

THE

HISTORY COLORADO | WINTER 2020/2021

COLORADO

MAGAZINE

TEST OF TIME

HOW WILL 2020
GO DOWN IN HISTORY?

Eugenics & Dr. Corwin / Women of the Borderlands / Knitting Patriotism

Rising to the Challenges of Today



As we near the one-year mark of our pandemic crisis, we can certainly agree that there have been many dark and often tragic days. History Colorado has humbly attempted to be a light in our state and for the people we serve during this dark time by illuminating our history, creating conversations for us to build on our shared values, pulling Colorado communities together to expand the stories we tell and add to our collection, and rising with resilient optimism regardless of the latest crisis.

You can tell a lot about someone in how they respond in an emergency. And I am proud of how History Colorado has collectively—staff, board leadership, volunteers, and members—responded in these prolonged and overlapping crises. History Colorado is resilient, creative, and community-centered and has demonstrated a lot of hustle in ensuring the long-term sustainability of this 141-year-old institution.

We learned that we cannot respond to a crisis in the same ways that we respond to problems. Crises require new tools. These tools—such as virtual programming, more human-centered connectivity even while social distancing, an anti-racism framework—have helped us form our ideal of what a twenty-first-century historical society can be.

In reflecting on the past year, History Colorado has fully shown up in the moment, and here are just a few of our successes during this otherwise difficult time:

- Doubled audiences for our popular adult education programs
- Added new artifacts to our collection from 49 of 64 Colorado counties
- Opened 15 exhibitions across multiple History Colorado museums interpreting a diversity of topics from American Democracy to Borderlands, from John Denver and Aprons to Colorado Women's Vote
- Created new Hands-On History programs throughout the state that provide safe, educational child care for working families when students are not in school.

We are grateful to all of you, members and Coloradans, for walking with us through these times. Your support has helped light the way. We are eager for the happier days that surely lie ahead and we can't wait to see you in real life.

Steve W. Turner
Executive Director and State Historic Preservation Officer

In the spirit of healing and education, we acknowledge the 48 contemporary tribes with historic ties to the state of Colorado. These tribes are our partners. We consult with them when we plan exhibits; collect, preserve, and interpret artifacts; do archaeological work; and create educational programs. We recognize these Indigenous peoples as the original inhabitants of this land.

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THE COLORADO MAGAZINE

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BORDERLANDS OF SOUTHERN COLORADO opened at the History Colorado Center, February 2021, joining exhibits at El Pueblo History Museum and the Trinidad History Museum.

In this photo: Children gather around adobe horno in Old Segundo in southern Colorado. From *Camp and Plant*, September 19, 1903. Published weekly by the Sociological Department of Colorado Fuel & Iron Company. Photo courtesy of Steelworks Center of the West.

History Colorado members can deepen their involvement and support the Borderlands of Southern Colorado initiative by joining **FRONTERAS**, the Borderlands of Southern Colorado Society. See page 47 for more details.

2 **Rising to the Challenges of Today** by Steve W. Turner / 4 **The Forum** / 6 **Women of the Borderlands** by Dawn DiPrince / 8 **CF&I's Dr. Richard Corwin** by Brian Clason & Jonathan Rees / 14 **Hindsight 20/20** by 20 Historians & Thought Leaders / 38 **A Knitter's Tale** by Robert Moll / 44 **"To Think, Talk & Work for Patriotism"** by Amy Unger / 46 **A Generous Spirit Found a Way to Keep Giving**

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ON THE COVER / Hindsight 20/20 by *Katie Bush*

THE FORUM

We love hearing from you

The Colorado Magazine

William Wei's "Immigration to Colorado" in the Fall 2020 issue tackles an important part of Colorado's history, past and present. The 1959 photo of braceros on a bus traveling to northern Colorado is priceless. They were an important part of a large labor program of Mexican workers that were needed on farms and factories where they were sorely needed but were also exploited by their American employers. Wei should have included their additional exploitation after returning to Mexico....

—David W. Dent

William Wei Replies:

I very much appreciate your comment on my "Immigration to Colorado" article. You will be pleased to know that I intend to include the information you provided on the Mexican government's exploitation of Mexican workers in part II of my article.

Toppled Civil War Monument on Display

"Toppling or defacing a monument or statue because it offends you means that you don't know history or how that person or event had changed the lives of people. The purpose of a monument is to educate and remind us of our past and see how far we have come as a people."
— Visitor comment left at exhibit

"Toppling or defacing a monument means you DO understand history and do not blindly follow what you're told. We are all human and make mistakes, some mistakes should not be celebrated!"
— Visitor comment left at exhibit

The Weekly Digest

"I cannot believe you allowed William Wei's article [in the Hindsight 20/20 Project]. That is his opinion and should not be written on this platform...."

—Consie Krumreich

Our Weekly Digest Team Replies: Dr. Wei's article was part of the Hindsight 20/20 Project, in which we asked twenty distinguished writers to imagine what the history books would say about the events of 2020 a century from now. As such, it was inherently an opinion piece. Our intention was to honestly represent a broad spectrum of ways in which we might imagine our future. I suspect that if you keep reading, you'll also find opinions you agree with.

[Note: Read all the perspectives in the Hindsight 20/20 project in this issue of *The Colorado Magazine*.]

Museum of Memory

"Thank you so much for accepting our donations from students and teachers to the Museum of Memory Collection.... In this collective donation, our local historians aged 8–14 weave a story that brings people together even while we are apart. It also highlights key voices that too often get left out in historical narratives—the voices of our children."

—Whitney Gaskill, Sallie Barney, Katie Shapiro, teachers, Silverton School

"Along with learning and preserving our Manito dialect of Spanish, and learning the local music, dancing, and traditions, preserving our cultural and community memories is of vital importance. We are grateful to History Colorado's Museum of Memory for helping our youth and young adults to recognize the importance of preserving memories."
—Judith Gurulé, Community Coordinator, Adelante San Luis

Online Collections

"I own one of these edgers and challenge your description. I believe your description is for the Planet Junior No. 1 and not the number 2. There is only one metal bar and not two as the improved No. 2 was made to be lighter."
—Sean Maley (in reference to a lawn edger in our collection)

Our Curatorial Team Responds: Thanks for the info!... We have millions of items in the collection and can't be experts in them all so it helps when we get info like this to help us clarify or even correct our data.

[Note: We have gladly corrected the description in our online database.]

Borderlands Lecture Series

"Thank you! I've really enjoyed the virtual lectures and look forward to attending more, even after the health crisis is over."
—Kay Miller

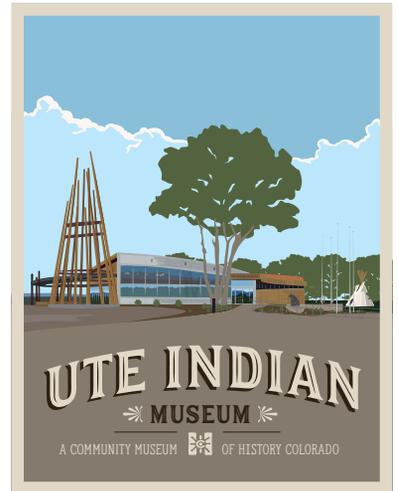
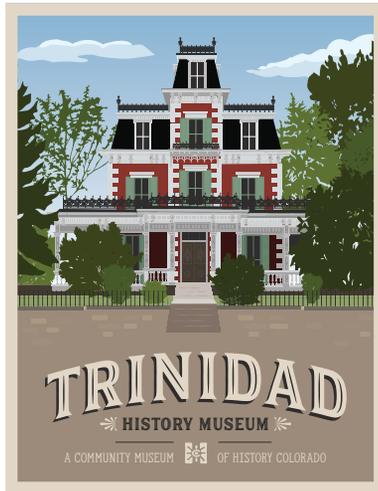
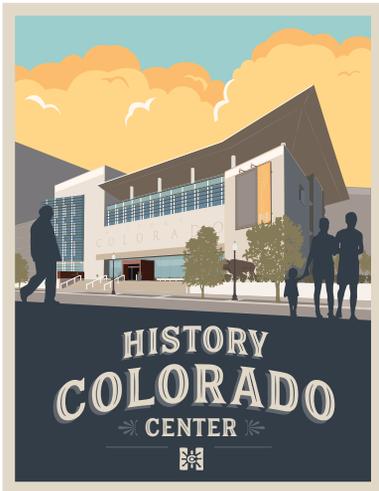
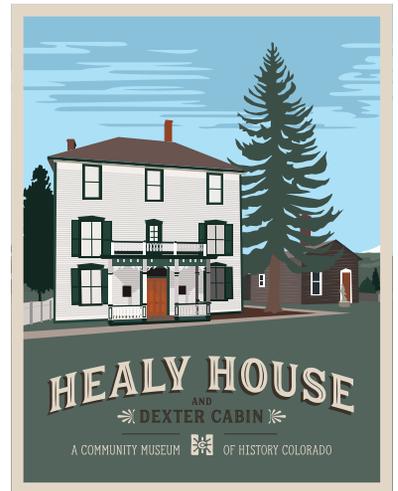
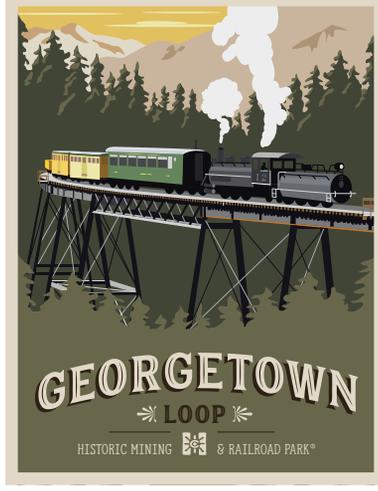
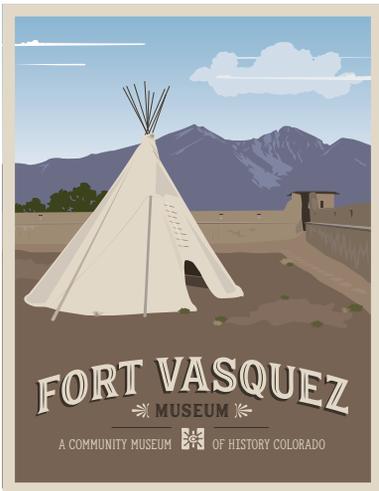
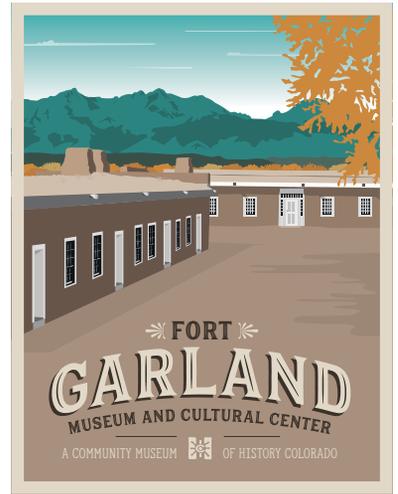
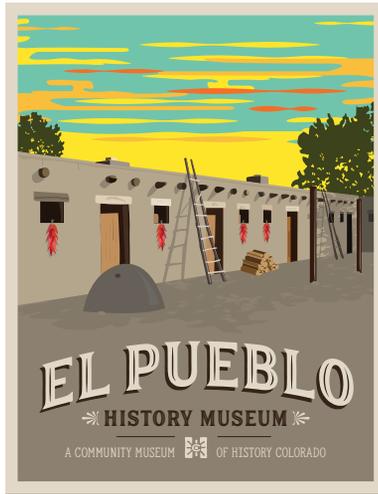
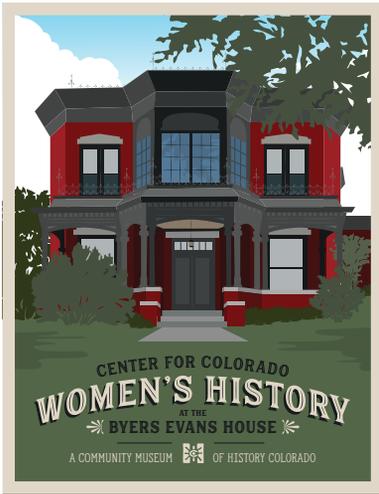
"Thank you for creating these wonderful opportunities to learn more during this difficult pandemic time."
—Rebecca Fernandez

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**WE ARE
COLORADO**



**BECOME A MEMBER
TODAY!
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WOMEN

of the BY DAWN DI PRINCE

BORDERLANDS



THE YEAR 1848 marked two notable moments in US women's history. The suffrage movement was formally born at Seneca Falls, New York, where activists proclaimed women's equality in a manifesto titled "The Declaration of Sentiments." Earlier in the year in Mexico, another document, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, was signed and ceded 55 percent of Mexican land (including southern Colorado) to the United States. As the border moved south, Mexican women who lived on this land lost rights as their homes became part of the United States.

This is an interesting juxtaposition. As American women asserted their rights in the eastern United States, Mexican women in the newly annexed American territory faced "a loss of autonomy as individuals capable of contracting and holding property [and] became wards of their husbands, on whom they were legally dependent," writes María E. Montoya, in *Translating Property*.

As English colonists crossed the Atlantic, they brought with them the law of coverture. Coverture demanded that women surrender to their husbands their legal claims and their rights. This meant that women themselves, their property, and their material belongings were considered the property of their husbands. Meanwhile in the lands out west, Spanish colonization imposed different cultural and legal traditions. Women in these lands did not necessarily have social or cultural equity, but under Spanish and Mexican civil law, they were allowed to own property.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo destabilized Mexican property rights as the ideological differences of Mexican and American property law collided. In the borderlands, "as in so

many other imperial histories of this period, the move to disenfranchise colonized men came at the expense of traditional rights of colonized women," writes Karen R. Roybal in *Archives of Dispossession*. "A double violence marks this history: Mexican American women lose their herencia and their fathers and husbands suffer the indignities of feminization in front of the Anglo American man."

For all of these reasons, the post-Treaty era of the borderlands is marked by intermarriage. Anglo American men married Mexican land-owning women to acquire swaths of property. At the same time, through intercultural marriage, Mexican women married Anglo American men to ensure that their multiracial descendants would inherit their property. On December 11, 1847, the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* speculated on the process of territorial acquisition in the event of a US victory and illustrated the power of marriage in the Americanization of the borderlands: "Our Yankee young fellows and the pretty señoritas will do the rest of the annexation, and Mexico will soon be Anglo-Saxonized."

There is often a mythology of empty land that fuels and justifies colonization. This shows up in US territorial policy in the form of "the mythic belief that the West was an expanse of unsettled, unsocialized natural wilderness waiting to be converted to the use of national capitalist markets," writes Montoya. The US government sought explicitly to overlay an economic system based on individual property ownership in an effort to eradicate what it deemed a feudal land system. But, in this transformation of legal structures, Mexican women who once had some forms of independence were forced to live as feudal subjects to their husbands.

Yet, even within this complex landscape of shifting empires, Mestiza and Indigenous women were often at the heart of intercultural collision and coalescence in the borderlands. They served as agents of cultural exchange, spoke multiple languages, sometimes owned property, and possessed important survival knowledge about the landscape and local practices. These women often made practical decisions to marry or assist colonizing men in order to protect the economic survival of their children and descendants. In doing so, they helped to define the lasting culture of the borderlands. ■

Explore more about the women of the southern Colorado borderlands in exhibitions at the History Colorado Center, El Pueblo History Museum, and Trinidad History Museum.

Join us for the Borderlands Lecture Series to hear more from María Montoya, who speaks about the women of the borderlands on April 8.

FOR FURTHER READING

Bonnie Clark, "Understanding Amache: The Archaeobiography of a Victorian-era Cheyenne Woman." *Colorado Heritage*, Autumn 2006.

María E. Montoya, *Translating Property: The Maxwell Land Grant and the Conflict over Land in the American West, 1840–1900* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2002).

Karen R. Roybal, *Archives of Dispossession: Recovering the Testimonios of Mexican American Herederas, 1848–1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

DAWN DIPRINCE is the Chief Operating Officer of History Colorado and lead developer of the Borderlands of Southern Colorado initiative: b-co.org/borderlands.

PHOTOS clockwise from top left / *Dona Bernarda Mejia Velasquez*, courtesy of the Esquibel Family; *Rebecca Lopez*, courtesy Minette Church; *Josefa Jaramillo Carson*, courtesy Kit Carson Home and Museum; *Teresita Sandoval*, courtesy of Pueblo City-County Library District; and *Amache Ochinee Prowers*, *History Colorado* 89.451.5827.

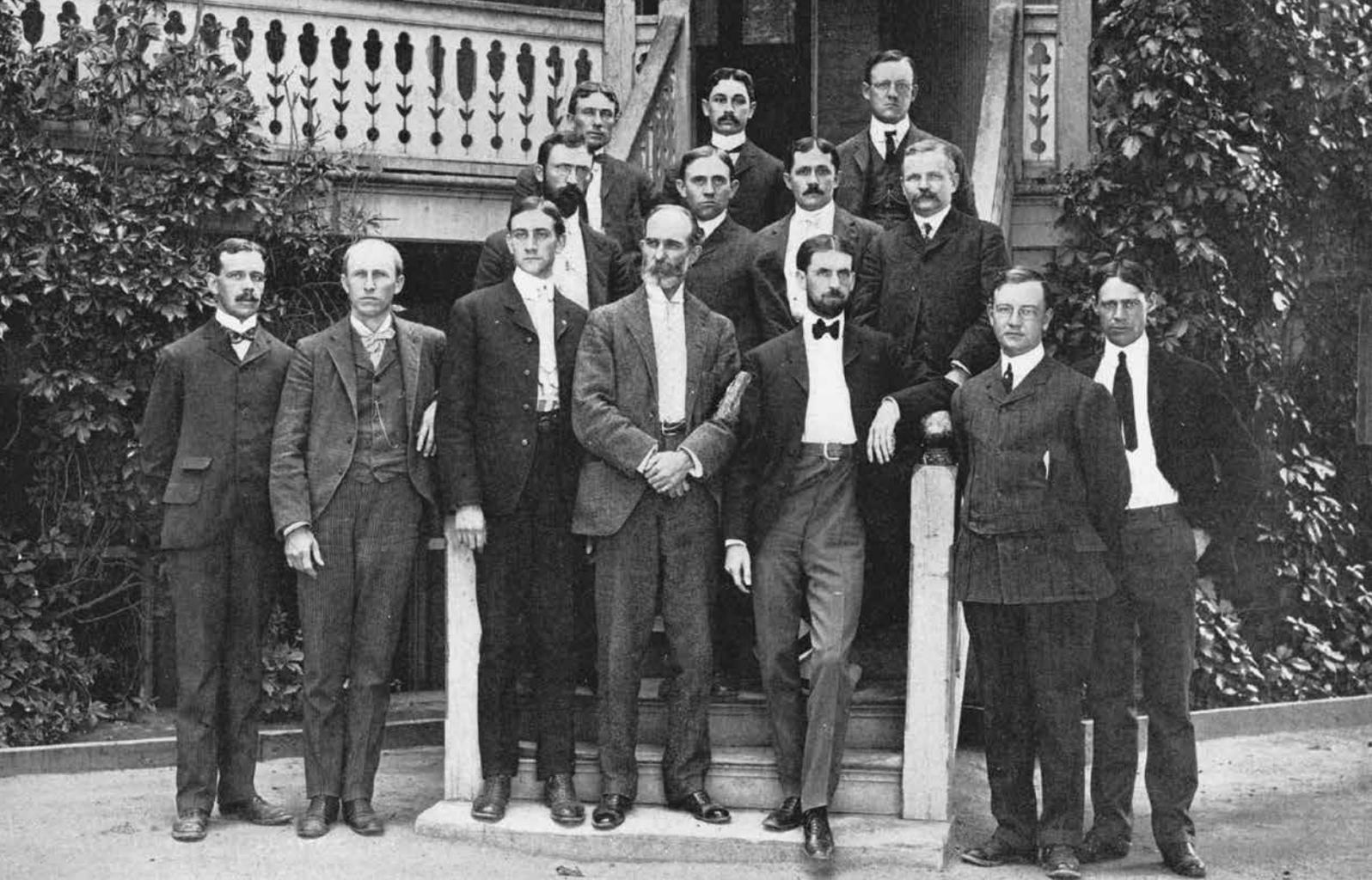


PHOTO / *Richard W. Corwin (at front center) is joined by his staff in 1902. Courtesy Bessemer Historical Society/CF&I Archives.*

DR. RICHARD CORWIN

& Colorado's Changing Racial Divide

BY BRIAN CLASON
& JONATHAN REES

Dr. Richard Corwin's name is visible throughout Pueblo. It's on St. Mary-Corwin Medical Center and Corwin International Magnet School. Despite the prominence of his name, many may not know much about the man himself or his complicated legacy.

THE PUEBLO HALL OF FAME is housed in College Hall on the campus of Pueblo Community College. One of its inductees is Dr. Richard Warren Corwin, the former chief surgeon of Colorado Fuel & Iron Company, the largest private employer in the state at the time he died in 1930. The plaque under Corwin's picture calls

him "an ideal physician, an exemplary community advocate, and a marvelous combination of genius, energy, generosity and executive ability." A local middle school and the St. Mary-Corwin Regional Medical Center are named for him. "Many of his innovative concepts made a big impact on the care of Pueblo citizens," explains the plaque.

The preeminent historian of CF&I, H. Lee Scamehorn, has written that "Corwin's emphasis on community and social betterment reflected Progressive Era middle-class concerns for Americanizing recent immigrants, who constituted the majority of the workforce" at the company. Besides his concern about Americanizing some recent immigrants,

Corwin's belief in eugenics strongly demonstrated that he cared little for Americanizing others, especially the ones who were not white.

Francis Galton, a half-cousin of Charles Darwin, coined the term *eugenics* in 1883. It refers to a pseudo-scientific philosophy that promotes an intelligent and healthy human race through the manipulation of heredity. Specific manipulations of heredity by eugenicists included forced sterilization, forced institutionalization, forced abortion, and euthanasia. Eugenics flourished in the early 1900s as a response to the influx of eastern and southern Europeans into America, since these immigrants were seen as a threat to the quality of the American gene pool. Perhaps the most prominent practitioner of this ideology in Colorado during its heyday was Dr. Richard Warren Corwin.

Race was a fluid concept during Corwin's lifetime. It not only referred to the color of a person's skin, but sometimes ethnicity or even a group of people's collective intelligence. Corwin's available eugenics-related statements suggest a broader effort at achieving white solidarity against a growing Mexican and Mexican American population that eugenic supporters saw as a threat. That perceived threat arose not from simple racism, but from couching those racist beliefs in the cover of a pseudoscience that strengthened greatly over the last two decades of Corwin's life. The purpose in describing Corwin's beliefs is not to deride the legacy of a man who did so many positive things for Puebloans of all races, but to illustrate the changing racial divide in southern Colorado from the early 1910s through the late 1920s.

Richard Corwin was born in New York in 1852. While growing up, he had a deep interest in observing wildlife and enjoyed taxidermy as a hobby. His skill in taxidermy led him to Cornell University, where he received his formal education and was appointed taxidermist. In the years

between 1874 and 1878, he held the position of curator at the museum at Michigan University, where he taught anatomy, composition, and microscopy. At the same time, Corwin studied at the University of Michigan's Medical Department, graduating in 1878. He interned for a year at Saint Luke's Hospital in Chicago and also studied overseas at European hospitals, becoming educated in hospital management and construction.

Corwin worked for CF&I from 1881 to 1928. While there, he embraced his position as chief surgeon of the Medical Department and superintendent of the Sociological Department. When he arrived, the Medical Department had only two physicians who cared for over two hundred workers and their families. With support from CF&I superintendent John Osgood, Corwin led CF&I in a medical revolution, and by Feb-

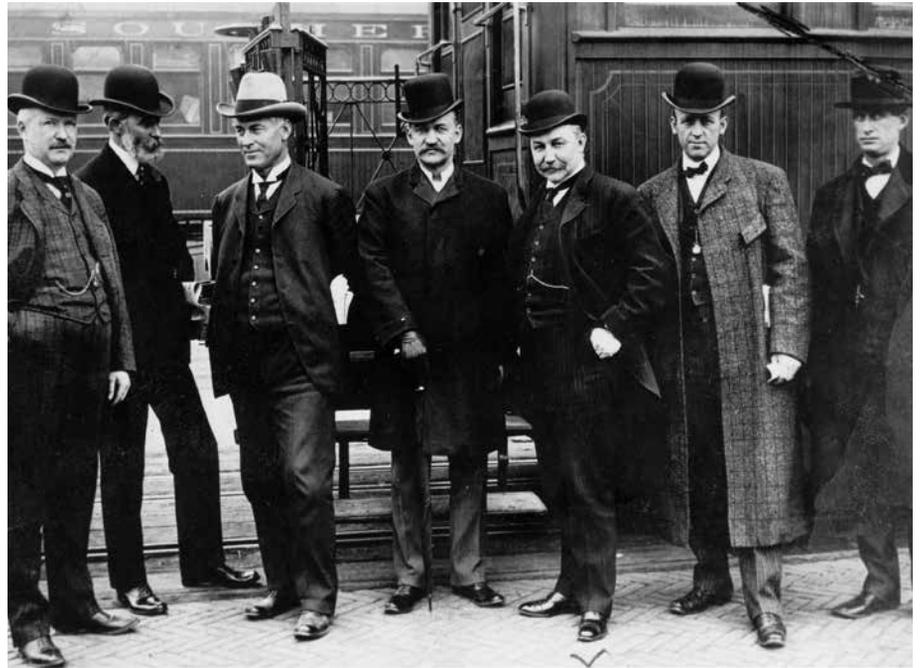


PHOTO / Corwin (second from left) joins CF&I superintendent John Osgood (third from right) and Governor James Peabody (center) in an undated image. With Osgood's support, Corwin expanded CF&I's Medical Department to care for 60,000 miners and their family members in Colorado, Wyoming, and New Mexico. *History Colorado*, 86.296.5205.

The Colorado Coal and Iron Company (later known as the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company) hired Corwin to organize its medical department in Pueblo. He arrived in 1881 to find a workforce of about two thousand men in the steelworks and a severely inadequate medical facility. The following year, an increase of steel workers brought with them a typhoid epidemic. The epidemic prompted the Colorado Coal and Iron Company and the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Company to build a hospital that could accommodate thirty patients at a time.

By February 1902 the Medical Department had increased to "38 surgeons who cared for 60,000 persons—employees and their families—at the thirty-eight mines and mills in Colorado, Wyoming, and New Mexico," according to company magazine *Camp & Plant*.

With the influx of CF&I jobs and European immigrants, Corwin supervised the expansion of the Minnequa Hospital on the shores of Minnequa Lake in Pueblo. Minnequa Hospital replaced the old 1901 hospital on the east end of Abriendo Avenue. Many observers lauded his hospital for its superb examination tables, X-ray ma-

**CORWIN WROTE
“environment
is important
but heredity
more
important,
and eugenics
most
important,
and that thru
eugenics
is the only hope
of improving
our race or
saving our
nation”**



chines, steam sterilizers, and building architecture that allowed for maximum sunlight to enter, the movement of fresh air within the building, and handicap access points.

Colorado Coal and Iron created the Sociological Department in 1901 specifically to resolve racial and ethnic differences that had led to a strike at CF&I that same year. In its earlier years, the department stressed Americanization designed to bring people together, not racial differences designed to tear them apart. According to Scamehorn, Corwin ran the department with concerns that went

well beyond those of an ordinary company surgeon. “In numerous ways,” Scamehorn writes, “the sociological department improved the quality of life in communities. It concentrated its efforts on education, domestic and industrial training, and leisure activities.”

As Corwin’s Medical and Sociological Departments flourished in the early 1900s, CF&I struggled with debt until John D. Rockefeller Jr., son of the famous oil baron, bought the company. In response to an economic downturn in 1908, management cut the Sociological Department budget drastically, posing a serious threat to

Corwin and his work trying to boost employee morale, motivation, and safety. But with Rockefeller attempting to pull CF&I out of debt, the demand for productive and able-bodied workers created pressure on Corwin to reduce worker injuries and maintain a healthy workforce. Rockefeller influenced industrial relations at CF&I in different ways too. He spent at least \$100 million dollars on eugenics-related programs nationwide long before the popularity of this racist ideology peaked. Some of that money went to improve the eugenics-related programs at CF&I’s Sociological Department.



PHOTO / Italian families pose near a shop in a coal camp in Las Animas County, around 1900. *History Colorado*, 84.193.421.

a large number of our states the mentally defective are cared for when young but when reaching maturity and most dangerous are turned loose upon the community to become parents of a class, with each generation becoming more depraved. If for the next hundred years our schools would discontinue all higher and aesthetic education and devote their energy to improving the human stock; to feeding and breeding; to teaching that acquired traits die with the body, that inherited traits pass to the next generation, and that the laws of heredity are constant and are the same for bug and man . . . and to educating the people to know that environment is important but heredity more important, and eugenics most important, and that thru eugenics is the only hope of improving our race or saving our nation—if this were done, at the end of the century we should find the people not only 100 years older but 100 percent better, stronger, and wiser.

The children of immigrants overwhelmingly dominated the schools Corwin dealt with at CF&I coal camps and in Pueblo. This response blames the poor sanitation conditions in these schools on the racial characteristics of the students. Mentioning eugenics is a logical response for someone who believes that the environment these children lived in is a direct result of their genes.

In other pronouncements, Corwin couched concern for the race in terms related to citizenship. This was a common tactic for eugenicists trying to alarm native-born whites about the threat of race mixing. In *The Administration of Health Departments—The Colorado Plan*, from 1913, Corwin notes that the child of today is the citizen of tomorrow and that it is the schools' responsibility to report on the physical, mental, and moral defectiveness of any and all children attending school:

Corwin left a published record that documents his belief in eugenics. In his 1913 *Report of the Joint Committee on Health Problems in Education*, he shows great anger in response to a study that analyzed the sanitation of rural school districts throughout the United States. He makes his position on eugenics crystal clear: "The average rural schoolhouse in relation to its purpose is not as well kept or as healthful as a good stable, dairy barn, pigpen, or chicken-house. But what more could be expected from a government that creates a cabinet department for animals but fails to recognize one for man; that appropri-

ates millions for brute heredity and little or nothing for human eugenics?" As he continues, he describes the threat to the white race in more explicit terms:

In our schools we find 2 percent of children known to be feeble-minded; in some schools, they average as high as 30 percent—and this does not include the morons, the higher class of defectives: . . . it is well known that the feeble-minded constitute the major portion of criminals, prostitutes, epileptics, drunkards, neurotics, paupers . . . found in and out of prisons; and that in

Many now know and understand but are lacking in the very mental qualifications that make for good and best; not until there is progress in moral mentality can there be racial improvement . . . we spend \$32,000,000 annually upon the insane and encourage them to multiply their kind by giving them their liberty; we expend immense sums upon the feeble-minded, keep them under control when harmless, and turn them loose to reproduce more fools when of the age to become parents; in like manner we deal with the criminal, the epileptic, the alcoholic, and the prostitute, who are mental and moral defectives, permitting them to propagate their type We teach environment and neglect heredity. We are a success at feeding but a failure at breeding.

For him, the solution to this problem was to teach eugenics in schools (presumably to white students since children who were threats to society would have been identified and isolated):

The value of environment cannot be overestimated—it should be taught in every grade and by expert teachers, especially prepared; but of more importance is the teaching of the science of heredity. Heredity begins at the beginning; it is the foundation of existence; environment, the superstructure of life. We should teach better heredity—eugenics; every school and every grade should have instruction in heredity and eugenics. The cause of feeble-mindedness, criminality, epilepsy, alcoholism, pauperism, and prostitution should be known and the prevention understood. The cure cannot be brought about thru environment; *upon eugenics rests the salvation of the race.* (Emphasis added)



PHOTO / A woman and children pose with their pets at a house in a coal camp in Las Animas County, around 1900. *History Colorado*, 84.193.35.

Perhaps unrestrained from the need to keep even the most racially inferior workers happy and productive, Corwin let his true feelings show.

In 1917 and 1918, CF&I experienced a reduction in laborers, nurses, and doctors as the United States entered World War I. That loss could not have come at a worse time. In 1918, a worldwide influenza epidemic swept through CF&I towns and camps, overwhelming an understaffed medical department. Corwin’s “Annual Report of Chief Surgeon” to CF&I President J. F. Welborn pushed for more efficiency within the Medical Department during this tumultuous time. The epidemic heightened Corwin’s eugenics-influenced beliefs that sanitation and hygiene standards within the CF&I towns were not being upheld due to the unfit and feeble-minded.

In response to the lack of sanitation and hygiene that Corwin perceived at the hospital, he issued a three-tiered classification system that separated those who were willing and able from those who were feeble-minded and unfit:

1. Those who know, have self-control, feel a moral responsibility, and exert every effort to protect themselves and others.
2. Those who know, but do not care, are indifferent, morally weak, shun responsibility, and protect neither self nor neighbor.
3. Those mentally feeble, unable to comprehend or reason, have no power of resistance, and are a constant source of annoyance and danger.

Corwin noted that the first class should be given every protection possible, the second class should be educated and reformed if possible, and the third class “should be guarded and protected. The state should care for the feeble-minded . . . those needing asylum . . . for life. The law cannot be too stringent for the benefit and protection of those who ‘can’ for the benefit of the race.” Corwin’s hospital saved thousands of Puebloans—including many who did not work for CF&I—during the epidemic, but they might have done even more if not for this kind of policy.

In 1922, Corwin announced the need for mental examinations

[Colorado mine owners] hoped that racial and ethnic divisions within the workforce would make it impossible for workers of all kinds to unite.

to screen for the unfit among the applicants for employment at CF&I, referencing the army's use of mental tests, along with schools and juvenile courts that used them as well. The mental exams at CF&I bore a striking resemblance to the literacy tests aimed at disenfranchising southern Black voters during and after Reconstruction, since both aimed at disempowering a class considered inferior to the white elite.

In 1927, just as eugenics had passed its peak in popularity and shortly before Corwin's death, he accepted a nomination to be part of the Colorado Eugenics Committee. The committee's purpose was to create pro-eugenics propaganda and push eugenics legislation through the state of Colorado. In the September 1928 edition of the *Industrial Bulletin*, Corwin spoke of eugenics by referencing Chicago-based Dr. William J. Hickson's assessment that "the criminal is a 'primitive'—he is a primitive man, underdeveloped in a part of his brain structure. This whole problem is a hereditary problem."

Corwin died in 1930. He did not live long enough to see the racial ground in southern Colorado and the country's attitude toward eugenics shift.

As late as the 1890s, the majority of Colorado coal miners were native-born Americans or immigrants of English, Scottish, Welsh, or Irish descent. A severe labor shortage, as well as the threat of strikes, led mine owners to recruit immigrants from southern and eastern Europe and especially Mexico. They hoped that racial and ethnic divisions within the workforce would make it impossible for workers of all kinds to unite. On August 1, 1918, approximately 20 percent of CF&I's miners were Mexican or Mexican American. After strikes

in 1919 and 1921, as many as 60 percent of the company's new hires in both the mines and the mill were people of Spanish/Mexican ancestry. Nationwide immigration restrictions on Europeans instituted by Congress in 1921 and 1924 assured that CF&I would have to employ a sizable number of these non-European immigrants for many years to come.

In the late nineteenth century, eugenicists—indeed, probably most native-born Americans—assumed that the Polish, Italian, and Slavic workers who appeared on America's shores every day belonged to inferior races despite their white skin. As Corwin's workforce became increasingly Mexican, delineating the worthy from the unworthy poor became much easier as they could be separated by skin color.

After Corwin's death in 1930, the economic situation at CF&I turned so dire that management let go many, perhaps close to all, of their Mexican and Mexican American employees. Whatever hard feelings these workers had about the company's racial attitudes no longer mattered to their former employer.

The racial makeup of southern Colorado, like our society in general, is changing today just as it was in Corwin's time. The social and economic costs and benefits of immigration are just as hotly contested now as they were then. Corwin's persistent belief in eugenics should remind us that racism persists even as racial classification systems change. More important, it demonstrates how racist philosophy can be continually adapted to fit changing demographic circumstances.

Corwin's name remains throughout the Pueblo cityscape because of what he built and as a memory to his medical legacy. His racial legacy, while much more controversial, is

still worthy of consideration because of what it can still tell us about race relations in Colorado today. The dynamics underlying immigration and employment in Corwin's day fostered extremist ideologies and disturbing solutions, just like they do now. ■

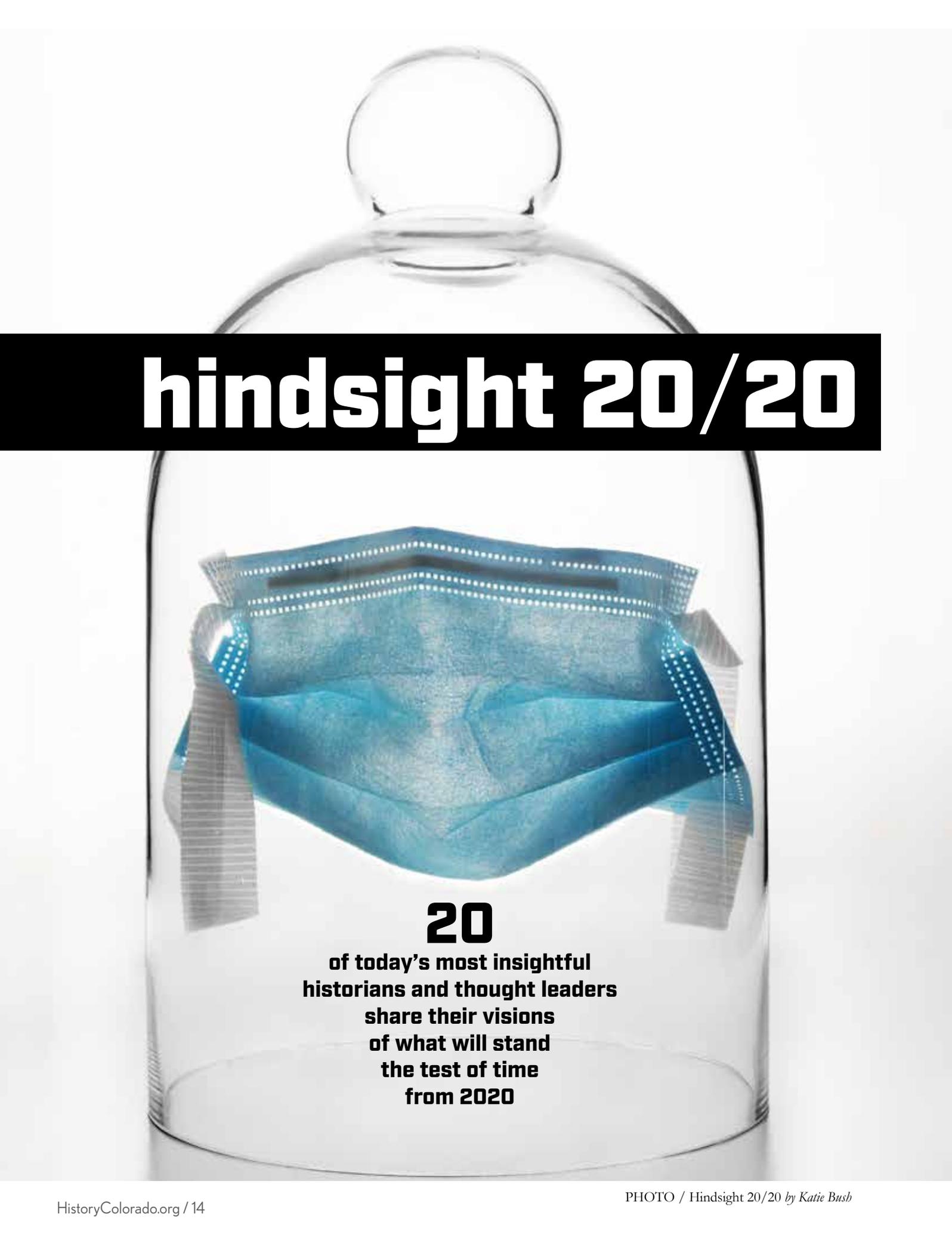
Editors' note: *This story is excerpted from Making an American Workforce: The Rockefellers and the Legacy of Ludlow, edited by Fawn-Amber Montoya (University Press of Colorado, 2014).*

FOR FURTHER READING

For more about CF&I, see H. Lee Scamehorn, *Mill & Mine: The CF&I in the Twentieth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992). For more about the eugenics movement, see Ruth Clifford Engs, *The Eugenics Movement: An Encyclopedia* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005); Edwin Black, *The War against the Weak: Eugenics and America's Campaign to Create a Master Race* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 2003); and Alexandra Minna Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). Find CF&I correspondence and publications, including digitized copies of *Camp & Plant*, at the Bessemer Historical Society and CF&I Archives in Pueblo.

Brian Clason is a former middle school principal and history teacher living in Austin, Texas. He is an education and training program manager at the Texas School Safety Center on the Texas State University campus.

Jonathan Rees is a professor of history at Colorado State University—Pueblo. His books include *Representation and Rebellion: The Rockefeller Plan at the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, 1914–1942*.

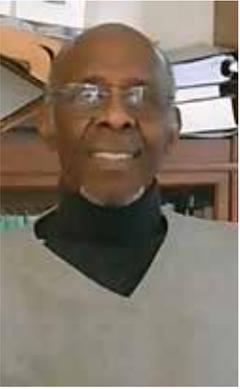
A clear glass jar with a lid, containing a blue surgical mask. The mask is folded and placed inside the jar. The jar is set against a white background.

hindsight 20/20

20

**of today's most insightful
historians and thought leaders
share their visions
of what will stand
the test of time
from 2020**

CONTRIBUTORS



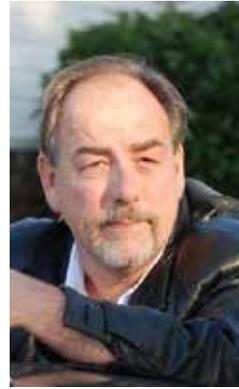
**William B.
ALLEN**



**Thomas
ANDREWS**



**Majel
BOXER**



**G.
BROWN**



**Mark
EARNEST**



**Derek
EVERETT**



**Claire Oberon
GARCIA**



**Rachel S.
GROSS**



**Jason L.
HANSON**



**Brian
JACKSON**



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**Holly
NORTON**



**Samira
RAJABI**



**Tom I.
ROMERO II**



**Karen R.
ROYBAL**



**Susan
SCHULTEN**



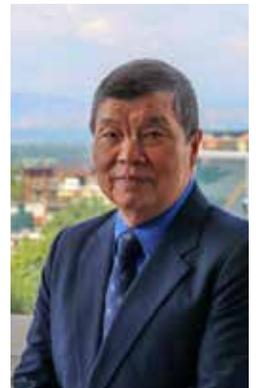
**Ed
SEALOVER**



**Jacob
SWISHER**



**Duane
VANDENBUSCHE**



**William
WEI**

We don't have to tell you that **2020 defies simple precedent**. Through a year marked by partisan politics, pandemic, and protests, one extraordinary moment followed another in ways that made the times feel unparalleled and consequential. Even when we haven't agreed on anything else, we seem to agree that the events of **2020 will reverberate** into the future and shape years—if not generations—to come.

So, a century from now, how will 2020 go down in history?

In the pages that follow, twenty writers share their answers to that question. Some envision a 2120 in which the fabric of our daily lives—culture, cuisine, music, recreation—persists in new forms. Others see a darker future, warning that the events of 2020 set us on a course to social and political breakdown. Some question whether the year was as momentous as it seemed. And several emphasize lessons learned that our descendants will use to build a better world.

In every case, their compelling visions spotlight key insights from 2020 that we can harness as we create our shared future—with the power to embrace it, or to change it.

hindsight 20/20

Karen R. ROYBAL
**A Pivotal—and Long
Overdue—Moment for
Change**

What happened in 2020 was not unprecedented. Rather, it was a stark reminder that racism and classism had for too long gone unresolved. It was a time for action. The youth of 2020 went on to become the chroniclers of their era—and the leaders of the effort to redress the inequities the pandemic had exposed.

The year 2020 was filled with uncertainty, loneliness, sadness, anger, and hope. Mothers wondered what their young children would remember and what they would tell them about

2020. Many youth across the nation and globe relied on online learning and virtual playdates—something no one had anticipated. The Covid-19 pandemic impacted people's abilities to spend time with loved ones, and as the holidays approached, to share traditions like making tamales and biscochitos with their abuelas. Realistically, time apart from loved ones was nowhere near as great as the impact on families and friends of the millions of people for whom 2020 had meant having to say goodbye from a distance—left to mourn without closure over lives cut unexpectedly short.

The year was often described as “unprecedented,” but really, it was a stark reminder of issues left unmitigated over time. Years later, scholars reflected on how Covid-19's impacts on BIPOC citizens—Black, Indige-

nous, and people of color—forced them to once again confront systemic racism and classism and emphasize that those struggles had never really ended. For Chicana scholars who taught and wrote about Chicana/Latinx communities, 2020 signaled time for action. Our next generation of critical ethnic studies scholars and historians questioned why we saw disproportionate numbers of Latinx Covid-related deaths and why, in 2020, Latinx still made up the majority of frontline workers. These scholars also examined the integral role of youth as they took action to address persistent systemic issues of racism, classism, and access to education.

Seemingly disparate, but not unrelated, Latinx communities felt uneasiness about their political future as a growing racial demographic. Chicana/

Barns aren't raised and pandemics aren't crushed by individuals. It takes communities.

Latinx historians later wrote about how the 2020 presidential election sent us a strong message that Latinx are not a monolith and cannot be cast as a single voting bloc; that race is a social construction; and that young Chicanx/Latinx organizers in borderlands states like Arizona worked tirelessly to encourage voters to help turn historically red states blue.

Those scholars also focused on immigration. In 2020, the country witnessed the impacts and toxicity of xenophobic practices like the Trump administration's adherence to "zero tolerance" along the US/Mexico border. In her book *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Chicana feminist scholar Gloria Anzaldúa described the borderlands as "una herida abierta," an open wound. Twenty-twenty revealed the worsening of this wound through reckless abandonment by a government that allowed thousands of children to be separated from their parents at the border, more than 600 of them remaining alone because their parents could not be located. Future scholars documented these barbarisms.

Many issues evidenced in 2020 were not new—the killing of our Black brothers and sisters, increased numbers of missing and murdered Indigenous women, continued poverty, #Landback efforts—but neither was our resistance. As 2020 closed, mothers reminded their daughters that they would see their abuelas again. Educators reminded their students—our future scholars and leaders—that this was a pivotal moment for change, long overdue, and we would continue to resist. ■

KAREN R. ROYBAL is assistant professor of Southwest studies at Colorado College.

Mark EARNEST Our Strength Is Our Union

In 2020 people learned a lot (that they didn't want to know) about life during a global pandemic. A century later, we've learned a lot about how a society enshrines one generation's learning so that it becomes durable for future generations to draw upon.

On a spring morning in 1906, an earthquake leveled San Francisco. One violent moment claimed 3,000 lives and rendered half the population homeless. And yet, the Great Quake would become a disaster without an encore. While earthquakes regularly recurred, devastation did not. The lessons of that grim morning weren't left to the vagaries of human habit and memory; they were enshrined in concrete, steel, and building codes. The city rose from the rubble and built a bulwark against a threat that would always be with them—saving countless lives and billions of dollars.

The same cannot be said of the Spanish flu. A dozen years later, as influenza swept through San Francisco, the city that pioneered a public response to earthquakes dissolved into factions, squabbling over individual freedom and public health measures. Ultimately, the pandemic would claim hundreds more lives than the quake; and yet, a century later, the city would be no better prepared for the next pandemic than it was in 1918. The same was true for the nation. Any lessons learned from the loss of nearly 700,000 Americans to influenza was lost to time.

One key difference between the two responses was human knowledge. The link between earthquakes and building safety was easily understood in 1906, while the cause of the Spanish flu was unknown and the value of mitigation strategies unclear. There were no such excuses in 2020 when SARS Co-V 2 arrived on America's shores—germ theory was well understood and the coronavirus was quickly identified. But, like San Francisco in 1906, the threat seemed theoretical and the nation was unprepared.

Never again.

As the pandemic and political chaos of 2020 passed, Americans embraced the lessons of Covid-19. We rejoined the international community and led the way in developing a robust global pandemic surveillance and response program with the goal of rapid containment. Nations developed plans to ensure that communities and regions affected by an emerging pandemic could isolate themselves and shut down rapidly with the assurance that they would be supported economically. The International Monetary Fund ensured that developing nations could do the same.

Individual habits, like regular hand-washing and wearing a mask with the onset of respiratory symptoms, became more common but required continual reinforcement. Collective responses proved more durable. Building codes addressing indoor air quality evolved rapidly, dramatically reducing the annual death rate from common respiratory infections like influenza while steeling the country against future outbreaks. The techniques and policy innovations enabling rapid vaccine development and deployment that were pioneered in 2020

became the norm. The success of the Covid vaccination campaign, coupled with reforms that reduced the dissemination of misinformation on social media, pushed the anti-vaccine movement far to the fringes. The era of hyper-individualism ended in 2020. Poverty plummeted. The economy became more equitable. Life expectancy began to rise across all demographic sectors. America rediscovered and reaffirmed one of its core founding principles: Our strength is our union.

Barns aren't raised and pandemics aren't crushed by individuals. It takes communities. ■

MARK EARNEST *is a professor of medicine at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.*

Throughout the year, while we were socially distancing, we turned to our cultural arts, knowledge, and wisdom not just as a means of constructively passing time but as a way to heal and pray for our loved ones and those we lost.

Majel BOXER **Our Cultural Traditions Served to Heal Us**

Cultural practices tell Indigenous Peoples that concern and care for each other are how we understand the concept of “All My Relations.” These humble practices, however, were turned against us in 2020 as the coronavirus preyed upon and spread among those gathered at social events and at ceremonies.

As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, we learned in 2020 that “Being a Good Relative” meant we had to refrain from hosting or participating in gatherings—family and social events, ceremonies, and places of mourning. Out of concern for the spread of the virus, that year marked the first time that summer and winter powwows were canceled. “Being a Good Relative” meant that tribal leadership made drastic and difficult decisions to forestall the spread of the virus; several tribal governments issued curfew hours, weekend lockdowns, or even checkpoints at reservation entry points. These precautions were not easy to follow, but they were all worth the effort to keep tribal Elders, many of them Indigenous language speakers and the most vulnerable, safe from harm.

That pandemic year also revealed that as Indigenous Peoples—we are resilient! Throughout the year, while we were socially distancing, we turned to our cultural arts, knowledge, and wisdom not just as a means of constructively passing time but as a way to heal and pray for our loved ones and those we lost. “Beading Circles” using video conferencing began bringing together beginner and expert artists to talk, share, and instruct others. There were webinars on traditional and medicinal plants and foods, Native wellness, and community health trainings, to name but a few.

While the virus ensured that there would be no powwows that year, our collective resiliency responded with socially distant powwows shared to social media showcasing the talents of many dancers.

Additionally, the “Jingle Dress” dance also shared on social media frequently that year reminded us of the origins of the dance among the Ojibwe Peoples: A man had a dream in which four dresses made of red, yellow, blue, and green fabric were adorned with small tin cones. The man told his wife that the female dancers in his dream danced straight forward, never backwards, swiftly, and with their arms on their hips. After he told his wife of his dream, she and her friends made the four jingle dresses. Sometime later, a young girl who was ill attended a drum ceremony with her family, and upon hearing the sound coming from the jingle dresses of the dancers, was healed. And so, the Jingle Dress dance became known as a healing dance.

The first appearance of the Jingle Dress dance was among the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe in Minnesota in the 1920s during the Spanish Influenza. This style of dancing has remained with the Ojibwe Peoples since then and has been shared and adopted by other Native Nations. Just as the Jingle Dress dance served to heal—so, too, did our cultural traditions for the next 100 years, and ever since. ■

MAJEL BOXER *is an enrolled Sisseton and Wahpeton Dakota tribal member of the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of Montana and an associate professor of Native American and Indigenous studies at Fort Lewis College.*

PHOTO / *The 2020 protests for social justice that were sparked by the Black Lives Matter movement drew strong support from members of other communities of color, who also endured institutional racism and social inequities. Photo by Katie Bush. History Colorado CBS.2020.0051*



Claire Oberon GARCIA
**American Studies 102:
Survey of 21st Century
US “Race” Relations,
with Professor Iqbal
Penelope-Nkotto**

An American Studies professor looks back at the antiquated notion of “race” that prevailed in 2020, when high-profile incidents of anti-Blackness sparked the War of Reckoning and, ultimately, the Great Reconciliation.

Day 323 2120

Good morning, students. Today’s class focuses on the year 2020, which planted the seeds for the Wars of Reckoning and the Great Reconciliation. Please sign up for a 2020 site visit on the Back In Time platform before signing off today.

As you remember from our first lecture, the United States was comprised of people categorized into so-called “racial” groups, informally defined by phenotypical and cultural characteristics presumed to be associated with biological and other fundamental differences.

Although there’d been racial crisis points around systemic police violence against unarmed Black citizens throughout the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries—the Rodney King beating in 1991, the Trayvon Martin murder in 2012, uprisings after Michael Brown’s killing two years later—the high-profile murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd presented a turning point in US anti-Blackness. Arbery was a 25-year-old on a jog through his mother’s neighborhood when he was pursued and shot dead

by three white men—one of them a former police officer—who were initially exonerated. Twenty-six-year-old first responder Breonna Taylor was shot when police mistakenly raided her fiancé’s apartment in the night: the only charge against the perpetrators was for endangering neighbors. Then, as the country seemed to be emerging from the Phony First Wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, citizen external personal device video (digital devices were external and had to be periodically charged) captured a police officer choking to death 46-year-old George Floyd, who was unarmed, over more than eight minutes in front of shocked bystanders.

Although murders of unarmed Black citizens were commonplace and rarely prosecuted, and convictions of officers statistically negligible, these murders caught the world’s attention.

The indifference to anti-Blackness had been the product of a history of racism—dehumanizing people and denying their fundamental rights because of their categorization—that had long tolerated casual terrorism against Black, Indigenous, and Latinx citizens. But the sight and continual replaying of video awakened the nation’s conscience. Americans had to decide what democracy should look like, and who could participate. These conversations came to a head with the Insurrection of January 6, when horrified Americans of all persuasions witnessed an assault on the heart of the democratic process and the different treatment accorded white rioters and the mostly peaceful demonstrators for social justice who’d taken to the streets the previous summer. It seemed that law enforcement treated citizens demonstrating for rights and citizenship as more threatening than a mob disrupting one of the most sacred rituals of US democracy.

So I’m sure you can see how the seeds were sown for the Wars of Reckoning, but also that the difficult conversations and sense of community that burgeoned in an era of debates pitting individual liberties against the government’s need to protect public health led quickly to the Great Reconciliation—a grassroots movement involving citizens from all walks of life whose values were later reflected in legislation and initiatives that shaped the world we know now.

Oh, dear, I’ve kept you past the hour. Don’t forget to sign up for the Back In Time field trips. Remember: Back In Time works on the Old Christian Calendar, so be sure to make the right conversions. See you in 2020! ■

CLAIRE OBERON GARCIA *is the dean of faculty and acting provost as well as a professor of English at Colorado College.*

Adrian MILLER
A Plateful of Pandemic

In 2120, of course, having a meal is as easy as imagining what we want and grabbing it from the replicator. But in the old days, it wasn’t so easy. And 2020 is when everything changed.

Gather around and let me tell you about a time when gathering affected our food. A hundred years ago, the world experienced a pandemic caused by a virus that went by many names: Covid-19, the coronavirus, even just “the ’Rona.” Many, but not everyone, tried to stop its spread by wearing a mask, practicing good hygiene, keeping their distance from other people, and, when they did come together, doing it in small

**Americans had to decide what democracy should look like,
and who could participate.**

groups. All of these things profoundly affected the ways people got food, what they ate, and the way they dined.

Back then, people didn't get food by merely thinking about it and having it appear in a replicator as we do today. They killed billions of live animals every year in places called "slaughterhouses." Meat was such an important part of the diet that workers in that industry were considered "essential" and had to keep working on-site even though many others could work from home. The virus ran rampant in a lot of these slaughterhouses, workers got sick, and the meat supply grew very unpredictable. Consumers worried about eating diseased meat, so they looked for alternatives. Eating vegetables became more fashionable. Eating meat was a hard habit to shake for some, so even if they were eating plants, they still wanted their food to look, feel, and taste like meat. Fortunately, some magical food scientists had appetizing answers. This was "The Dawning of the Age of Synthetic Taurus."

The places where people dined were the hardest hit. The very act of dining, especially in a large group, turned out to be one of the very things that helped spread the virus. So, restaurants had to change the way they did business, and diners adapted. Many restaurants scaled down their menus, severely limited the number of people who could dine indoors, and transitioned to being primarily take-out businesses. To boost revenue, they created outdoor dining spaces. That was met with uneven success because, at that time, Coloradans experienced something we don't really see any more. They called it "winter," and temperatures dipped below zero degrees Celsius. Can you believe that? Sadly, because the economic tumult was too much and government assistance too little, a mass extinction of small, independent restaurants followed.

Because of the pandemic, a lot of businesses closed their offices and had their employees work at home.

(Oh, sorry, "offices" were places where everyone in the same company worked together in one location.) With all that time at home, people started paying closer attention to their residences; home improvement projects blossomed, especially in kitchens. People were inspired to cook more, and asked "artificial people" named "Alexa" and "Siri" for help finding the multitude of recipes available digitally.

The economic effect of the pandemic exposed a rather shameful phenomenon in our history: chronic hunger. This led to "The Gorging '20s," when people came together to make it easier to get access to food by growing their own, reducing waste, and reallocating resources. Thanks to those fundamental changes, chronic hunger is now extinct. ■

ADRIAN MILLER is a James Beard Award-winning author and the executive director of the Colorado Council of Churches.

Jacob SWISHER COWvid-19: A Look Back at the Meat of 2020

It was a year of reckonings both big and small. In 2020, Covid-19 disrupted supply chains around the world as consumers adapted to the new realities of life in a pandemic. Sometimes, it took something as simple as an all-American entree to help us see how truly connected we all were.

A lot about 2020 was certainly historic. Many Americans confronted the Covid-19 pandemic, protested for racial justice across the nation, and participated in one of the more heated election cycles in history—events that spawned history books and live on in our collective memory today in 2120. But as we look back at 2020, we should also take time

The economic effect of the pandemic exposed a rather shameful phenomenon in our history: chronic hunger.

to reflect on seemingly mundane aspects of the year—the things that, for some, became forgotten relics of a momentous beginning of a new decade.

I'm talking, of course, about hamburgers.

In the grand scheme of 2020, the beef hamburger patty may appear rather insignificant at first glance. At the time, however, the United States consumed more meat per capita than any other nation in the world. In 2019, the United States brought 27.2 billion pounds of beef to market, and Colorado alone produced 1.8 billion pounds. The average American consumed 54.5 pounds of beef annually. Whether at a fast food chain or the local grocery store, affordable beef was reliably available for eager consumers. But in the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic, it wasn't.

Covid-19 disrupted supply chains around the globe. In Colorado and elsewhere, beef was no exception. In April 2020, national media attention focused on the JBS slaughterhouse in Greeley, Colorado, as the plant experienced a surge in Covid-19 cases and shut down temporarily in an attempt to contain the spread of the virus among plant workers. As the summer dragged on, meat-processing facilities across the United States also paused their operations after Covid-19 spread



PHOTO / These Arvada, Colorado, grocery store shelves reveal the panic buying that transpired as a result of shoppers stocking up during the pandemic lockdown of 2020. Photo by Alisa DiGiacomo. History Colorado 2020.31.33

among the employees who labored to transform cattle into the tons of packaged beef that Americans consumed every year.

When Covid-19 wreaked havoc on these facilities, consumers watched as beef prices rose in kind. Throughout 2019 and into the early months of 2020, ground beef cost around \$3.80 to \$4 per pound. Prices climbed by the end of spring, peaked at \$5.33 per pound in June, and stayed above \$4 for the remainder of the year.

Beef was becoming more expensive just as record numbers of Americans filed for unemployment. Moreover, the workers who put the marked-up ground beef on grocery store shelves also got sick as Covid-19 continued to spread.

As beef made its way from ranchers and meatpackers to grocery-store employees, restaurant workers, and consumers, Covid-19 touched almost every stage of the beef supply chain. The production, transportation, and consumption of beef may not seem monumental in a year filled with major events and transformations that still resonate 100 years later, but everyday things like ground beef offer us an opportunity to revisit what may be one of the more important reminders of the Covid-19 pandemic. Behind every product, be it a hamburger or the packages of toilet paper that flew off store shelves at the onset of the pandemic, were people—people whose labor we have long relied on to sustain our communities and daily life. The supply-chain disruptions wrought by Covid-19 forced people everywhere to recognize just how connected they were to one another—a lesson that bears significance to 2020 and 2120 alike.

JACOB SWISHER *is studying environmental history in the doctoral program at the University of Notre Dame. He was the 2019 Best Overall Essay winner in History Colorado's Emerging Historians Award.*

Samira RAJABI A TikTok Pandemic Story

In 2020, a generation of young people experiencing isolation and loneliness in the midst of a pandemic seized on a new platform called TikTok. This new generation of media creators transformed trauma into creativity and, ultimately, connection.

Expression of the self through media—narrating your story to the world, putting it out there—has existed and evolved as long as communication technologies have existed. From the pencil to the PC, humans have always creatively engaged culture and found ways to tell the world who they are and why they matter. As media scholar Nick Couldry once said, the ability for humans to have voice is a human good.

So, when classroom doors shuttered and faces were covered in March of 2020, the world was once again in a space where human creativity would attempt to solve its communicative challenges.

Suddenly, the whole world was traumatized, and people only had technology to keep them company. Collectively, they had no idea how to deal with this level of suffering—but they did have social media, and often, in that space, people were more creative than anyone ever could have imagined.

And that's where TikTok came in. TikTok was a space for short videos that could be quickly and easily edited together to tell stories. In the United States alone, TikTok had more than 45.6 million users at that time—nearly 14 percent of the total US population—and its unique algorithm meant users of this platform saw global videos rather than just those of friends they followed. Thus, TikTok offered a diverse array of content to users trapped in their homes and in need of entertainment.

But when these TikTok users themselves got sick with Covid-19, they creatively engaged this platform to be a space for coping during one of the most unprecedented traumas facing communities across the globe. In particular, students—suddenly trapped in quarantine spaces on college campuses to prevent the spread of the virus after a positive test—took to TikTok to narrate their experiences, to give testimony. From sharing their mundane daily tasks to expressing their deepest fears about being sick and alone, these young adults offered a window into the pandemic that was hard to see in mainstream news.

Everywhere people looked, they were using social media to make meaning—and TikTok was where they went to laugh, to play, to dance, and to express their voices. Looking back at that resilient world, while people did encounter challenges in access, in equality, in learning, in connection, they could also see how much there was to be found in that time of suffering.

From the man with his guitar (@someguywithaguitar, as was the naming custom in that era) capturing a mood through his music while sitting safely in his car, to the way TikTok was mobilized in the highly contentious presidential election, to a video of a man dancing with a goose (@hartyt), creativity abounded.

There were a lot of fears about society's new reliance on media in the times of the pandemic, but even while everyone grew tired of seeing each other predominantly through screens, one thing was certain: There was a new boon of culture and meaning being made by everyday people, from the safety of their quarantines, that changed what we would come to think of as cool, interesting, and entertaining, and in so doing changed forever how media helps us experience our world. ■

SAMIRA RAJABI *is the director of technology influenced pedagogy at the University of Colorado Boulder.*

It would seem that fears would have been defused by moderate confidence in the future.

Holly NORTON

The Covid-19 Centennial Public Archaeology Project

To an archaeologist, we are defined by the things we leave behind. The artifacts people discarded in 2020 tell a story of humanity that connects us across centuries.

Dr. Camila Rojas, Colorado State Archaeologist, wipes the sweat from her brow as she sits back on her heels amid gasps of excitement from the fifth graders crowding around her to get a better look. In the reddish-brown dirt before her is the unmistakable baby blue of a twenty-first-century medical face mask. While such masks were in use for decades, they now generally denote the 2020 layer in a stratigraphic profile. She raises her hand to signal her co-PI, Tribal Archaeologist David Little Bison, who with his crew is setting up the HLS—the holographic laser spectrometer that scans the ground to create 3D movies of the past, populated with archival information and oral histories.

The children marvel at how that blue fabric could have led to the Personal Environment Rings, or PERs, they each wear now. Masks were discarded fairly quickly after the Covid-19 epidemic. Still, some Americans continued to use them when they were ill or felt vulnerable to others' potential illnesses, although never to the extent mask use was adopted in places like Asia. But with the next viral pandemic in 2040, personal hygiene and virus protection technology shifted rapidly. The predecessors

of PERs were large bubbles, followed by the namesake rings that sat on the collarbone and emitted irradiated air to kill bacteria and viruses as the wearer breathed. Today's PERs, of course, are barely noticeable as they create a micro-environment around the wearer and can even be used as a personal communication device.

In just a few moments, the eleven-year-olds are shrieking in delight (technology may change, but children haven't) as David flips the HLS emitter and starts transmitting holographic images of the past straight into to the ocular devices with which each PER is equipped. Just as Camila is mid-sentence in describing social distance protocols of the twenty-first century, they start seeing ghostlike projections of people from other centuries wandering past each other around a wildfire scar.

A century earlier, this region had been covered in lodgepole and ponderosa pine, before the largest wildfires in Colorado history blazed across the area. Ponderosa is now all but extinct, and most of the children have only ever smelled the trees' vanilla-cake-batter scent in history programs that use scent for storytelling. Today's climate is vastly different than when those fires blazed and the "typical" progression of tree replacement hadn't yet occurred. The aspens had given it a valiant effort, but ultimately the wildfire scars settled into large, dryland meadows, more akin to something that David's ancestors would have recognized as they roamed the same area hunting and gathering 7,000 years ago during the last altithermal period.

"Remember to sterilize your hands before lunch!" David calls to the group as they run for the bus, and across the field Camila sees a wave of

green lights as the PERs go to work. She winces as two boys run into each other and one's ocular piece snaps, a common occurrence with PERs. As he pulls a replacement from his pack, Camila laughs silently, wondering what an archaeologist, a hundred years from now, will make of the shattered lens lying in the soil. ■

HOLLY NORTON is the Colorado State Archaeologist and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer at History Colorado.

William B. ALLEN 2020: Year of Destiny

Though Americans in 2020 felt the weight every day of a global pandemic, in the end they endured. What was harder to appreciate at the time was the pandemic's long-lasting impact on American politics—and democracy itself.

The year 2020 opened with impressive, eye-catching news to launch a year of national elections. Economic rebound promised; economic rebound delivered. Border wall promised; border wall delivered. Impeachment promised; impeachment failed. Supreme Court rebuild promised; Supreme Court rebuild delivered. Energy independence promised; energy independence delivered. Ending wars promised; ending wars delivered. Reshaped international alliances promised; reshaped international alliances delivered.

What followed: Covid-19, months of often violent racial protests, increasingly violent instability in urban communities, labor force

disruptions caused by pandemic lockdowns, an electoral defeat of a sitting president, and resurging Covid-19.

It should be easy to say what most decisively affected the course of events in 2020: Covid-19.

What is not so easy to say is why Covid-19 had such a dramatic effect. The temptation might be to say a panicky fear of death penetrated the entire society. That, however, would fail to address the cause of the panic, the resistance to reassurances that, while we experienced unavoidable losses, the disease would be defeated. After all, the general public's compliance with recommended public health measures—though often inconsistent—did occur. A seemingly impossible promise of a vaccine turned out to be as reliable as a safe deposit box. Objectively, therefore, it would seem that fears would have been defused by moderate confidence in the future.

Nevertheless, fears were not sufficiently defused. In addition, an atmosphere of intense hatred cast a shadowy gloom over even such heartening news as the potential for Middle East peace to relieve multi-generational anxieties. To be sure, the growing disparity between the well-off—comfortably ensconced in Zoom-ready libraries—and the too-inessential poor locked out of school, work, and income contributed significantly to heightening the anxiety.

It is hard to resist the temptation to conclude that 2020 presented a tempting plum of opportunities to cultivate fear and anxiety in the face of a reassuring reality. The year will always be a reminder that character counts more than policy in directing public opinion and shaping national destiny.

Whatever the cause, the effect is clear: Nothing was more significant in 2020 than an election of historic proportions and dimensions. The 67-percent turnout defied reasonable behavioral expectations. Those who voted more than once (as some were assured they had done) figured in a drama that altered the destiny of the nation in ways yet to be comprehended. Even after Covid-19 was reduced in memory to the dimensions of runner-up to the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic, it remained the case that the election of 2020 figured in history as the greatest stress to the practice of American democracy ever experienced to that point. ■

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William WEI Saving the “Soul of the Nation”

Since the day record numbers of Americans elected Joe Biden as their president, historians have been writing the record of the Trump Era and the fractures his presidency exposed—and how Americans charted a path forward.

The “soul of the nation” was at stake in the 2020 presidential election, said Joe Biden. Well, he was right. What was on the line was nothing less than America's identity as a democratic nation. In a nail-bit-

ing election, the nation of second chances got a second chance to reaffirm its commitment to democracy. In electing Biden, the American people implicitly rejected Donald Trump's authoritarianism and, in so doing, saved the American project for posterity.

Many thought that once Trump became president, he would act like one. Instead, he governed as a self-aggrandizing monarch. He demanded—and he got—unquestioned loyalty from subordinates and sycophancy from Republican Party members, much to the delight of the country's adversaries and the dismay of its allies. Scholars, pundits, and former officials have documented in detail Trump's betrayals and the existential threat he posed to American democracy. With this evidence in hand, historians in 2120 tend to rate Trump as the worst president in modern American history.

The Trump presidency brought to light as never before the problems of the country's political process. Among them was the flawed way we elected our president. Elections are our means of transferring power peacefully and what distinguishes America more than anything else from authoritarian nations. Eliminating the Electoral College and replacing it with the popular vote has made the process more equitable and now reflects the will of the majority. This change took many years of assiduous effort, as it required amending the US Constitution. Indeed, it took as long as it did to pass the 19th Amendment, which finally gave women the right to vote after suffragists and their allies worked from 1848 to 1920 to secure its passage.

Trump's presidency also raised serious questions about our people's

Over two-thirds of eligible voters cast their ballots, the most since 1900, and in so doing they made history.

But we learned some important lessons: Believe and trust in science. Do not politicize disasters.

commitment to the nation's ideals as embodied in its founding documents. It is our common commitment to such ideals as racial equality, social justice, and political empowerment that makes us Americans. For much of the world, America's liberal immigration policy encapsulated those ideals. As a "Nation of Immigrants," America derived its strength from diversity and inclusivity. Trump sought to change America's identity, promoting uniformity and exclusivity with the aim of attaining white supremacy. Immigration was his signature campaign issue, and upon assuming the presidency he implemented a draconian policy to exclude immigrants from certain Middle Eastern, Latin American, and African countries. He used inhumane means to carry it out—separating children from their parents to deter immigrants from trying to enter the country and proposing to deport immigrants who had come as children. Fortunately, the Biden presidency replaced this policy with a liberal one that redounded to the benefit of the economy and society.

Trump's defeat was a historic moment if ever there was one. Americans did the one thing they could collectively do to stop Trump from carrying out his authoritarian agenda: they voted, and in unprecedented numbers. Over two-thirds of eligible voters cast their ballots, the most since 1900, and in so doing they made history. In every election since, the goal has been to emulate that singular achievement in the nation's storied past. ■

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Duane VANDENBUSCHE Looking Backward: Lessons from a Pandemic

A backward glance at 2020 reveals a list of lessons learned in the century since.

The year 2020 was the year of the coronavirus, which killed millions worldwide and many hundreds of thousands in the United States. We had few cares in the world (or so it seemed) when the virus hit in January. At first, no one took it seriously—including President Donald Trump, who said it was just a flu and would disappear quickly. However, by March, despite denials by political leaders, it was obvious that this virus was as lethal as the Spanish flu of 1918–19. Ski areas closed early, airline travel collapsed, borders closed, schools continued teaching but by virtual means, and people were encouraged to wear masks, socially distance, and avoid crowds.

However, as I look back, I realize that politics got involved and science was not followed. Many refused to wear masks and attended huge rallies, declaring that they did not want their individual freedoms infringed upon. Others believed that wearing masks and social distancing were patriotic. In view of the disasters we have suffered from 2020 to 2120—climate change, overpopulation, running short of water and resources, and constant wars between haves and have-nots—the virus seems almost trivial today.

But we learned some important lessons:

1. Believe and trust in science.
2. Do not politicize disasters.
3. The virus gave the young a much greater appreciation of what their great-grandparents went through

in the Great Depression and World War II.

4. It took President Trump and many of his staff to get the virus for the entire nation to take it seriously.
5. The virus taught us that if another pandemic hit we would react fast, with the federal government leading a coordinated effort to stamp it out.
6. The virus convinced the United States that we needed a war on behalf of science and the environment—much like the all-out effort, with everybody on board, that we had during World War II.

And, the virus taught us to never take anything for granted—that every day was a good day and to do your best always, with your fellow men and women in mind. ■

DUANE VANDENBUSCHE has been a professor of history at Western Colorado University since 1962 and is the current Colorado State Historian.

Tom I. ROMERO II The Beginning of the End of the American Experiment

In 2020, impeachment and a bitterly contested election tested the nation's legal system. The checks and balances designed by the Founders frayed in the face of extreme partisanship, exposing the limits of Americans' commitment to the rule of law.

A hundred years ago was the beginning of the end of the American Experiment.

How did multiple and inequitable pandemics—Covid-19, systemic racial



PHOTO / A mural on the side of Denver Sweet, an LGBTQ bar located on Lincoln Street in Denver, April 14, 2020. The bar was temporarily closed due to the novel COVID-19 pandemic and the city's lockdown. The sign reads, "Things Will Be Sweet Again." History Colorado 2020.31.25

Up until 2020, Congress had used its impeachment power sparingly. Although the constitutional framers understood the gravity of a president’s dereliction of duties, they knew well that impeachment could expose deep, sometimes irreconcilable divisions in civic life.

violence, climate change—lead to a nation’s sudden decline? Seemingly lost in assessments of that year, but fundamental to an understanding of that age, was the infection inflicted upon the rule of law.

The first symptoms of this legal pandemic came on December 18, 2019. For only the third time in US history, a sitting president was impeached when the House of Representatives invoked its powers under Article II, section 4, of the Constitution against President Donald J. Trump. Congress specifically brought Articles of Impeachment against the president for abusing his power for political gain in his dealings with Ukraine and for obstructing Congress in its subsequent investigation. After an abbreviated Senate “trial” in which a majority of the senators refused to hear testimony from key actors involved in the allegations, the Senate chose not to convict the president on either count in February 2020.

Up until 2020, Congress had used its impeachment power sparingly. Although the constitutional framers understood the gravity of a president’s dereliction of duties, they knew well that impeachment could expose deep, sometimes irreconcilable divisions in civic life. With that check in mind, only one impeachment of a sitting president occurred between 1787 and 1997. The impeachment of Bill Clinton in 1997 set in motion the process the framers had feared and when Congress first attempted to bring Trump to account, it hastened deep divisions. After that, like any pandemic, the number of outbreaks exponentially grew and impacted almost all areas of life.

To be sure, 2020 represented a microcosm of what was to come in an America dealing with endemic racial violence, deep-rooted economic insecurity, the contested role of science in dealing with its most intractable problems, the continued aggrandizement of wealth and power, and the corruption of those who most benefited by the perpetuation of the status quo. In the face of all this, legal institutions at every level buckled under accusations of illegitimacy, irrelevance, and inequity. State and federal courts handcuffed public health professionals’ ability to respond effectively to the Covid-19 spread. Politicians quietly dismantled regulations to protect ecosystems. Police brazenly disregarded the lives of Black men, women, and children. Redress could not be found in stacked courts.

It came as almost a surprise when the Supreme Court in December 2020 rejected what many called an “audacious legal bid” to disenfranchise millions of voters in key battleground states in the presidential election. Part of more than sixty lawsuits (only one successful) orchestrated by the Trump campaign and the Republican Party, legal attacks against public officials and civil servants only served to feed a political frenzy never before seen in America. This pandemic crested on January 6, 2021, when hundreds of insurrectionists, inspired by Trump and scores of elected politicians, stormed the US Capitol, coming within seconds of physically assaulting the elected representatives and senators assembled to confirm a peaceful and orderly transition of presidential power.

On January 13, 2021, Trump was impeached a second time. The resulting trial only confirmed the rapid acceleration of the contagion that infected a body politic in 2020. A lack of accountability for brazen individual and institutional failures symbolized a venomous assault on fellow Americans under the guise of law. Without a shared understanding of how the scales of justice should tip, the year exposed an American legal tradition barely clinging to life. ■

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G. BROWN Heard Immunity

A music writer ponders the quaint habits of music fans of 2020, who, in their day, lamented the loss of such archaic practices as live concerts, in-person gatherings of any kind, and now-outdated technologies. But music itself lives on—as does a certain rock ‘n’ roll guitarist.

Sitting in my analog-delay sub-cortex-demodulator-home-entertainment complex, I find it quaint to revisit the pandemic of 2020, which occurred one hundred years ago. As history told us before the subject was expunged from school curriculums, people actually had to be asked to sequester in their homes with no outside human contact—a ritual termed “social distancing” or “what enemies deserve.”

And there was a segment of society that clamored for the return of “live music”—a concept whereby the experience of gathering to listen to actual people playing actual instruments held an appeal that couldn’t be replicated on Zoom (a now-forgotten technology that allowed people to see each other as they spoke, a precursor to today’s cochlear-retinal entertainment package implants). The leaders of the resistance were of a generation raised on “concerts,” a generally accepted type of super-spreader event. The pandemic decimated that industry, and everyone held out hope for concerts to return while struggling with the loss of artists such as singer-songwriter John Prine and the underappreciated Adam Schlesinger of Fountains of Wayne, who succumbed to Covid-19.

But live music professionals were ill-equipped to deal with the combined forces of commerce and technology. A tipping point emerged shortly thereafter in the broadcasting community, when, to counter the inconvenience of studio audiences, the producers of *The Voice* and *Rollerball Singing*, where contestants eliminated their competitors by attempting to maim them as they vocalized.

Things exploded from there, to the point where we are now safe from any pitfalls of listening to music performances collectively—or the distasteful notion of interacting with others except on our devices, for that matter. Locally, a watershed moment occurred when Red Rocks Amphitheatre was franchised into do-it-yourself kits scaled to anyone’s land parcel or loft patio.

Now there are outliers, such as Keith Richards’ forthcoming 175th birthday tour—the promoters have announced that there are no tickets to purchase, only a flat \$10,000 rate covering delivery fees and service fees and processing fees and facility fees. But most every consumer is content with the enhanced 5-D hologram programs that replicate the sights and

sounds (and Port-a-Potty smells and concession-stand tastes) of the old rock festivals.

We must still navigate aesthetic compromises, the latest being a decree by King Eric Trump III from the country of Florida—that he be digitally inserted into every musical performance of the last two centuries playing kazoo. But is that really such a big deal? Yes, the music business has changed. But as has been the case since homo sapiens whistled through holes poked in mammoth tusks 40,000 years ago, music will endure. ■

G. BROWN *is a veteran journalist, broadcaster, and historian.*

Ed SEALOVER The Lingering Aftertaste of 2020

Before 2020, people just waltzed right into bars, restaurants, and cultural venues to be among other people. But, well, that was before 2020. Decades of isolation and innovation later, what have we gained? What have we lost? What should we try to reclaim?

My bartender, who just served me the Oskar Blues/Olympus Mons Brewing collaboration IPA, told me recently that 2020 was a turning point. He found some old articles in the holo-library about how people before that year walked into restaurants and brewery taprooms that were open to everyone and did something called “mingling” with people they didn’t know.

It was during the decade of pandemics, the “Abhorring Twenties,” that people started to break into groups and distance themselves. I hear it was then, as one public-health panic followed another, that someone conjured the idea of clubs where you paid fees for regular health tests and entered with a select group of people. And that’s where things changed.

Restaurants with suddenly stable operating bases began to experiment more with foods, using new technology to try bold things over the next few decades with lab-grown meat and new methods of flavoring. The successful brewery clubs attracted people wanting either boldness or historic recipes, but no one today makes both barrel-aged beers and seltzers. Art/theater collaborations contracted for the films and exhibits their clientele wanted.

Decades in, I’m told, the club systems truly changed society. You developed your tastes based on the breweries, restaurants, and arts houses you chose, and you also met your friends and spouses through these—particularly after colleges went fully online 50 years ago. The “mingle merchants” became the new pseudo-upper class, moving meals, spirits, and arts programs between these clubs.

I wonder what it would have been like if 2020 hadn’t taught us we could work from home, eat from home, drink from home, watch cultural events from home, learn from home, and reinvent ourselves by going out occasionally in pods of our choosing.



PHOTO / Thousands of wildland firefighters were needed to help contain the historic fires around Colorado in 2020. Courtesy Mark T. Spring

Without 2020, some historians have theorized, none of this would be possible. That was the year we learned that we could insulate ourselves in our own worlds socially and concentrate on what we already knew and loved. At first, people took advice on old-time sites like Twitter and The Facebook to try new things. But as people broke off of those sites into smaller and more specialized pockets of the internet, they began to focus on known gathering places with their known groups. I'm told there are more restaurants and bars that are 75 years old today than there have been at any time in history.

It's great that my dining club now gets hypersonic deliveries from its sister club in North India, but I wonder what people are like in other clubs. I wonder how society would function differently if the instinct to trust only the people we know hadn't evolved into permanent "trust blocks" that defined generations.

As we've reopened borders following the 20 Years' Isolation and colonized the moon and Mars, I'm glad we've opened to trading resources. But I wonder what it would have been like if 2020 hadn't taught us we could work from home, eat from home, drink from home, watch cultural events from home, learn from home, and reinvent ourselves by going out occasionally in pods of our choosing. I see that our tastes kept evolving in areas from food to liquor to art. But I wonder what it would have been like to evolve together as a planet rather than in about 20,000 worldwide clubs.

Still, the use of volcanic ash in this beer is top-notch. I hope other clubs pick it up as well. ■

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Thomas ANDREWS

Burning Truth: The Beginning of the End for Colorado's Forests

In 2020, three Colorado wildfires consumed a combined total of more than half a million acres—dwarfing what had previously been the state's most destructive fire seasons. It should have been an alarm heard throughout the West, even worldwide. The lessons were right there to be learned. And yet . . .

Now that 2120 has crashed down upon us, I feel compelled to use this centennial as an opportunity to look back, if not coolly then with as little prejudice as possible, on what could have—*should* have—happened as Coloradans of that bygone age sought to heal from the ravages of one of the most infamous years in modern history.

I will leave it to my colleagues to address Covid-19, the inequalities it exacerbated, the contending struggles for racial justice and white supremacy, the enduring puzzles of Trumpism, and the rise of what some call a "post-truth" mentality. Instead, I want to reflect on the lessons that I so dearly wish twenty-first-century Coloradans had taken from the worst wildfire season our state had yet experienced.

Several huge fires hit Colorado in the late 1800s, but modern record-keeping only began in the early 1900s. Prior to the 1960s, even this information remained spotty and anecdotal. Though incomplete, this data shows that between the early 1900s and 1987, Colorado experienced just one fire larger than 10,000 acres. Between 1988 and 2002, eleven such fires broke out. The Hayman Fire of 2002 established many milestones; at 137,760 acres, it was easily the largest Colorado had experienced since the late 1800s. Despite heavy fire seasons in 2011–13 and 2016–18, Hayman remained the largest in state history

Even after 2020, though, Coloradans showed that they were more deeply committed to life as they knew it than to safeguarding the environments they purported to love.

until 2020, when it was superseded by three blazes that collectively razed more than half a million acres.

The sharply upward trend in the severity and destructiveness of wildfires in Colorado—and California, Australia, and many other places—seemed unmistakable. Experts rightly emphasized the complexity of the dynamics, involving the legacies of fire suppression, rising human populations in the urban-wildland interface, and other factors. Many Coloradans, however, remained unwilling to accept the inconvenient truth: climatic changes caused by the extraction and consumption of fossil fuels, methane emissions, and other human activities had become the main driver of fuel conditions and fire-season weather in the state as in every other reach of the planet. Dozens of scientific studies dating back to the 1990s had documented the clear impact of the state's increasingly warm, arid climate on fuel loads, ignition potential, and the length of the fire season. Even after 2020, though, Coloradans showed that they were more deeply committed to life as they knew it than to safeguarding the environments they purported to love.

We all know what happened next: Conflagrations became still larger and more frequent until they exhausted the available fuel. As Colorado's remaining unburned lands became too small and fragmented to sustain massive fires, the sprawling forests that Coloradans had associated with the mountains were little more than memories.

The 2020 wildfires might have served as a clarion call that inspired a new birth of environmentalism—a rehabilitated version shorn of its NIMBYism and its blindness toward racial equality and social justice. Colorado in 2120 has become a sad incarnation of its former self because our forebears missed a clear opportunity to understand that the epidemiological, economic, racial, and environmental challenges that bore down on them from every side were inextricably interconnected. ■

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Rachel S. GROSS **Sold Out! Outdoor Rec in a Disaster Year**

When public health concerns precluded many forms of leisure, Americans eager for escape envisioned the woods and waters as safe places—or safe enough—to find solace and adventure. They emptied shelves of tents, bikes, and more as they made the best of a difficult situation. Still, there was no escaping the constraints of the times.

While the effect of the 2020 pandemic on outdoor recreation loomed large in that moment, it was not the turning point that some outdoor enthusiasts and industry commentators had hoped. Yes, the stay-at-home orders that marked hiking, biking, and other individual outdoor

By summer's end, Coloradans checked daily statistics—coronavirus transmission rates, ICU fill rates, air-quality ratings—to guide their behavior.

activities as safe made escaping to the mountains an attractive choice. Yes, outdoor companies sold out of bikes, tents, and other equipment in the early months of the pandemic. And yes, the threat of ski hill shutdowns led resorts to revamp how they operated during ski season, from parking to amenities.

But buying outdoor equipment and clothing proved not to be a salve. No amount of acquisition could hide that in states like Colorado, where complaints about overcrowding stretched back decades and local parks did not have the infrastructure like parking or wide trails to support the demand. Perhaps more damningly, outdoor recreationists did not become their better selves in pursuit of nature. Instead, they squeezed their cars and trucks onto road shoulders in defiance of signage that indicated they should not, and headed up to already packed trailheads just when public health officials were explaining how the easy airborne transmission of a deadly disease demanded that people physically distance themselves.

Buying a tent promised escape for individuals. But Americans got consistent reminders that they were not just individuals, they were members of a community, and that there could be no escape from the troubles of the modern world. Coloradans often stayed home, new tents safely ensconced in garages, not just because of Covid-19 but because the air was unhealthy for weeks at a time due to record-breaking wildfires. By summer's end, Coloradans checked daily statistics—coronavirus transmission rates, ICU fill rates, air-quality ratings—to guide their behavior.

Equipment purchases that supported close-to-home recreation, when they were possible, slowed because goods had to be produced, shipped, and stocked. All along those products' journey to the consumer were the threads that linked a day in the woods to a worldwide economic system. There was no going into nature alone.

Still, 2020 did not fundamentally shift the landscape of outdoor recreation. Given historical parallels, this should not be surprising. For instance, during the oil crisis of the 1970s, when gas lines stretched down the street across the United States, Americans bought and rode bicycles in record numbers. But as lines shortened and driving felt more convenient and affordable again, those bicycle riders did not turn their cities into bastions of sustainable transportation. Instead, they put their bikes in garages and bought bigger and bigger cars.

Fifty years after the oil crisis, Americans continued to turn toward time outdoors—and time shopping for time outdoors—as a balm. The historic year of 2020 underscored the same contradictions of recreation in a modern world that Americans have long encountered and too often ignored: The state of Colorado burned, but commentators suggested that outdoor recreation would keep driving the local economy. Despite the short-term demand for bicycles, tents, and gear, there was no sustainable future in buying more. ■

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Brian JACKSON

The Year of the Ethicist

When the Covid-19 pandemic exposed public health shortcomings and deadly racial inequities, it sparked a new public conversation about our priorities. The hard days and difficult decisions of 2020 propelled new ways of thinking about the health and wellbeing of our whole society, including what a “right to health care” really means.

The year 2020 was the beginning. The beginning of conversations we still have today: questions about who lives and who dies, about where we spend our money and time, and about how we treat our neighbors. Those conversations, which seem so routine today, wouldn’t have happened without the disruptions of 2020. They needed a catalyst, and together the Covid-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement served that role.

Covid-19 raised difficult questions at every turn. How is personal liberty weighed against collective safety? How are scarce resources allocated to care for sick people? How is the safety of research participants balanced with the urgent need for a vaccine? Would consideration of “quality of life” result in the marginalization and dehumanization of people with disabilities? Terms like triage and vaccine distribution became widely understood and important in the decades to come.

The coronavirus pandemic seems almost quaint when you remember the leishmaniasis that slowly crept into the United States in the 2040s, the novel influenza that killed tens of millions in the 2080s, and the “in-

vincible strep” that spread last year. But Covid prompted people to really assess how we should respond to new diseases. Each time a new threat erupted, we asked the questions again. We never agreed on the answers, but, ever so slowly, people learned to openly talk about what tradeoffs we were willing to make—and who has the right to make tough decisions.

We began to ask these questions not only with each new disease, but with each year’s health care budget. Without 2020, the amount of money we spent on health care would have continued to increase indefinitely. While last year’s invincible strep revealed continuing disagreement about what we should do in a crisis, we’ve realized that a fair process for deciding how to respond might be more important than the response itself.

The other major event of 2020 was the Black Lives Matter movement. While today, most people remember BLM for its reform of policing, its effect on health care was no less profound. Covid-19 disproportionately affected those who were Black, Indigenous, and people of color because they had poorer access to health care before and during the pandemic. While some policies tried to address this form of discrimination during the pandemic (by giving priority access to treatments and vaccines to people from disadvantaged communities), it was only in the reckoning afterward that people started to ask, “Why did this happen?” and to realize that crises are a difficult time to correct centuries of injustice. BLM had staying power: Policymakers responded, leading to our modern system of universal health care. By the 2050s, life expectancy rates among races equalized, and the dangerous idea that race was the cause of disparate health outcomes was extinguished.

Those who lived through 2020 often suggested the year would be remembered for its death and destruction. But with the hindsight of history, its lasting impact has been on the conversations we have every day. We wouldn’t have learned to talk about difficult health policy questions openly and honestly. We wouldn’t have experienced how our decisions about health care have real life-or-death consequences for real people. Twenty-twenty was a costly year, but without it, the last century would have been much poorer. ■

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Derek R. EVERETT

The Good Old Days

Coloradans in 2020 seemed unaware of just how good they really had it. A time of relative peace and plenty, it was truly a Second Gilded Age. It’s a year we now look back on with a sense of longing and nostalgia given the War of Disunion and the myriad other woes that we’ve endured in the century since.

Like the American Civil War did for historians more than a century ago, the War of Disunion (sometimes also referred to as the Wars of Reckoning) dominates the attention of scholars today. Tens of millions of North Americans dead, most major cities devastated, use of hijacked nuclear weapons rendering large swaths of territory uninhabitable, all culminating in the collapse of the

Covid-19 raised difficult questions at every turn. How is personal liberty weighed against collective safety?

United States into petty factions often pitted against one another by despotic powerhouses like China, Brazil, Franco-Germania, and Texas.

By the late 2020s, little recognizable remained of North America. People who had once considered themselves Americans were now shocked, desperate, and lost in a postapocalyptic wasteland. We eke out our existence in the ruins of that arrogant society. Granted, life for citizens in our Rocky Mountain People's Empire tends better than for our neighbors, in part because of our comparative isolation. Nearly twenty thousand people live in and around our regnal seat at Boeberstos, twice the number of residents than a century ago when this dignified capital was the humble town of Craig, Colorado.

Pondering the War of Disunion demands attention not only to those atrocities, but also to the prewar atmosphere that made the nightmare all but inevitable. Let us look back to the delusional start of that disastrous decade. Judging from the scant electronic records that survive from the Second Antebellum Era, residents of the then-United States believed that the year 2020 was a collection of unprecedented miseries. If only they knew what awaited, how they would look back on 2020 as "the good old days."

For forty years before, Americans had laid the foundation for their own destruction. Some scholars from the prewar era referred to their time as the Second Gilded Age, looking backward to the late nineteenth century and its similar woes. Granted, the first Gilded Age followed the Civil War while the so-called Second Gilded Age preceded one, the United States' final war as it turned out. But both eras shared dubious characteristics, including institutionalized racism, vast economic inequity, corporate development without meaningful oversight, bitter political feuding, and environmental degradation. They barely knew the climate

change that has subsumed lands and peoples around the world and inflicts wild weather upon us almost daily. The year 2020 also heralded the onset of Biden's Disease—known then as coronavirus—which remains the second most common cause of death in North America after radiation poisoning.

The people of 2020 had no idea how lucky they were to have lived in relative peace for so long, an echo of which our small community enjoys a century later. I know that my fellow RoMPes join me in extending our eternal gratitude to our regnal family, and especially Her Late Grandness Lauren I, Our One Real Mother. Her ingenuity after the War of Disunion enabled our forebearers to survive. Thanks to her and her successors, the Rocky Mountain People's Empire will remain free and strong...for as long as we can manage.

Supreme Adjunct Darren Q. Everest
Shooters Imperial Academy
September 15, 2120 ■

DEREK R. EVERETT *is a member of the history departments at Metropolitan State University of Denver and Colorado State University.*

Susan SCHULTEN The Past Is Present

Every generation sees itself at the center of history, and Americans in 2020 were no different. But as time passed, many were disappointed to realize that change was less profound than they had hoped. Still, it might have been comforting to learn that they were part of a much longer effort to define their nation.

M myriad historical sources from 2020—whether official press outlets or the avalanche of social media that was then so popular—indicate

that Americans disagreed about nearly everything except the belief that they were living in "historic times."

An unforeseen pandemic brutalized underserved communities and the elderly. Left without coordinated national leadership, states and localities adapted by imposing a spectrum of measures to control the spread of the virus, which swelled the ranks of the unemployed and left students without the crucial structure of school life. Longstanding structural racism boiled over into massive public protests that reached well beyond cities into small towns and suburbs. A presidential campaign rocked by anger and polarization heightened voter turnout; that same polarization emboldened the incumbent to reject his defeat in the Electoral College. Devastating wildfires throughout the autumn in the American West created the sense that the natural world was spinning out of control as well.

From the vantage point of 2120, however, these episodes are best understood not as *historic* in the sense of having seismic importance, but rather deeply *historical* as being part of a much longer and larger context.

The rapid spread of Covid-19 was facilitated by the same globalizing forces that transformed an influenza mutation on a remote farm in Kansas in 1918 into a pandemic that killed 50 million people worldwide. Structural inequality—both racial and economic—galvanized earlier generations, whether the ardent moral reformers of the 1830s, the Progressives of the 1910s, or the Civil Rights activists of the 1950s. In 2020, those periods of reform became urgent reminders of the persistence of both injustice and the potential for change. Likewise, the generation of reformers that followed would draw upon the inspiration of those who advanced the cause of social justice in 2020.

And while Americans of all beliefs bemoaned the sharp political division of 2020, they might have paused to consider that partisan bitterness is endemic to our history.



PHOTO / A protestor likened himself to a statue at the Colorado State Capitol while drawing attention to systemic social injustices during the widespread protests of 2020. Photo by James Peterson. History Colorado HC.2020.64.5

However seismic the changes of 2020 appeared to those who lived through it, many also recognized what James Baldwin meant when he wrote in 1965 that “history is literally present in all that we do.”

PHOTO / *Businesses in downtown Denver, such as Think Tank Tattoo on South Broadway, were boarded up for security reasons during the pandemic lockdown. Photo by Mark Nelson. History Colorado 2020.31.6 - SPH. COVID.0043*

In the 1790s, the emerging political parties considered their opponents not just rivals, but enemies of democracy; after the Civil War, white southerners rejected the Republican Party as entirely illegitimate; and in the early Cold War, fear of Communism abroad destroyed norms within Congress and sowed distrust among citizens. In each of these moments (and in those difficult episodes that followed), rank partisanship eroded faith in representative democracy and the integrity of those institutions.

However seismic the changes of 2020 appeared to those who lived through it, many also recognized what James Baldwin meant when he wrote in 1965 that “history is literally present in all that we do.” He knew that history was “not merely something to be read,” nor did it even reside in the past. Instead, historical forces govern every aspect of our lives, even our identities and aspirations.

Baldwin’s observations often fall on deaf ears, for Americans like to see themselves untethered to the past, free to chart their future. But the disruptive events of 2020 demonstrated how deeply we live in the world of our ancestors, whether we appreciate it or not. ■

SUSAN SCHULTEN *is a professor of American history at the University of Denver.*

Jason L. HANSON

How Did We Get to Now? Museums Chronicle America’s Emergent Era

A pale blue face mask sits suspended in a slender glass case. It’s analog and simple, delicate even, compared to the environmental enhancement headsets we wear today. But the accompanying text notes that a century ago it was surprisingly controversial. Welcome to the 2020 centennial exhibition.

Thank you for coming! Whether you’re watching from home or here at the museum, I’m pleased to welcome you to our newest exhibition, *The Emergent Era in America: 2020 and Beyond*.

With this exhibition, we explore how the events of a century ago set us on the course to our present. Most historykeepers have come to see 2020 as the catalytic year of the Emergent Era, those decades of the early twenty-first century defined by both an unrelenting series of emergencies and a corresponding emergence of a new notion of our collective identity.

In hindsight, it’s clear that 2020 ushered in long-building cultural currents with an explosive energy that still reverberates in our present



Most historykeepers have come to see 2020 as the catalytic year of the Emergent Era, those decades of the early 21st century defined by both an unrelenting series of emergencies and a corresponding emergence of a new notion of our collective identity.

world. To commemorate the centennial of that pivotal year, museums in nearly every region are transporting visitors to witness the events that laid the foundations for our Community today. The holoscenes you'll encounter are the most realistic and immersive ever. Whether you're embedded with a team of healers on a Covid-19 hospital ward, marching with crowds demanding racial justice, holding the line with wildfire crews, or there at the storming of the Capitol, this exhibition is the closest thing to time travel we've ever created.

But there's a big part of the story that you *won't* find here: the way 2020 marked a turning point for museums themselves.

The events of 2020 accelerated a trend among museums to acknowledge the shortcomings of what had been the mainstream narrative of American history—one narrowly centered on the actions of so-called Great Men, who were mostly referred to within then-common constructs of race as “White.” New technolo-

gies were just making it possible to preserve the experiences of many people, not just those privileged voices with access to media outlets, and these diverse individual experiences ultimately revealed a more cohesive portrait of our shared story. Today we underscore this common narrative by embracing the expanded and inclusive notion of *Community* (in place of *citizenry* or *society*) raised to popular consciousness during the Third Civil Rights Movement.

The contentious events of 2020, when even the concept of “facts” was disputed, also prompted museums to embrace their role as honest brokers for posterity. Claims of objective history had been undercut by the vestigial white supremacy that had permeated the American narrative for centuries. But after 2020, museum historykeepers increasingly acknowledged their own biases while documenting events with self-awareness. They discredited the notion of neutrality but tempered their advocacy with humility, knowing that overly

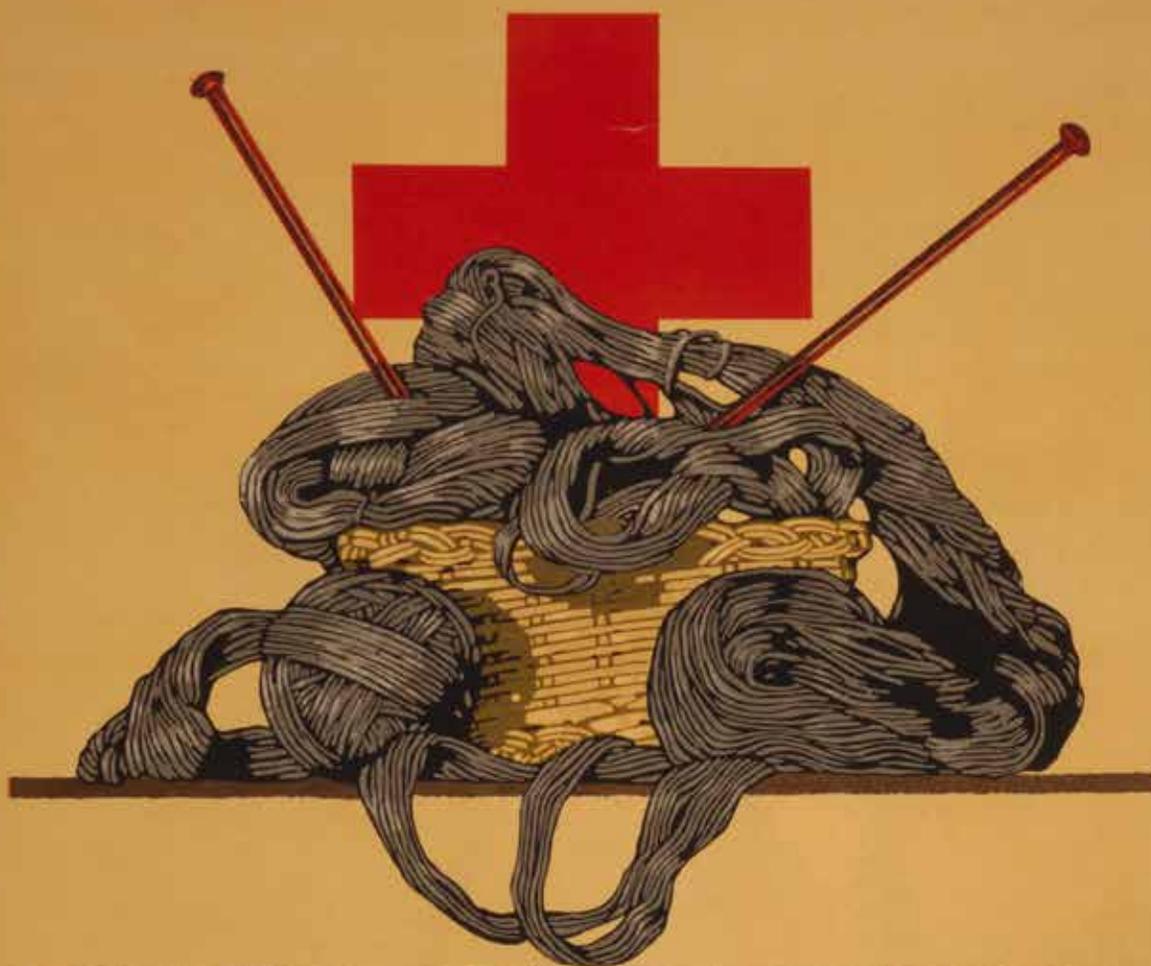
corrective narratives risked repeating the errors of museums of the past. This commitment was especially vital to maintaining the public's trust as mass media fractured and the American political parties realigned into the shifting three-party system that typified the mid-twenty-first century.

This exhibition owes a great debt to those nimble and foresighted historykeepers who went out and secured the record of the Emergent Era before its material culture was disposed of and memories faded. Those museums that recognized the significant cultural shifts underway in 2020 spent the ensuing century doing what museums have always strived to do, even if it looked different from how they'd done it before: helping the Community understand who we are, helping us make sense of how we got to now, and helping us illuminate the path to a brighter future. ■

JASON L. HANSON is the chief creative officer and director of interpretation and research at History Colorado.



AMERICAN RED CROSS



OUR BOYS NEED

SOX

KNIT YOUR BIT

CREEDE & WORLD WAR I

A Knitter's Tale

BY ROBERT MOLL

“Grandma, do you know how to knit?”

It was the summer of 2000 and eleven-year-old Lizzie, a beginning knitter, hoped she'd found a mentor—her ninety-four-year-old grandmother, Mary Elting Folsom. Lizzie's question took Mary back to 1917, several months after the United States entered World War I.

Yes, Lizzie, I do know how to knit. I learned during the summer of 1917, when I was eleven. Surprisingly, my teacher was a British army recruiter who had come to my home town of Creede, Colorado.

LOCATED HIGH IN THE SAN JUAN MOUNTAINS

of southern Colorado, Creede was a silver mining town when Mary was born in 1906. Silver had been discovered there in 1889, just before the US Congress passed the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. This legislation required the US Treasury to make substantial monthly purchases of silver, for which it issued special silver-backed paper currency. The price of the metal quickly shot up, and in a matter of months Creede became one of North America's wildest mining camps. The silver craze attracted more than ten thousand prospectors, miners, and adventurers, who took up residence in tent cities that ringed the town.

Legendary figures of the Wild West were among the town's new inhabitants. Bat Masterson turned up, not as a lawman but as a saloon keeper. Bob Ford, killer of Jesse James in Missouri in 1882, also came, only to be gunned down himself in his own saloon in 1892. Swindlers and gunfighters, gambling halls and brothels—that was Creede in its heyday.

Then, in 1893, an economic panic hit the country and people began exchanging their new silver-backed

paper currency for gold coins. Fearing a run on its gold reserves, the US Treasury stopped buying silver altogether. The price of the metal fell dramatically, ending Creede's three-year run as a silver boomtown. Work continued at the largest mines, but the population of the town soon fell to about a thousand. Still, Creede's early rowdiness remained a part of town life through the time of the First World War.

In the midst of Creede's roughness, Mary grew up in a respectable middle-class family. Her father was a storekeeper who sold hay and grain for the town's horses and mules. Her mother was a former schoolteacher who gave Mary a proper upbringing. When Mary asked why the women standing in front of a house down the street were wearing kimonos, her mother answered sharply, “You're too young to know.” Years later she realized that the establishment had been a brothel. In summer the family retreated from rough-and-tumble Creede to Antler's Park, a former dude ranch they owned west of town.

Mary's father, Charles Elting, had come to Creede as a young man—his doctor had recommended

a move from New York State to the western mountains as a treatment for his tuberculosis. He arrived in Creede during the boom years and for a while stayed in a tent next to Bob Ford's. Twenty-five years later, in 1917, he had become a prominent citizen. That spring he was appointed Mineral County's representative to the Governor's War Council in Denver. Then, in August, he played Cotton Mather in the town's production of *Anne of Old Salem*, a fundraiser for the Red Cross.

While we were at Antler's Park during the summer of 1917, the English recruiter stayed with us in one of the cabins on the ranch. Recently disabled by a war injury, he came to my school and talked about what life was like for soldiers. The stories were horrifying. Everyone squirmed when he gave a graphic description of “cooties”—the lice that plagued soldiers night and day.

That summer the war was on everyone's mind. News of the conflict filled the pages of *The Creede Candle*, the town's four-page weekly newspaper. The *Candle* exhorted young men to volunteer for the army, and urged everyone else to get to work: “No



PHOTO / *Mary on horseback, Antler's Park, 1918. Courtesy Creede Historical Society.*

work, no eat' is the slogan. The war leaves no room for slackers." Slackers took a beating all summer long.

A *Candle* feature called "Local Siftings" was Creede's public message board. Townspeople could post announcements or proclamations on almost any topic. Rental rooms with electric lights were advertised. Special events were noted: A Tom Thumb wedding, where small children dressed up as bride and groom and acted out a wedding ceremony, was a great hit. And there were expressions of outrage. Colorado had become a dry state in 1916, and an irate prohibitionist railed against unchecked drinking in town: "This constant flow of booze has disgusted many of our

better citizens and should it continue an awful roar will be heard."

The Siftings reported all sorts of comings and goings: Ada Skinner was in town between trains, and John Glendinning stopped by while bringing his sheep to higher pasture. Especially prominent were reports about anyone going anywhere by automobile: Doctor J.A. Biles motored up from Del Norte to look in on Mrs. Broadhead; a fellow named Duncan was driving around in a new Buick he had bought from sales agent Lulu Voss; and Charles T. Elting, Mary's father, had been a business visitor in Monte Vista the previous Saturday, making the trip in his automobile.

Mary's father had just bought

his car in Denver, and with no instructions and no training had managed to drive the 250 miles back to Creede without mishap. The next day he taught eleven-year-old Mary to drive—licenses weren't required in Colorado until the 1930s. Some time later his car stalled along a high mountain road. Enraged when he couldn't get it started, he tipped the vehicle over, flipping it into the ravine below. Apparently his sometimes-volcanic temper was well-known. Mary was reminded of this during a visit to Creede in 1994, when she encountered an old man who looked dimly familiar. Evidently he thought the same about her, leading to this exchange:

Old-timer: “Are you from around here?”

Mary: “Why yes—I’m Charlie Elting’s daughter.”

Old-timer: “That old sonof-a-bitch?”

While the *Candle* and its Siftings column had much to say about many aspects of town life, it never mentions the British army recruiter.

The recruiter came to Creede because he was looking for Cornish miners—miners from the Cornwall region of England—who had not taken American citizenship. His mission was to persuade them to return to England and fight in the war.

Because mine management would not have wanted any of Creede’s skilled miners lured away to join the British war effort, the recruiter wisely did not publicize his visit.

Much of World War I took place underground, in trenches and tunnels designed, dug out, framed, and shored up by miners in the military. When troop advances stalled in late 1914, a meandering front line, extending from the North Sea to Switzerland, separated the German army on the east from the British and French armies on the west. Soldiers on both sides dug deep trenches along the front line so that combatants could stay below the enemy’s line of fire. A narrow strip—“no-man’s land”—separated the two sides. Side trenches linked the trenches along the front with underground living spaces, first-aid posts, and command centers.

Both sides also dug attack tunnels. Long and deep, these tunnels extended beneath enemy lines. The British enlarged the far ends of their tunnels and packed them with explosives, to be detonated underground just as their soldiers began a surface attack. By the spring of 1917 the British had built a series of attack tunnels under German lines near the town of Messines, in Belgium. Altogether these underground bomb chambers held almost five hundred tons of explosives. When they were detonated on June 7, the enormous blast killed

ten thousand German soldiers and was heard in London one hundred fifty miles away. At the time the blast created what was thought to be the largest artificial sound ever produced.

Wartime tunneling efforts were huge—as many as forty thousand men worked on trenches and tunnels for Britain. Because trench and tunnel work was miners’ work, the British required a steady stream of fresh miners for its military efforts underground. While Cornish miners were highly skilled and especially sought after, they were in short supply by the time of the First World War.

In the first half of the nineteenth century Cornwall dominated world tin mining. But when much cheaper ores from overseas became available in the 1870s, most tin mines in Cornwall closed. The region’s copper mines suffered a similar fate. In the last decades of the nineteenth century several hundred thousand people—mostly unemployed miners—left Cornwall for mining regions around the world, including Colorado.

During World War I the mining of coal and metals were considered so essential for heating homes, powering factories, and manufacturing

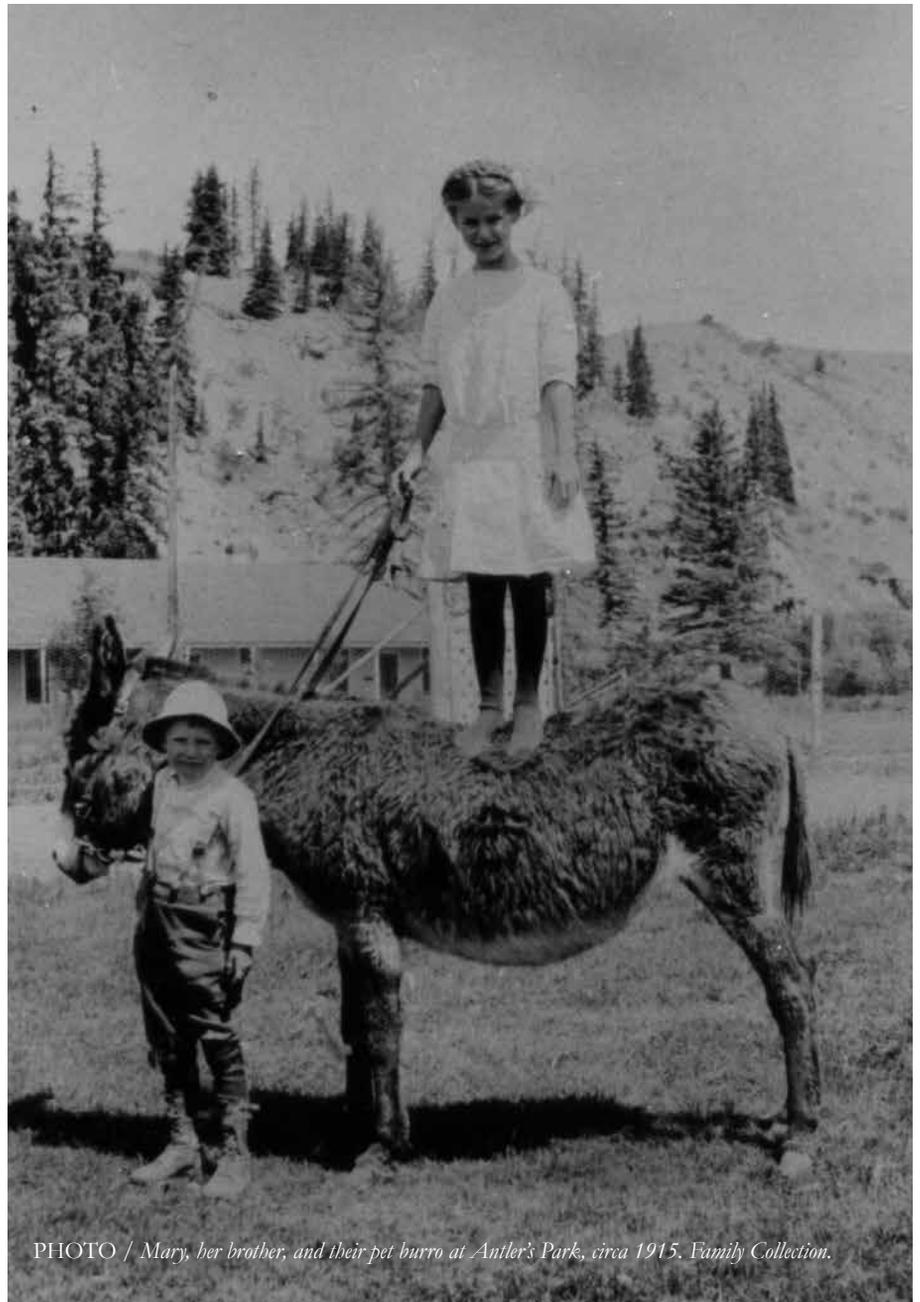


PHOTO / Mary, her brother, and their pet burro at Antler’s Park, circa 1915. Family Collection.

armaments that when conscription began in 1916, miners were generally exempted from military service. At the same time, Britain was desperate for soldiers with mining skills. Cornwall's miners were offered double wages if they agreed to enlist, and as manpower shortages continued, Britain searched overseas for expatriate Cornish miners who might be persuaded to return and join the fight. Mary's knitting teacher was part of that overseas mission.

Creede's immigrant miners who had not taken American citizenship were put in an awkward position once the US entered the war, and a *Candle* editorial on June 16 underscored their predicament: "Alien citizens of all allied nations in this country should not be allowed to remain in safety here while our own boys are sent abroad to fight. Put 'em in the army or send 'em home."

The grim physical realities of soldiering during World War I made joining the British army a difficult choice for Cornish expatriates. Soldiers endured unending bombardments in trenches that were filled with deep, oozing mud, and they were preyed upon by the cooties Mary's schoolmates had heard about.

As protection against the ever-present muck, high boots were an essential part of every soldier's outfit. Unfortunately, American soldiers were issued boots that leaked. This created a dire need for a second layer of protection: thick wool socks.

Shortly after he arrived at Antler's, the Englishman asked me, "Little girl, do you know how to knit?" I admitted that I didn't. He replied, "Well, by tomorrow you will." He started me off with wash cloths. They were boring. So the next day he brought me wool and small needles for knitting socks. His stay at the ranch lasted long enough for him to keep me at the task until I could turn the heel and "toe-off" properly.

In the summer of 1917 the Red Cross called for a half a million pairs of socks to be knit by civilians for

soldiers going off to war. Mary had been recruited to help with this huge project. The effort she joined brought together knitters from a broad cross-section of American society, and included firemen in Cincinnati, lifeguards in California, and women inmates at the Colorado State Hospital for the Insane in Pueblo. By the end of the war, participants had knit 370 million socks and other items for soldiers headed to Europe.

I jumped right in and started at it. This was how I could help our soldiers overseas.

While Mary was knitting socks, Lizzie's grandfather, ten-year-old Franklin Folsom, was also determined to contribute to the war effort. He was spending the summer of 1917 with his grandmother in Pueblo while his father was serving with the army in Europe. Drawing on a fourth-grader's sense of geography, he was expecting a German attack on Pueblo from across the nearby Arkansas River. To prepare for the attack he grabbed a shovel and began digging a trench behind his grandmother's house. Sadly, he dug too close to the family's five-hole outhouse, weakening its earthen supports. Later, when his rather large grandmother took a seat in the five-holer, the building collapsed, dropping her into the unpleasantness below. It took three men to pull her out.

Was the recruiter able to persuade any miners to return to England? I just don't know.

It's unlikely that many of Creede's Cornish miners returned to England to enlist. Most had been away for decades, and tales of the unrelieved horror of trench warfare had surely reached Creede's Cornish community. Of course, the recruiter would have pointed out that returning was a "now or never" decision—a British citizen was subject to Britain's conscription laws, and so by refusing to return to fight, a miner would risk jail if he returned home at a later time.

In fact, only a single Cornishman in America has been identified who returned to Britain during the war to join a tunneling company.

Mary thought about the war and her contribution.

All told I must have knit a hundred pairs of socks for our soldiers.

She paused, looked over at Lizzie, and added:

Then the Armistice came in 1918—and I haven't knit since.

MARY DIED IN 2005. A literary editor for ten years after college, by 1940 she had begun translating French children's books into English. She soon realized she could write books for kids herself, and launched her career in 1943 with *Soldiers, Sailors, Flyers, and Marines*. Written to explain the Second World War to children, the book had an unexpected second use. The Navy ordered three thousand copies to help teach illiterate sailors to read.

During the next half-century she wrote almost ninety books, mostly for children, many co-authored with her husband, Franklin. She created a "First Book of" series that began with *The First Book of Boats*, and went on to trains, trucks, automobiles, and nurses. In her "Answer Book" series, she gave interesting answers to questions about science, geography, computers, and the human body. Along the way she also wrote about dinosaurs, volcanoes, archaeology, robots, and the history of corn. Her 1980 alphabet book *Q is for Duck*, written with her son, Michael Folsom, is still in print.

Mary had other interests. She was in on the founding of the Council on Interracial Books in 1965. A longtime member of the Jane Addams Children's Book Awards Committee, she read hundreds of books every year in order to make recommendations

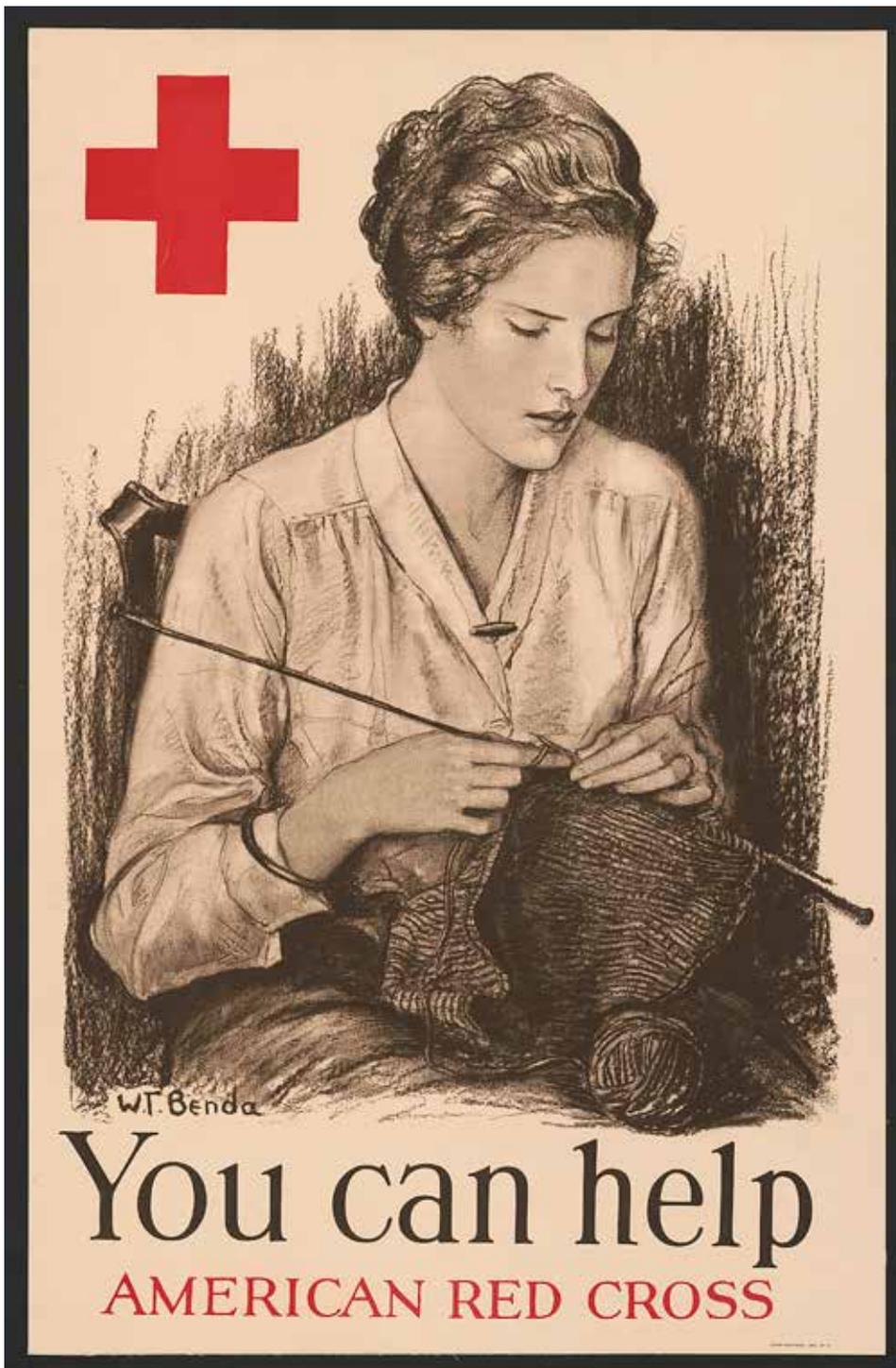


PHOTO / Knitting poster, 1918. Courtesy Library of Congress.

for awards. Late in life she edited *The Skeptical Inquirer*, a periodical dedicated to debunking non-scientific claims about the paranormal and the supernatural.

An intrepid world traveler, Mary, with Franklin, took an eighty-day bus tour from London to Kathmandu. Afterwards they flew to Sri Lanka,

where they did research for a magazine article on Buddhist eye banks for the blind. In her seventies she backpacked across the Grand Canyon, and in her eighties she visited Lhasa, Tibet, as part of a Boulder, Colorado, sister-city delegation. On a ninetieth birthday trip to Rome in 1996, Mary observed that the city had “changed

a lot” since her last visit—in 1930 during the Mussolini era.

With almost one hundred years of material to work with, Mary was a great storyteller.

SITTING AT THE KITCHEN TABLE, IN HER LATE NINETIES, glass of sherry in hand, she talked about how Creede coped with the 1918 Spanish flu epidemic (several of her schoolmates died); she recalled sorority life at the University of Colorado in the 1920s (sorority members mailed their dirty clothes home to be laundered); and she told stories about working for publishing houses in New York in the 1930s:

Let me tell you about the easiest job I ever had.

Mary let that sink in while she sipped her sherry.

One morning in 1936, when I was working as an editor, my boss came by and put a kid’s book manuscript on my desk. “Let me know after lunch if you think we should publish it,” he said. I knew in a minute that we had a winner—the book was the children’s classic Ferdinand the Bull.

Franklin Folsom, Rhodes Scholar and author of eighty books for children and adults, died in 1995. Folsom Field—the football stadium at the University of Colorado, Boulder—is named for his father, football coach and law professor Fred G. Folsom.

Elizabeth Folsom Moll—Liz-zie—is a city planner in Seattle. ■

ROBERT MOLL is professor emeritus of information and computer sciences at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He has authored or co-authored six textbooks and two children’s books and is a frequent contributor to the humor magazine *The Funny Times*.

“To Think, Talk & Work for Patriotism”



With great military fanfare and speeches by such dignitaries as Governor Julius Caldeen Gunter, the opening ceremonies of the Fifth National Service School unfolded on the lawn of Denver’s Loretto Heights Academy on July 2, 1917.

National Service Schools, first established in 1916, were quasi-military training camps for women operated by the Woman’s Section of the Navy League, the first nationwide women’s military preparedness organization in the United States. The sinking of the British ocean liner RMS *Lusitania* in 1915 led to an outcry for increased military preparedness, prompting Elisabeth Ellicott Poe, a Washington, D.C., journalist, and her sister, Vylla Poe Wilson, to form a Woman’s Section of the Navy League to help protect the country against invasion by foreign foes and promote patriotism among American women.

Within a month, the organization had drawn 8,000 members. Upon joining, they recited this pledge:

I pledge myself to think,
talk and work for patriotism,
Americanism and sufficient
National defenses to keep

the horrors of war far from America’s homes and shores forever.

In these days of world strife and peril I will strive to do my share to awaken our nation and our lawmakers to the dangers of our present undefended condition so that we may continue to dwell in peace and prosperity and may not have to mourn states desolated by war within our own borders.

In so far as I am able, I will make my home a center of American ideals and patriotism, and endeavor to teach the children in my care to cherish and revere Our Country and its history, and to uphold its honor and fair repute in their generation.

The National Service School’s inaugural encampment took place in Chevy Chase, Maryland, in May 1916, with President Woodrow Wilson as the opening-day speaker and an audience that included Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels and Secretary of War Newton Baker. National Service Schools at the Pre-

sidio in San Francisco, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, and Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island, soon followed. With a leadership group consisting primarily of the wives and relatives of military men, the camps appealed to women who did not strongly identify with the antiwar movement and wished to contribute to the war effort. Attendees were predominantly white middle- and upper-class women, typically from prominent families who could afford the camp fee and uniform costs. The typical working-class family could not afford to send a daughter to camp, nor could most independent single women afford to leave their jobs to attend a two- to four-week session. Day students were accepted at most camps but typically were segregated from the residential attendees and given fewer opportunities.

National Service School camps offered a standardized training program that emphasized discipline and obedience and was, according to the April 1918 *Army and Navy Register*, “just military enough to turn out, at the end of three weeks’ training, a body of women physically and mentally alert and ready for the service for which they have trained.”

The National Service School at Loretto Heights

BY AMY UNGER



Denver's Sisters of Loretto generously opened the campus of their private Catholic school for girls to the National Service School for its fifth encampment during the 1917 summer break. Thirty-five white-walled canvas tents went up on the grounds to house attendees, instructors, and camp offices. The commanding Army officer at Fort Logan, General Robert Getty, detailed a bugler and two sergeants to provide instruction in military calisthenics and drilling, and over the next three weeks more than 100 women received intensive training in skills deemed useful to the war effort.

Attendees woke at 6:30 a.m., donning soldierly khaki uniforms, broad-brimmed hats, and drill boots before marching to mess at 7:30. Their typical training day included military drills, Red Cross instruction in caring for the wounded, and classes in military communications, wireless telegraphy, typing, stenography, knitting, and other skills.

Many of the women who attended the Fifth National Service School at Loretto Heights Academy become valuable assets in the war effort. Some served in the Red

Cross or joined other national service organizations. One French-speaking attendee responded to the government's call for female recruits to serve as telegraph and telephone operators overseas. Others traveled to assist Colorado fruit growers in picking and conserving the 1917 harvest, while still others volunteered to teach semi-weekly lessons in military calisthenics and drilling in their communities.

At a time when women were increasingly active outside the domestic sphere but not yet in the workforce in large numbers, National Service Schools provided yet another important outlet for female activist energy. As historian Barbara Steinson writes, the women's organizations related to pacifism, military preparedness, and war relief that emerged in the United States after the onset of World War I "coincided with the increased momentum of the suffrage campaign and mark the years from 1914 to 1919 as a period of unprecedented female activism." ■

AMY UNGER is an architectural historian and principal of Pine Street Preservation, a historic preservation consulting firm in Alma, Colorado.

PHOTOS from left / Officers pose at the National Service School at Loretto Heights Academy in July 1917. History Colorado, 96.97.9. / The National Service School at Loretto Heights Academy in July 1917. History Colorado, 96.97.1. / Women learn first aid at the National Service School at Loretto Heights Academy, July 1917. History Colorado, 96.97.3. / Women learn knitting at the National Service School at Loretto Heights Academy in July 1917. History Colorado, 96.97.13.

LORETTO HEIGHTS ACADEMY was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. An amendment to the original nomination is currently being prepared to recognize not only the exceptional quality of the campus's architecture and the importance of Loretto Heights and the Catholic academy movement in the education of Colorado's young women, but also the outstanding role the campus played in women's history. The amendment is part of a larger project involving the rehabilitation of historic Pancratia Hall, in the oldest portion of the campus, with the assistance of Federal Preservation Tax Credits.

PRESERVATION INCENTIVES PROGRAMS / Properties listed in the National or State Register may be eligible for investment tax credits for approved rehabilitation and to compete for History Colorado State Historical Fund grants.

HistoryColorado.org/preservation-archaeology

A Generous Spirit FOUND A WAY TO KEEP GIVING

BY STEVE
GRINSTEAD

JOHNN WELCH and History Colorado are both the beneficiaries of Josephine Miles's legacy. For John, you could say it's personal: she was "just delightful," he says, and his family enjoyed a long friendship with her. For History Colorado, it's Josephine's love of history and generous spirit that live on.

Born in 1899, Josephine grew up on a ranch near Longmont. After a career overseas, teaching in locales like the Philippines, she returned to her native Colorado. She served terms as president of the Territorial Daughters of Colorado and History Colorado's volunteers. She had a particular interest in Indigenous people, which built on her father's good relations with the Southern Arapaho who visited her family's ranch.

Welch is the trustee of the Josephine H. Miles Trust, a fund Josephine created before her death in 1996. As a program director for Archaeology Southwest, a Tucson-based nonprofit, he's spent three decades facilitating partnerships with tribes in Arizona and New Mexico and with First Nations in British Columbia. He served as archaeologist and historic preservation officer for the White Mountain Apache Tribe from 1992 to 2005, and in 2016 the University of Arizona Press published his book *Dispatches from the Fort Apache Scout: White Mountain and Cibecue Apache History Through 1881*.

Welch's father, J. Robert "Bob" Welch, was a Colorado native and antiques dealer who served as Josephine's estate appraiser. "You have special interests in Colorado history, and you have special interests in Native people," he once told her. So



his advice? Create a trust to support both. Today, as "successor trustee," John serves in the role his father once held. The trust has two beneficiaries besides History Colorado: St. Labre Indian School in Ashland, Montana, and St. Stephens Indian Mission in Saint Stephens, Wyoming. The Miles Trust funds university scholarships for Native graduates from the schools. At History Colorado, the trust created the Josephine H. Miles Award to advance the knowledge and appreciation of Colorado's past. (A companion award, named for historian Caroline Bancroft, benefits projects in communities of fewer than 50,000 people.)

Of special interest to Welch is the trust's additional support of History Colorado's publications. In fact, the trust enabled the expansion of the magazine you hold in your hands. He's pleased that we've reclaimed the

quarterly's original moniker; it's a way, he says, to "show that it represents all of the state by opening it up to more people and voices." Miles funds have also supported History Colorado's books over the years, among them last year's *Colorado Day by Day, Italy in Colorado: Family Histories from Denver and Beyond* (and its two subsequent reprints), and the upcoming *Becoming Colorado: The Centennial State in 100 Objects*.

If you have an interest in planned giving to History Colorado, contact Shannon Joern at Shannon.Joern@state.co.us or 303/866-4737. To apply for a Miles or Bancroft History Award, go to HistoryColorado.org/2020-miles-bancroft. ■

PHOTO / The Golden History Museum's "Building Communities" classroom kits garnered a Josephine H. Miles History Award last year.

BORDERLANDS *of* SOUTHERN COLORADO

BORDERLANDS OF SOUTHERN COLORADO shares the sweeping saga of beauty and conflict steeped in cultural differences, colonizations, and clashing ideologies about land ownership before and after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

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HISTORY
COLORADO

*Mexican Settlement
Kutman Photo.*



HISTORY COLORADO 



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During these challenging times, History Colorado offers a variety of engaging in-person and online learning opportunities for all ages.

FOR SCHOOLS: Aligned to academic standards and anchored in meaningful discourse, virtual field trips and artifact kits provide school students with rich primary sources and critical thinking.

FOR FAMILIES: Our Hands-On History programs and camps throughout the state provide safe, educational child care for working families when students are not in school.

visit h-co.org/programs-education for more information