzie was instrumental in spreading the word about LCHP and connecting the Center with like-minded institutions and researchers. We are immensely grateful for Mackenzie's creative thinking and delighted that she will be rejoining us in 2025-26!

2024-25 LCHP Research



The pro-Palestine encampment in front of Royce Hall at UCLA on April 30, 2024.

In the wake of university crackdowns on student protests at the end of the 2023-24 academic year, LCHP's research during the 2024-25 academic year explored how American universities have historically responded to student protests, and considered how we might chart a more productive path forward. This far-reaching, year-long research project was composed of 3 sub-teams:

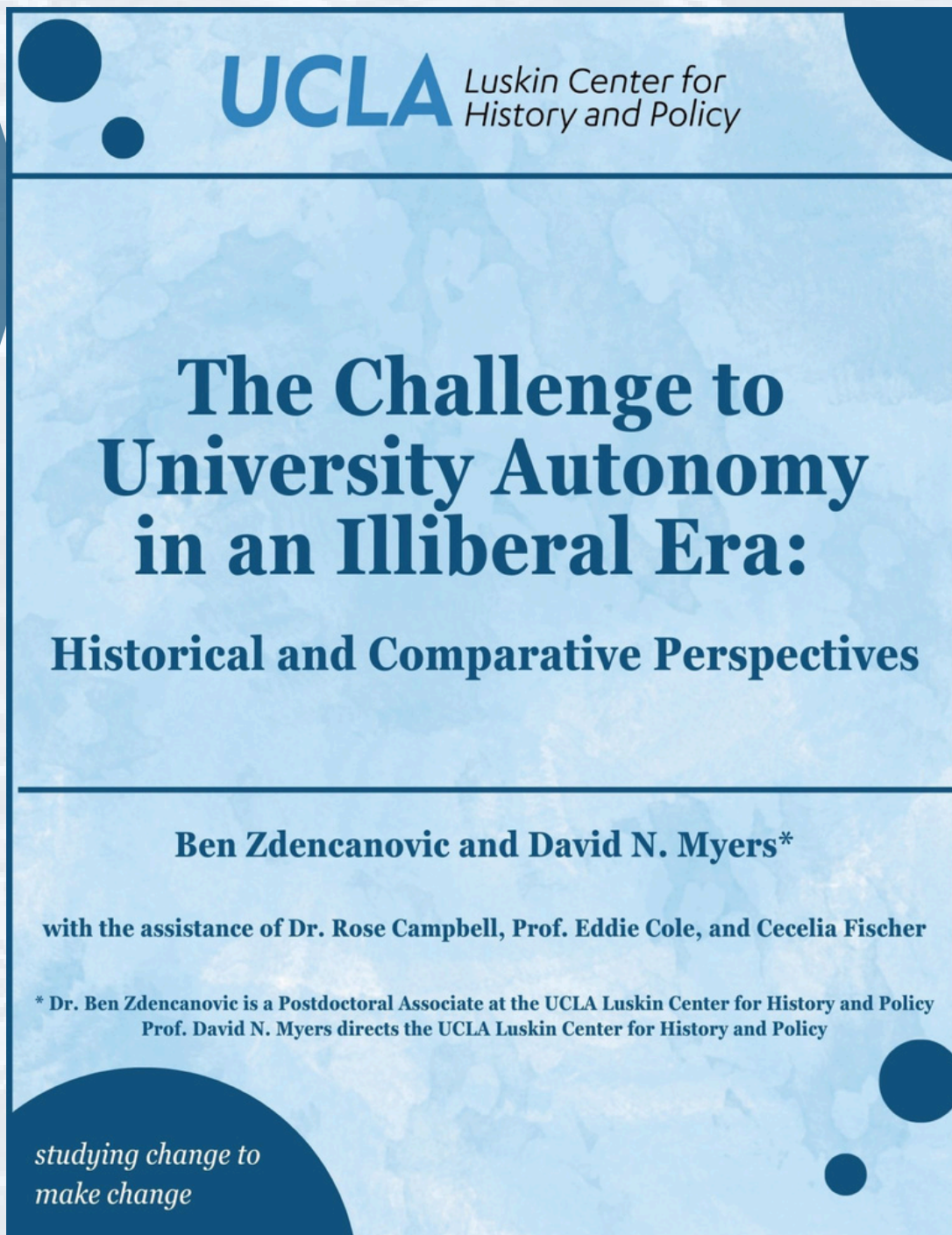
- Ben Zdencanovic focused on past cases of crisis within the University of California system.
- Alona Weimer and Kaitlyn Powell focused on a detailed analysis of the movement on university campuses to divest from South Africa.
- Abbie Cohen and Elizabeth Carlin focused on university responses to the protest movements on campuses in 2023-24.

These three sub-team reports will culminate in Fall 2025 in a fuller report on university responses to crisis.

2025-26 LCHP Research

In response to recent government challenges to universities in the U.S., LCHP Postdoctoral Associate Dr. Ben Zdencanovic and David Myers produced a brief report that emerges out of last year's research on universities in times of crisis.

Read the full report [here](#).



Research Grants: 2024-25

Every year, LCHP awards grants to teams who conduct collaborative research or hold public programming that brings historical analysis to bear on key issues of contemporary relevance. During the 2024-25 academic year, LCHP awarded funding to support four major research projects.

Understanding How Teacher Unions and Educational Justice Coalitions Can Play Roles in Addressing Educational Equity, Civil Rights, and Democracy

Researchers: Emily Szpiro and Alex Caputo-Pearl

Faculty Advisor: John Rogers

This project addressed the problem of understanding how teacher unions can play a role in building power and fostering movements that address educational equity, civil rights, and the expansion of democracy in schools and in surrounding communities. Critically, the project also attempted to provide support for decision-making that shapes the future of the teacher union and educational justice coalition movements.



Historical Border Instability and Democratic Backlash

Researchers: Luwei Ying and Sadaf Vafa

This research addressed the contemporary “democratic backlash” problem by examining an often-overlooked historical factor: the impact of frequent historical border changes on localities. By exploring how these border changes have shaped local political attitudes over centuries, this project aimed to provide historical context for the modern anti-democratic phenomenon and to propose policy solutions to address this pressing issue.



Changes to the Public Charge Rule Between 2019 and 2023 and Associations with Basic Needs Outcomes Among Low-Income Immigrant Adults in California

Researchers: Joelle Wolstein and Susan Babey

This study explored changes in avoidance of public programs out of fear that accessing such resources would impact immigration status between the Trump administration's proposed rule change and the Biden administration's rule change. It also explored changes to the relationship between avoidance of public programs and basic needs outcomes (access to care, food security, and housing security) among low-income immigrant adults.

The Effect of British Colonialism on Transphobia in India

Researchers: Ananya Hariharan, Emily Ortiz, and Josh Goetz

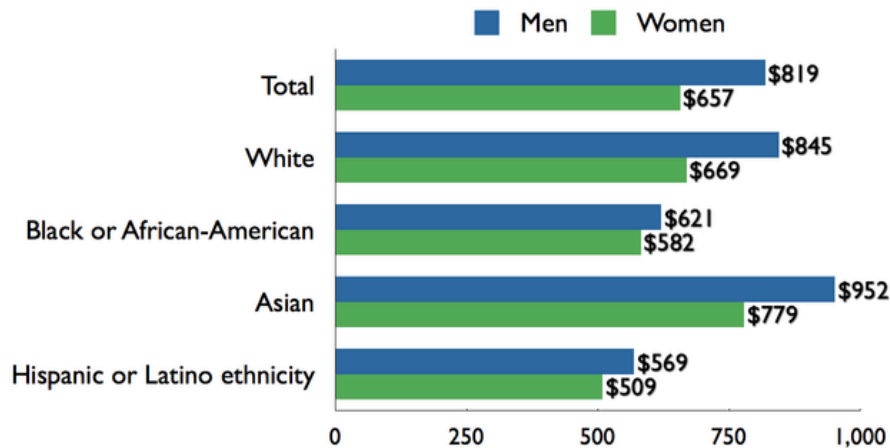
Faculty Advisor: Daniel Posner

This project examined transphobia in India as a direct product of British colonialism. Specifically, the project sought to understand varying attitudes towards LGBTQ+ individuals in areas that had different levels of influence from British colonial rule as a way to understand how colonial attitudes may have impacted local attitudes.



Upcoming Research Grants: 2025-26

We are thrilled to introduce our 2025-26 LCHP research grantees!



Tracing the Structural Roots of the Latino Wealth Gap

Researchers: Amada Armenta, Rodrigo Dominguez-Villegas, Gabriella Carmona, Eileen Diaz McConnell, Juan Gonzalez

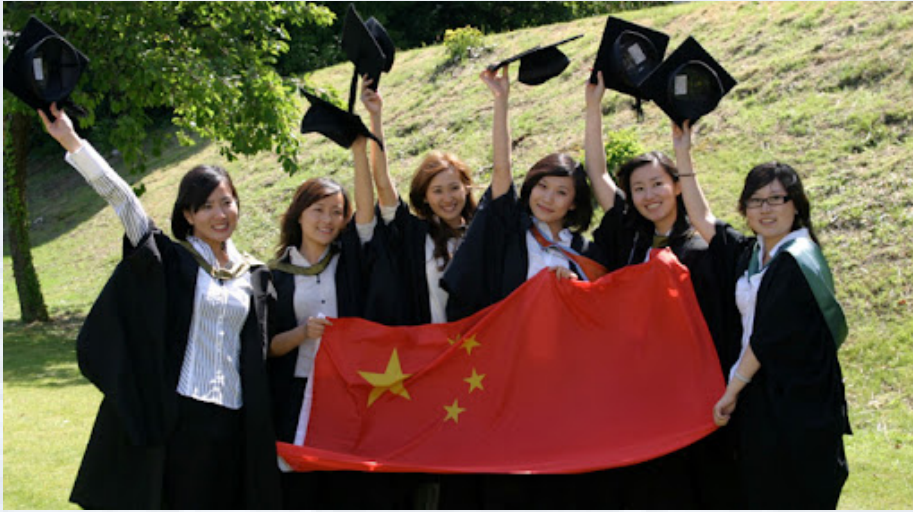
This project addresses a critical but understudied dimension of racial inequality in the U.S.: the Latino wealth gap. In 2022, the median Latino household held a quarter of the wealth of white households. The team will explore three primary questions: What historical and contemporary structural barriers have contributed to the contemporary Latino wealth gap? How do Latino subgroups experience wealth disparities differently? What indicators best define and measure Latino wealth over time?

Landback and Reparations in Santa Monica

Researchers: Kyle Mays and Peta Lindsay

This project will explore the intersection of land returns to Indigenous populations and reparations for Black communities, specifically focusing on Santa Monica. By analyzing the harms caused by the City of Santa Monica to its Black and Indigenous populations in the 20th century, this project aims not only to create a historical account of these events but also to partner with local educators to create instructional materials and lesson plans to disseminate the findings of this important work.





Seeds of Talent: The Long-term Effects of Knowledge Transfers through Foreign Education

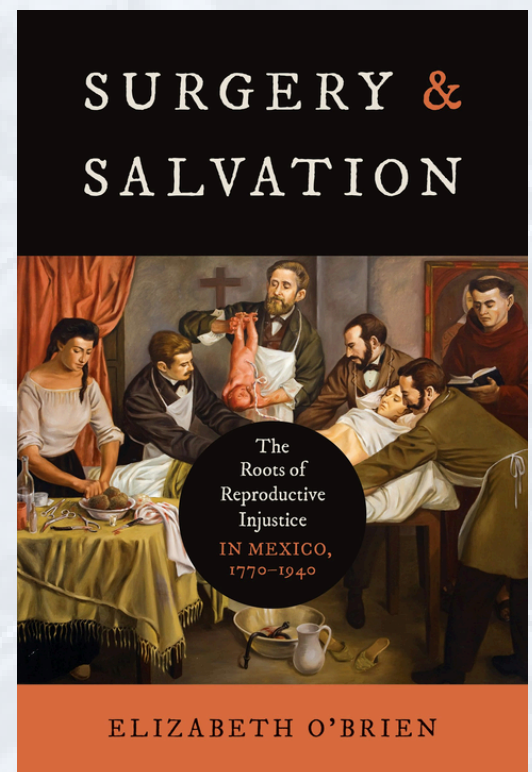
Researchers: Michela Giorcelli, Bo Li, and Yujing Huang

This project investigates the long-term effects of knowledge transfers through foreign education by examining the academic trajectories and institutional impact of Chinese scholars who studied in the United States during the 20th century. By evaluating changes in research topics, influence, and productivity between Chinese scholars who returned to China and those who remained abroad, the team hopes to shed light on the broader role that returnees played in building China's scientific infrastructure.

A Graphic Novel Interpretation of Reproductive Healthcare Policy and Ethics

Researchers: Elizabeth O'Brien and José Arboleda

This project seeks to translate historical insights about reproductive healthcare in colonial Mexico into popular knowledge, with the ultimate goal of influencing healthcare policy and advocacy. At the core of this project is the translation of O'Brien's scholarly monograph, *Surgery and Salvation*, into a Spanish-language graphic novel, which will explore medical ethics and the politics of fetal and maternal life in Mexico between 1770 and 1940.



Then & Now Season 5

Then & Now, LCHP's podcast, connects past to present, using historical analysis and context to help guide us through modern issues and policy decisions. Every other week LCHP interviews historians, policymakers, and thought leaders about what happened then, and what that means for us now.

By the numbers:

51,000

**lifetime
downloads**

5009

**Season 5
downloads**

26

**Season 5
episodes**

145

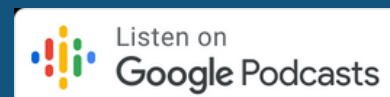
**lifetime
episodes**

*Trump 2.0 and
the Implications
for U.S. Foreign
Policy*

**most popular
episode**



Listen to Then & Now wherever you listen to your podcasts!



Then & Now Season 5 Highlights

Episode 8: The Epidemic of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women: A Conversation with Shannon Speed

Listen to the full episode [here](#).

then & now

Trump 2.0 and the Implications for U.S. Foreign Policy



with Stephen Wertheim

UCLA Luskin Center for
History and Policy

Episode 12: Trump 2.0 and the Implications for U.S. Foreign Policy: A Conversation with Stephen Wertheim

Listen to the full episode [here](#).

Episode 16: Preservation amidst Devastation: Salvaging History Tiles after the Los Angeles Wildfires

Listen to the full episode [here](#).

then & now

Coming Out Republican The Gay Right and the Politics of Belonging



with Neil J. Young

UCLA Luskin Center for
History and Policy

Episode 21: Coming Out Republican: The Gay Right and the Politics of Belonging. A Conversation with Neil J. Young.

Listen to the full episode [here](#).

then & now

The Epidemic of Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

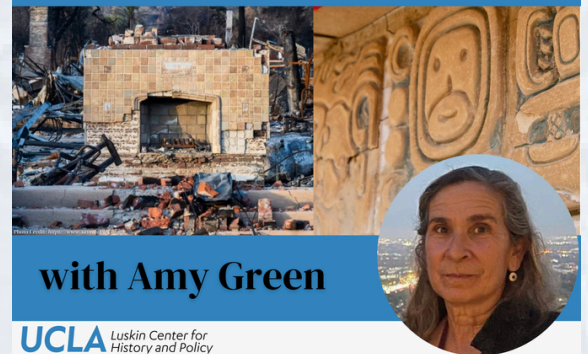


with Shannon Speed

UCLA Luskin Center for
History and Policy

then & now

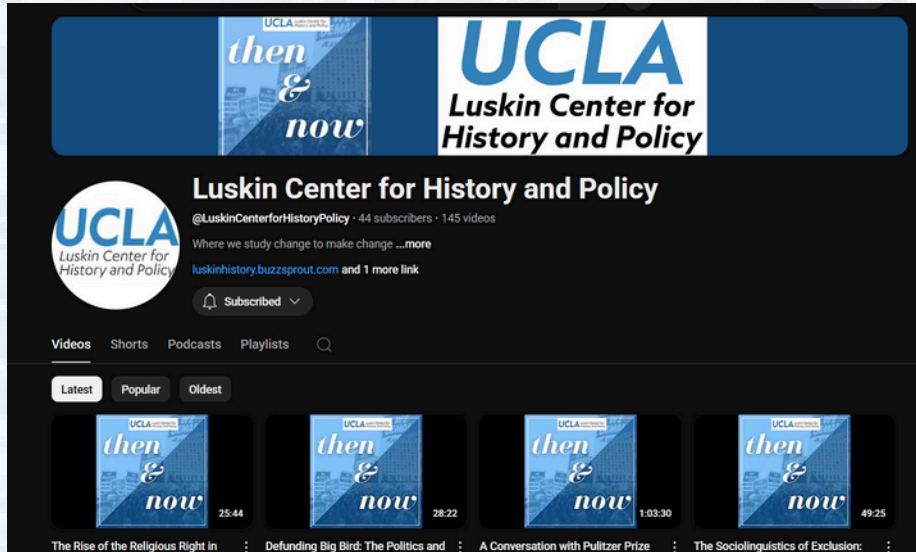
Preservation amidst Devastation Salvaging Historic Tiles after the Los Angeles Wildfires



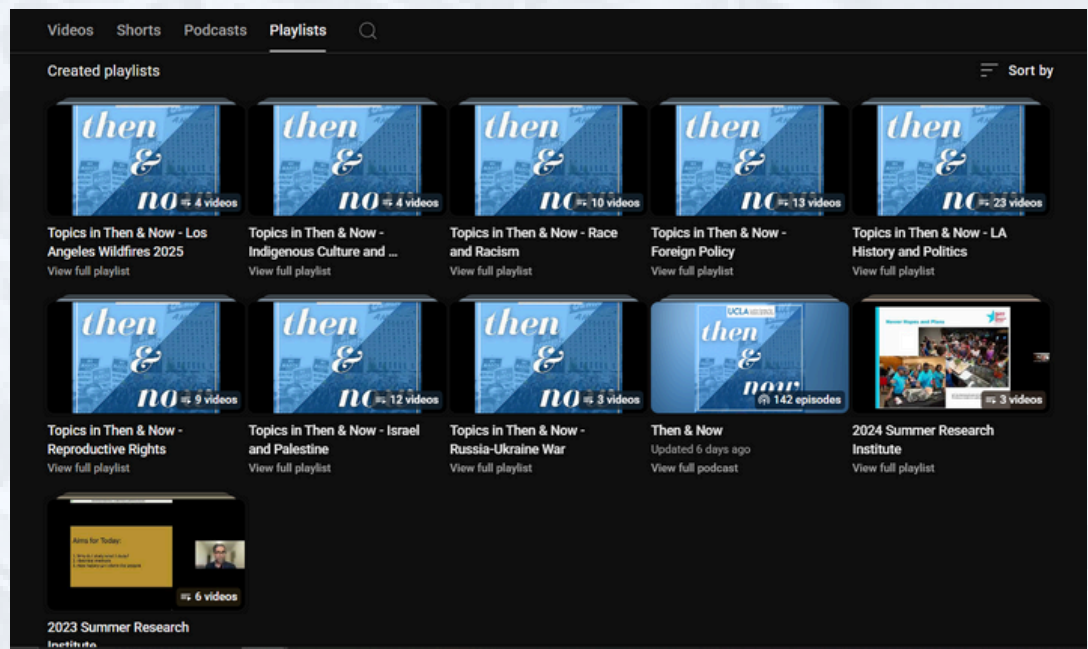
with Amy Green

UCLA Luskin Center for
History and Policy

Missed an episode of *Then & Now*? You can now find us on YouTube!



Find all our past episodes, as well as recordings of live events, on our new YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/@LuskinCenterforHistoryPolicy



Interested in a particular topic? Check out our curated playlists, where you can listen to every episode related to one topic in the same place!

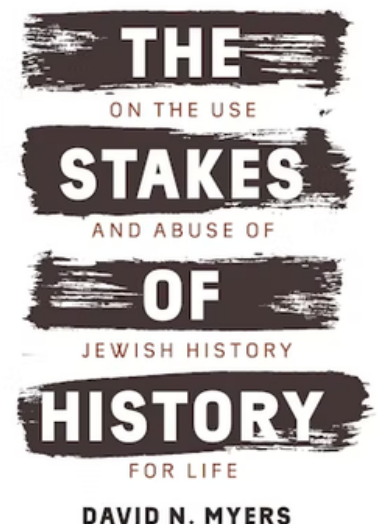
Be Part of *Then & Now* Season 6!



50,000 Podcast Downloads

As we enter the 6th season of *Then & Now*, and pass 50,000 downloads (!!), we are thinking of ways to refresh our content and organization for Season 6 and make sure we meet the needs of you, our loyal listeners. To do that, we need your help! What topics do you wish we would cover in history and policy? Have you ever read the news and wondered about the history of a particular issue, policy, law, or discussion? Wish our episodes were shorter or longer? Craving more frequent episodes?

To help us make the best podcast for YOU, our listeners, [please fill out our survey!](#) The survey should only take about 5 minutes, and everyone who completes the survey will be entered into a drawing to receive a FREE copy of LCHP Director David Myers' book *The Stakes of History*! Please make sure you fill out the survey before October 15, 2025 to be entered in the drawing!



2024-25 Public Programming


The Nexus of Education Non-Profits, Corporations, and Philanthropy: The Pressures of the Past and Reimagining the Future

November 4, 2024

LCHP Researcher Abbie Cohen analyzed the challenges faced by educational non-profits who must satisfy donors while also considering the needs of their often-marginalized communities.

UCLA Luskin Center for History and Policy **LUNCHTIME WORKSHOP**


**THE NEXUS OF EDUCATION
NON-PROFITS, CORPORATIONS,
AND PHILANTHROPY:
THE PRESSURES OF THE PAST AND
REIMAGINING THE FUTURE**



DATE: NOV. 4, 2024
TIME: 12:00 PM
LOCATION: BUNCHE 6339

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED


ABBIE COHEN
UCLA SCHOOL OF EDUCATION



Please RSVP before Nov. 1

UCLA Luskin Center for History and Policy **LUNCHTIME WORKSHOP**


**THE UNIVERSITY IN RUINS?
THE PAST AND FUTURES OF
TODAY'S HIGHER ED CRISIS**



DATE: NOV. 18, 2024
TIME: 12:00 PM
LOCATION: BUNCHE 6339

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED

PROF. DAVARIAN L. BALDWIN
PAUL E. RAETHER DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF
AMERICAN STUDIES
FOUNDING DIRECTOR, SMART CITIES RESEARCH LAB
TRINITY COLLEGE



Please RSVP before Nov. 11

The University in Ruins? The Past and Futures of Today's Higher Ed Crisis

November 18, 2024

Dr. Davarian Baldwin discussed the challenges to universities, especially in the wake of the institutional responses to pro-Palestinian encampments in the spring of 2024.

BEYOND NEUTRALITY

THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT AS TEACHER IN TURBULENT TIMES



PROF. MICHAEL ROTH
PRESIDENT, WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

DATE: DEC. 9, 2024
TIME: 12:00 PM
LOCATION: BUNCHE 6275

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED



Please RSVP before Dec. 4

Beyond Neutrality: The University President as Teacher in Turbulent Times

Dec. 9, 2024

Dr. Michael Roth, President of Wesleyan University, discussed how academic institutions can serve as places that instigate inquiry, while also exploring methods to protect challenging conversations from disruption and harassment.

The Original DEI: The Protestant Establishment and the Secularization of the University

Jan. 22, 2025

Dr. Nomi Stolzenberg described the origins of modern diversity, equity, and inclusion policies, which are rooted in the secularization of originally religious institutions of higher education.

THE ORIGINAL DEI

THE PROTESTANT ESTABLISHMENT AND THE SECULARIZATION OF THE UNIVERSITY



PROF. NOMI M. STOLZENBERG
NATHAN AND LILY SHAPELL PROFESSOR OF LAW, USC

DATE: JAN. 22, 2025
TIME: 4PM
LOCATION: BUNCHE 6339



Please RSVP before Jan. 15

Once More Unto the Breach: The Neutrality Debate and the American University, 1967 and 2025

Feb 10, 2025

Dr. Malick Ghachem considered the idea of university neutrality and what that means for individual academics as well as the university as an institution.

UCLA Luskin Center for
History and Policy

LUNCHTIME WORKSHOP

ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH THE NEUTRALITY DEBATE AND THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, 1967 AND 2025

DATE: FEB 10, 2025

TIME: 12:00 PM

LOCATION: BUNCHE 6339



PROF. MALICK GHACHEM
PROFESSOR, MIT

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED



Please RSVP before Feb. 7

UCLA Luskin Center for
History and Policy

LUNCHTIME WORKSHOP

BLACK FOR THE FIRST TIME RACE, ADMISSIONS, AND SOCIALIZATION IN THE HISTORICALLY WHITE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT



DR. JAMAAL MUWWAKKIL
CHANCELLOR'S POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOW
UCLA EDUCATION AND INFORMATION STUDIES

DATE: APR 7, 2025

TIME: 12:00 PM

LOCATION: BUNCHE 6339

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED



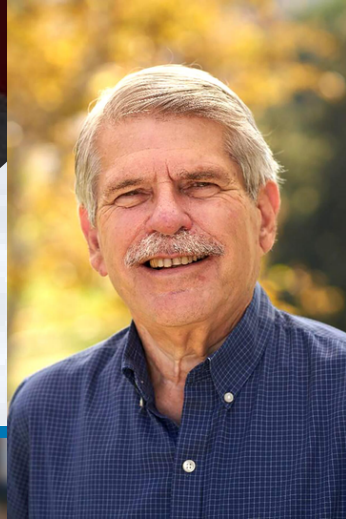
Please RSVP before Apr. 2

Black for the First Time: Race, Admissions, and Socialization in the Historically White Institutional Context

April 7, 2024

Dr. Jamaal Muwwakkil explored how the recent changes in affirmative action and consideration of race or marginalized identities in university admissions will have longstanding effects on students of color in university settings.

2025 Summer Research Institute



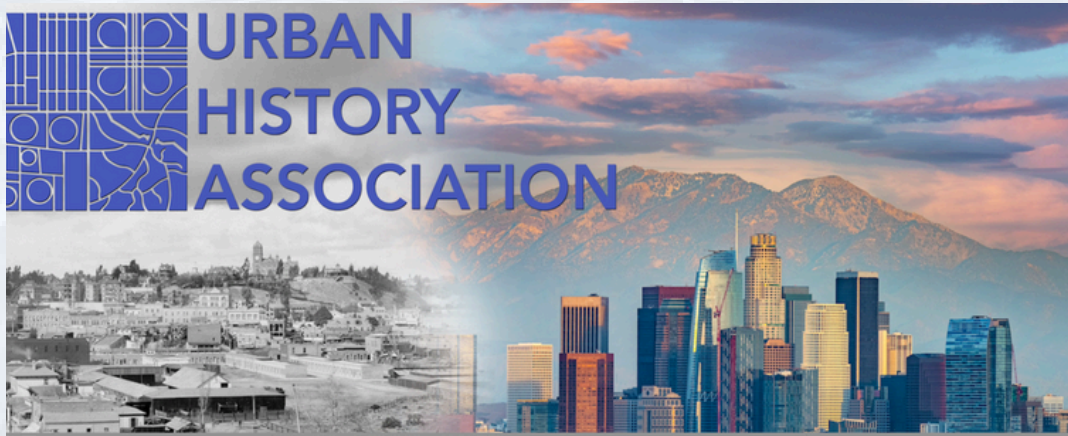
The 2025 LCHP Summer Research Institute attracted a record number of attendees! More than 60 outstanding undergraduate and graduate students immersed themselves in historical research methods over the course of 2 days in this free, online workshop. On June 16 and 17, 2025, students were exposed to the myriad ways in which historical research and knowledge can make a difference in the world. Presentations covered everything from archival methods to public history in museums, the history of the Olympics in LA to stolen Black History in California. New to 2025 was a hands on exercise that allowed students to research and write a pitch about the history of current political issues to media outlets, and to receive individualized feedback from award winning historians and reporters. SRI featured outstanding presenters including **Anthea Hartig, Eddie Cole, Susan D. Anderson, Justin Jampol, Zev Yaroslavsky, Ben Zdencanovic, Bharat Venkat**, and SRI first-timers **Alyssa Goodstein** and **Talia Soglin**.

Looking Ahead

The Future of History: A Conversation with Smithsonian Secretary Lonnie Bunch

November 3, 2025

More information coming soon!



Urban History Association Annual Conference

October 9-12, 2025

Los Angeles, CA

Register and find more information [here](#).



The Pasts and Futures of Higher Education

Seminars throughout the year

More information coming soon!



Stay in touch!

Follow us to hear about LCHP activities in the coming year



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@ucla.lchp



@LuskinCenterfor
HistoryPolicy



Luskin Center for
History and Policy



luskincenter@
history.ucla.edu