

SPRING 2025

# The Primary Source Newsletter

UNIVERSITY  
OF IDAHO

◆  
Department of  
History



In this newsletter  
you can expect:

---

Letter From the Chair of the History Department

---

---

An Atomic Bomb Survivor's Story

---

---

The Asian American Comparative Collection: A Field Trip

---

---

History Student Research Spotlight

---

---

A Glimpse Into the Women's Center

---

---

Staff Profile Highlights

---

---

# Letter From the Chair

Dear Students,

This year has been another busy year for our department.

We were joined by Dr. Alyssa Kreikemeier as an assistant professor and Dr. Annalise Walkama as a postdoctoral fellow. Two of our faculty members, Dr. Jeff Kyong-McClain and Dr. Alyson Roy, have been granted tenure and two of our faculty members, Dr. Matt Fox-Amato and myself, received the Presidential Mid-Career Award.

Faculty have presented their work around the world, from Germany to California. They worked with leading publications like *Environmental History*, *The Journal of Women's History*, and *Civil War History*. They have given expert witness testimony at immigration hearings. They have chaired university committees, taught almost 1300 undergraduate students in their classes, planned marquee events like the Borah Symposium and AsiaPOP!, and worked with tribal and community partners to ensure ethical relationships.

Students in our department have been no less busy—they have cored trees, researched UI Black history, traveled to Korea and France, learned from Indigenous leaders, sat on historical society boards, defended their theses, secured internships with state organizations, received research grants, and presented their work at academic conferences throughout the Pacific Northwest. Congrats to our departmental award winners: Spencer Cook, Eddie Payne, Dulce Kersting-Lark, Nathan Moody, and Shelley Walker-Harmon.

Yet, this has also been another year of loss. Our friends in the Black and African American Cultural Center lost that precious space yet again. Our Women's Center, one of the oldest operating in the nation, was forcibly closed. The LGBTQ office, the Multicultural Affairs Office, and so many other places that helped support our students, staff, and faculty were taken from us this year. Funding for historical preservation and America250 celebrations that had been in the works for years were cancelled and the fights about whose history matters continue to rage on.

I hope that amidst these struggles, we can continue to lead with courage. We will be focusing on America250 next year, supporting programing, building community, and engaging in conversations about the meaning of our layered national history. We hope to see everyone at our Pizza and the Past speaker series that will be held every other Wednesday from 12:30 to 1:20.

Thank you all for caring about history! We hope to see you again soon,  
Dr. Scofield



---

# An Atomic Bomb Survivor's Story: Keiko Ogura



In February, the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences, the Habib Institute , and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum held the honor of co-hosting Keiko Ogura in a free webinar for University of Idaho Students.

Keiko Ogura was just eight years old when the United States dropped the atomic bomb on her home town of Hiroshima, Japan. Keiko spoke of her experience, recalling the flash of the bomb and the flames that followed and swallowed her town. Since that day, Keiko has dedicated her life to advocating for world peace.

Aside from sharing her story with those at the University of Idaho, she also tells her story to various world leaders as a plea for future peace. She ended the presentation with a powerful statement, reminding us, “For we shall not repeat the evil”.

To give thanks to Keiko, the University of Idaho granted her an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters last May.

---





## A Field Trip to the Asian American Comparative Collection

The study of race and ethnicity is critical to understanding the forces that shape societies, both past and present. At the University of Idaho, students have the opportunity to engage with these issues through History 213: Race Through the Ages, a course that examines racial and ethnic dynamics across different regions, cultures, and historical periods.

The course delves into the political, sociocultural, and economic dimensions of racial and ethnic relations, analyzing how they foster both social cohesion and conflict. Through discussions on identity formation, cultural mentalities, and global perspectives, students gain a deeper understanding of the historical legacies that continue to influence contemporary societies.

This semester, students in History 213 had the opportunity to take their learning beyond the classroom with a visit to the Asian American Comparative Collection (AACC). Housed on the University of Idaho Moscow campus, the AACC is a unique resource for studying the material culture and history of Asian Americans in the Pacific Northwest. Thanks to AACC director Dr. Renae Campbell, the field trip offered a hands-on look at artifacts, documents, and photographs that tell the story of Asian immigrant communities, their struggles, and their contributions to the region.

The visit reinforced the broader themes of the course, illustrating how race and ethnicity are shaped by migration, labor, exclusionary policies, and cultural resilience. By engaging directly with historical materials, students were able to connect the lived experiences of Asian Americans to the broader discussions in class about race, identity, and belonging in global contexts.

---

---

# Environmental History Research

---

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was a pivotal program in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, designed to address unemployment while promoting conservation efforts in the 1930s. Between 1933 and the early 1940s, thousands of CCC camps were established across the United States, including a significant number in Idaho. Over the years, more than 87,000 men worked in Idaho's CCC camps, constructing roads, housing, recreation spaces, telephone lines, and dams which has shaped much of the infrastructure found in national and state parks today.

One such camp, Big Meadow Creek Camp, was located just outside of Troy, Idaho, approximately 11 miles east of Moscow. Situated on what is now the University of Idaho Experimental Forest, this year-round camp played a vital role in local conservation efforts and community development. The camp was home to around 200 men at a time, many of whom came from surrounding areas. Among its various projects, the most notable was the construction of the Big Meadow Creek Dam, a structure still referenced in local discussions about water use and conservation today.

For University of Idaho student Morgan McCully, this history is more than just an academic curiosity, it's a personal connection. Raised just outside of Troy, McCully has long been interested in how water resources shape rural communities. Now, with the support of a Summer Authentic Research Experiences

grant (SARES) through Idaho Community-engaged Resilience for Energy-Water Systems (I-CREWS), they have the opportunity to delve deeper into this subject. "My research will focus on the way the CCC has impacted water use in rural communities. This will take the shape of a historiography on the Big Meadow Creek Camp, but an emphasis will be placed on past and present water use in the area," McCully explained. "By examining both past and present water usage in the area, I hope to contribute to a broader understanding of conservation efforts in small communities."

Working under the guidance of Dr. Alyssa Kreikemeier, McCully will spend the summer conducting research and analyzing historical records. This work will culminate in a presentation in Boise in mid-July, showcasing findings that illuminate how CCC projects continue to influence water use today. "Troy has a unique relationship with water, and understanding its history can help inform discussions about sustainability," McCully noted. "Knowledge is never a bad thing—by uncovering this history, we can create more awareness of how we use our natural resources."

The research not only highlights a niche part of Idaho's history but also serves as a reminder of the long-lasting impact of conservation initiatives. Through this project, Morgan McCully aims to bridge the past and present and encourage deeper reflection on the role of water in rural communities.



# A Glimpse into the Women's Center 1972-2024

By: Kalista McCafferty and Olivia Ponte



## Introduction

For over 50 years, the University of Idaho's Women's Center symbolized belonging and hope. Founded in 1972 to address the high dropout rate of female students, the center quickly became a focal point for activism, resources, and support. As one of the former directors, Cheri Register, said, "The center is an open place where everyone is welcome." Beyond fostering community, the Women's Center fought for equal pay, gender equity, and inclusion. When the center was forced to close in December, due to state-mandated DEI bans, heartbreak spread across campus. However, hope remains strong. Though the physical space is gone, the staff remain committed to the center's mission. The fight is far from over. In honor of the center's legacy, we look back at the challenges it overcame, and the lasting impact left on the community.



A shot of the exterior of the Women's Center building in 1990

## Impacts of the Women's Center

One of the largest goals in starting the Women's center was increasing the enrollment rates of women at the University of Idaho. They wanted to create a place on campus where women could feel safe and included as they got their education, something that was still somewhat rare for women in the area in the 1970's. The introduction of the Women's center seemed to have the desired impact, as the enrollment rate for women students grew from 33% in 1972 to 46% by 1997 when the Women's center celebrated its 25th anniversary. The women's center was able to create the exact safe space that they needed with activism efforts on and off campus. In 2013 the Women's center started an online blog to be able to create another space where they could discuss important women and feminist issues. It was run on and off by University of Idaho students until the center was closed in 2024. They used this as a way to consistently be able to reach audiences about feminist issues and continue to encourage intellectual discussion no matter their location.

## Challenges Faced by the Women's Center

The Women's Center legacy is one of resilience. In 1994, a University of Idaho student lobbied the Idaho legislature to cut its funding, accusing the center of spreading "liberal propaganda." Though unsuccessful, this attack fueled critics, who continued to advocate against the center. Beyond fighting for political space, the Women's Center also fought for physical space. In 2000, its building was demolished, forcing an emergency move. Then, in 2002, the Women's Center relocated to the Memorial Gym. As support for the center grew, so did staff and student involvement, but inadequate space and a lack of resources proved to be a continuous struggle. Despite years of political, location, and resource battles, the Women's Center continued its mission by advocating, empowering, and creating space for students.

"I was devastated, angry, grief stricken disappointed."

Lysa Salsbury on when she heard the news of the Women's Center closure

## Interview with Lysa Salsbury

Recently we spoke with Lysa Salsbury, director of the U of I women's center from 2013 until it closed this past winter; she allowed us to pick her brain about the center's closure and her time as director. Lysa recounted how much she loved getting to work with students as director and how important it was to be encouraging the next generation of feminists and activists. She spoke on how the work from the Women's Center is so important, because while rights for women and feminist activism have come so far we still have a very long way to go, saying, "It's important, this work is important and not just in Idaho, but specifically in Idaho because of all those reasons. But also because There are still so many gender-based inequalities, right?" Lysa reminded us that just because the Women's Center is gone does not mean the work they did is. The women's center closing sounds really scary, but do not despair. As Lysa said "We're still here... Don't be complacent, don't lay down and give up. It's a hard time, but I have to believe that we are going to continue to move forward no matter what obstacles are thrown in our way." Just over 100 years ago women were granted the most basic right in this country and ever since we have been demanding a seat at the table only to be silenced, met with backlash, and ridiculed. History has shown time and time again we must continue to fight and to work to make the world a better place. Things are hard right now, but the fight is far from over. Keep fighting, make your voice heard, continue to educate yourself and others, because we are in this fight together.

This article was based on research at UI Special Collections

Faculty Research  
Spring 2025

Dr. Matthew Fox-Amato was invited to the University of Delaware's Iconoclasm Across the Americas workshop, where he gave a paper on iconoclasm in US history.

Dr. Dale Graden received the CLASS Conference and Professional Development Travel grant for upcoming archival research in Brazil.

Dr. Ellen Kittell is researching gender and history through the lens of the index.

Dr. Alyssa Kreikemeier presented her research at the University of Idaho's inaugural National Interdisciplinary Lookout Conference this spring.

Dr. Kyong-McClain had his co-edited volume From Missionary Education to Confucius Institutes: Historical Reflections on Sino-American Cultural Exchange issued by Routledge in paperback.

Dr. Alyson Roy gave a paper titled "A Different Type of Meta: Comedy, Audience, and the Roman Triumph" at the conference From Text to Performance: Reimagining Ancient Drama at the College of William and Mary.

Dr. Alexandria Ruble had an article titled "Martha Arendsee" come out in the volume Texts and Contexts from the History of Feminism and Women's Rights: East Central Europe, Second Half of the Twentieth Century (Central European Press).

Dr. Rebecca Scofield wrote an op-ed, "The History that Laid the Groundwork for Rebecca Yarros' Fourth Wing Series," for TIME Magazine's Made By History.