

## **Curriculum Vitae**

Erik B. Christiansen  
Professor, Department of History  
President, RIC/AFT 1819  
Rhode Island College

### **Education**

- Ph.D. History, University of Maryland, 2009  
Area of concentration: United States Cultural and Intellectual History.  
Minor field: Sub-Saharan Africa
- M.A. History, University of Maryland, 2004
- B.A. Music and History, University of Miami (FL), 1996

### **Academic Employment**

Professor and Public History Program Coordinator, 2010-  
Department of History, Rhode Island College  
Hired as an assistant professor in 2010, tenured and promoted to associate in 2015,  
and promoted to full professor in 2020. Scholarship focuses on 20th century  
American history, culture and politics, public memory and civic participation.  
Created nine new courses over ten years. Built and sustained the graduate and  
undergraduate public history programs and redesigned the curricula in 2019.  
Oversee History and Public History internships, maintain community and  
institutional partnerships, create public programming, develop internal and external  
public history projects, teach all public history courses.

Adjunct Professor, 2009-2010  
Department of History, University of Rhode Island – Providence

Adjunct Professor, 2009-2010  
Department of History and Philosophy, Roger Williams University

Adjunct Professor, 2006-2009  
Department of History, University of Maryland

### **Academic and Administrative Leadership**

Co-Chair, NECHE 10-Year Accreditation Self-Study, Standard Four: The Academic  
Program, 2019-2021

Responsible for the reaccreditation of RIC's entire academic division, reviewed all policies and procedures, surveyed all departments and programs, provided overarching assessment and recommendations for revision and improvement across the institution, coordinated with stakeholders at all levels within the institution and with NECHE accreditation team.

President, Rhode Island College Chapter of the American Federation of Teachers, Local 1819, 2020-

Worked closely with college administration to adapt quickly to Covid-19 pandemic, renegotiated current contract in emergency impact bargaining without significant losses for the membership, assisted with transitions including the untimely arrival of a new provost and two new deans, worked with senior administration to resolve budget deficits across the institution, managed closure of the 120-year old lab school and faculty retrenchment, oversaw numerous grievance cases and other complaints, currently serving on RIFTHP Executive Board and AFT Program and Policy Council.

Vice President, Rhode Island College Chapter of the American Federation of Teachers, Local 1819, 2016-2020

Revived long-discontinued newsletter, social committee, Committee on Political Education, and helped rebuild other parts of a moribund union local.

Executive Committee member, Council of Rhode Island College, 2018-2020

With the president and provost of the college, and the council chair, set the monthly and longer-term agendas for the council, in areas that included setting or revising academic policy, student success, campus life, faculty governance, and external relations.

### **Administrative and Policy Related Service**

American Federation of Teachers Higher Education Program and Policy Council, 2020-

RIC/AFT Committee on Political Education, 2018-

RIC Course Evaluation Task Force, 2020-

RIC Accessibility Task Force, 2020-

RIC Extended President's Executive Cabinet, 2020-

RI Promise Legislation Working Group, 2018-2019

Leader, Negotiation Team, Emergency Impact Bargaining, 2020

Negotiation Team for the 2018-2021 RIC Faculty Contract, 2018

Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, Performance-Based Funding Statewide Working Group, 2016-2018

Editor of the RIC/AFT Newsletter, 2014-2017

Executive Committee member, Rhode Island College Chapter of the American Federation of Teachers, Local 1819, 2014-2015

### **Published Books**

*Rhode Island College: Meeting the State's Needs through Time*. Providence: Rhode Island College, 2016.

*Channeling the Past: Politicizing History in Postwar America*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013.

### **In Progress**

"When the Illegals Were White: Refugee Stories from Restrictionist America" (manuscript under review).

### **Other Scholarly Publications**

"Reforming Higher Education Funding in Rhode Island: Lessons from Other States," The College and University Research Collaborative, Providence, 2016.

Review of *M.J. Rymza-Pawlowska, History Comes Alive: Public History and Popular Culture in the 1970s (2017)*, in the *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, 2019.

Review of Samuel Lawrence, *Remembering America: How We Have Told Our Past*, (2015), in the *Journal of American Studies*, 2016.

Review of Tammy S. Gordon, *The Spirit of 1976: Commerce, Community, and the Politics of Commemoration*, in the *American Historical Review*, 2014.

### **Other Publications**

"Refugees in an Age of Restrictionism," *History News Network*, November 3, 2019.

"Could We Actually Learn Something from '50s-Style Civics Education?" *History News Network*, February 4, 2013.

“The Tea Party Challenge,” *Inside Higher Ed*, April 23, 2010.

“More than just jobs: Public works spending should include an educational element to help Americans better their lives,” *Baltimore Sun*, December 12, 2008.

“Pronouns and the Autumn of Our Discontent,” *The Anchor*, October 26, 2010.

### **Professional Service**

Member, Providence Committee on Commemorative Works, 2020 -

Member, Rhode Island Statehouse Interpretation Working Group, 2019 -

Editor, Collaborator, Researcher and Writer, North Burial Ground Project, 2013 -

Adviser, Great Depression and New Deal Digital Records Project, to be published by Taylor, Rutledge & Francis, 2019-2020

Member, “Year of the City” Steering Committee, Brown Public Humanities Center, 2018-2019

Referee, "Citizen Du Pont turns 150: Corporate Culture as Public Culture," an article submitted to the business history journal *Enterprise and Society*, 2017-2018

Governor’s Appointee, Rhode Island State Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission, 2011-2017

Member, OAH Local Resources Committee for the 2016 Annual Conference of the Organization of American Historians, 2015-2016

Member, Scholarly Advisory Board, Rhode Island Council for the Humanities “Rhode Tour” mobile app project: *Making and Remaking: Moving Through Rhode Island’s History of Innovators, Disruptors, and Agents for Change*, 2014-2015

National Park Service Volunteer, Roger Williams National Memorial, 2010

Planning Committee for History Graduate Student Association Conference, “Conflict and Consensus,” University of Maryland, 2009

Editor, *The Maryland Historian*, 2009  
Edited special thirtieth anniversary issue on the role of historians in public.

Coordinator, Graduate Colloquium in History, University of Maryland, 2008-09

Graduate Student Representative, Graduate Committee, University of Maryland, 2004-06  
Drafted comprehensive exam reforms, co-authored subcommittee report on how to decrease time-to-degree, represented graduate student concerns.

Archives Assistant, Motion Picture, Sound and Video Division, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD, 1995-1997  
Provided research assistance and instruction, created finding aids for film and television topics, trained new staff, oversaw use of Nixon Watergate Tapes.

### **Institutional Academic Activities**

Organizer, "Restoring Seneca Village: Lessons for Providence's Snowtown," featuring Cynthia Copeland, 2021

"Refugees from America: First Person Accounts from Fugitive Slaves," Student presentations, RIC Black History Month, 2019

Lecturer, "Refugees in the 1970s and 1980s, and the End of Postwar Idealism," for LIBS 150: Border Crossings: Migration and Immigration in the 21st Century, 2019

Co-organizer, "1968: Revolution and Global Order," Rhode Island College, 2018

Panelist, Open Books - Open Minds, *Exit West* Teaching Roundtable, 2018

FYS Student Poster Presentations, Undergraduate Research Fair, 2018

Presenter, "Students Reading Students: How to Use Students' Low-Stakes Writing to Generate Better Class Discussions," FCTL Workshop, 2015

Co-organizer, "Shattered Lens: World War I on Film, Rhode Island College, 2015

Co-organizer, "The Hanging: Photography and the Assassins of Abraham Lincoln," Rhode Island College, 2015

Conference Organizer, "Gettysburg Resurrected: New Interpretations and Memorial Practice on the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg," Rhode Island College, 2013

Conference Organizer, "America's Bloodiest Day: Antietam, Emancipation, and Memorialization," Rhode Island College, 2012

Conference Organizer and Rhode Island Council for the Humanities grant recipient, "Rhode Island and the Civil War," Rhode Island College, 2011

## **Departmental Service**

Member of the Department Advisory Committee (DAC), 2014-2018, 2020-2022

Member of the Curriculum Committee, 2018-

Member of the Films and Lectures Committee, 2010-

Member of the Ad Hoc Program Revision Committee, 2017-2019

Editor of the Department Newsletter, 2018

## **Public History Projects**

Rhode Tour: Named Places in Rhode Island (Rhodetour.org), 2018-2019

A collaboration between public history students and the RIHS, this online tour links the history of particular places, including towns, parks, buildings, neighborhoods, and more, with biographies of the Rhode Islanders for whom the places are named.

The North Burial Ground Project ([pvdnorthburialground.com](http://pvdnorthburialground.com)), 2013-

This project is a collaborative effort between faculty and students at Rhode Island College, and local and regional organizations, to make the historic North Burial Ground an educational and economic asset for the region. The area's largest cemetery, it contains diverse stories, including those of slaves, soldiers, industrialists, reformers, statesmen, pioneers, and artists, which collectively reveal the history of the city, state, nation, and beyond. With student and community support, the project develops virtual themed tours of the NBG that appeal to a wide range of individuals and organizations and it provides opportunities for interested community members, students, schoolteachers, and faculty to use the NBG for experiential education-based projects in a variety of academic disciplines. The most recent virtual tour, "Providence: Creative Capital," debuted in fall 2019.

Providence Parks Outdoor Exhibit Panels Project, 2017-2018

Following receipt of a CRCA grant for undergraduate research, students in my fall 2017 first year seminar conducted research, drafted text, and designed six outdoor exhibit panels, in coordination with the Providence Department of Parks and Recreation. The panels were installed in the North Burial Ground and in Randall Park in 2018.

World War I Centennial: Telling Veterans' Stories, 2016

Students researched the lives of veterans of World War I who are interred in the North Burial Ground. After writing biographies of their subjects and photographing their gravesites, the students created a new website to share the information with the public (<https://projectnbg-ric.weebly.com/world-war-i-veterans.html>).

## A Rhode Islander in the Civil War: The Life and Death of Henry Jarvis Cole, 2012

This project was conducted by students enrolled in the spring 2012 Introduction to Public History course. Students used previously unseen primary sources (school diaries, private correspondence, and other miscellany) from Henry Jarvis Cole, a native of Rhode Island who died in the American Civil War at the age of nineteen, to construct an exhibit that was on display in Adams Library in spring 2012 and again in fall 2012.

## **Presentations and Conferences**

Presenter, Telling New England's Stories, Oral History Lab Workshop, University of Rhode Island, 2019

Panel Chair and Commentator, "Politics, War, and American Society," New England Historical Association Conference, Bristol, 2019

Keynote speaker, "The Providence North Burial Ground: Telling the Community's Story," Southern New England and Cape Cod Gravestone Association Chapter Meeting, 2019

Sessions Discussion Leader, "Building Community through Neighborhood History," and "Dead Zones: Exploring the Roles of Historic Cemeteries, Vacant Lots, and Wild Spaces in our Communities," at the Hacking Heritage Unconference, Brown University Public Humanities Center, 2019

Lecturer, "When the Illegals Were White: Protecting Refugees in Restrictionist America," Annual American Studies Lecture, Skidmore College, 2017

Presenter, "When the Illegals Were White: Protecting Refugees in Restrictionist America," Department of History Colloquium, Rhode Island College, 2017

Session leader, Roundtable Discussion on Digital History, Organization of American Historians Annual Conference, Providence, 2016

Presenter, "Preserving Lives at North Burial Ground," at The Remembered and the Forgotten: Preserving and Interpreting the Americas to 1820, Salve Regina University, 2015

Presenter, "Community History from the Communal Burial Ground," Annual Conference of the National Council for Public History, Nashville, TN, 2015

Presenter, "Developing Student Abilities with the North Burial Ground Project," Rhode Island Statewide Historic Preservation Conference, 2014

Presenter, "Exhibiting a Rhode Islander in the Civil War," What Cheer Day: Rhode Island at War, Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, 2012

Presenter, "Effective Public History Internships in Rhode Island," Rhode Island Statewide Historic Preservation Conference, 2012

Poster Presentation, "Live from the Battle of Gettysburg: History at CBS News," American Historical Association Annual Convention, Boston, 2011

Presenter, "'A National Shrine': American History at the Cold War Smithsonian," Public History in Germany and the United States: Fields, Developments and Debates in Praxis and Theory, Free University Berlin, Germany, 2009

Presenter, "Enforced Equality: *The A-Team's* Liberal-Muscular Approach to Conflict Resolution in Reagan's America," History Graduate Student Conference, University of Maryland, 2009

Presenter, "'Where Time Has No Meaning': Turning History into Myth on DuPont's *Cavalcade of America*," Eighth Annual Graduate Humanities Forum Conference: "Origins," University of Pennsylvania, 2008

Panel Commentator, "Manipulating Myth and Memory: Forging Identity with History," History Graduate Student Conference, University of Maryland, 2008

Presenter, "Liberia in the Age of Tubman: Religion, Politics, and the Making of a Dictator," History Graduate Student Conference, University of Maryland, 2007

Panel Commentator, "Center and Peripheries," History Graduate Student Conference, University of Maryland, 2006

Presenter, "'We Found Happy Home in U.S.A.': The Refugee Act of 1934 and America's First Official Refugees," Graduate Student Colloquium, University of Maryland, 2004

### **Community Outreach**

Elementary school field trips leader, annual "Jane's Walks" tour leader, and contributor to other popular community events at the North Burial Ground, 2015 –

Secretary and Newsletter Editor, Summit Neighborhood Association, 2016 –

Lecturer and Instructor, Teaching American History: *A New Birth of Freedom: Developing Historical Thinking in American History*, Rhode Island Historical Society program for Rhode Island Social Studies teachers, 2014



Lecturer and Discussion Leader, "Making Sense of the American Civil War," American Library Association program at Providence and Cranston public libraries, 2012

### **Other Academic Experience**

Research Assistant, 2008-2009

Professor James Gilbert

Photographic and other research, proofreading, indexing, securing reproductions and copyright permissions for *Whose Fair? Experience, Memory, and the History of the Great St. Louis Exposition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Advisor for Middle East Studies Program, 2008-2009

University of Maryland

Advising undergraduate students, conference and event planning, and updating the program's website.

Researcher, 2007

Archival Resources Usability Study, University of Maryland Libraries,

Conducted individual tests to see how undergraduate and graduate students use Internet resources to conduct research.

Advisor for Undergraduate History Majors, 2004-2007

University of Maryland

Advised and counseled undergraduate students, served on the department's Undergraduate Committee, cleared students for graduation, prepared course descriptions, assisted with internship placement, wrote recommendations, advised on curriculum development.

Researcher, State Constitution Project, 2004-2005

National Bureau of Economic Research

With Professor John Wallis of the University of Maryland, Department of Economics, researched several state constitutions to provide the first complete record of all state constitutions and amendments.

### **Other Teaching Experience**

Discussion Leader, 2007-2009

Gilder Lehrman Institute Lectures for public high schools

Substitute Teacher, 2000

Montgomery County, MD

Served as both short and long-term substitute in public elementary, middle and high schools; taught special education, mainline, and talented and gifted students primarily in music and social studies classes.

Assistant English Teacher and Curriculum Designer, 1997-1999

Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program, Niigata, Japan

Developed curriculum and classroom activities, taught classes, groups, and individuals of all ages, participated in official municipal and district events.

Teaching Assistant and Self-Esteem Coordinator for troubled students, 1994-1996

Dade County Public Schools, FL

Devised activities to help troubled junior high school students build self-esteem, tutored and mentored students, taught special history and social studies classes.