



## SPEAKERS BUREAU

Presentations with Discussions

The KHC *The Way We Worked* Speakers Bureau features presentations and discussions examining the theme of work and working in Kansas and how these stories help define us.

The Kansas Humanities Council conducts and supports community-based programs, serves as a financial resource through an active grant-making program, and encourages Kansans to engage in the civic and cultural life of their communities. Visit us online at [www.kansashumanities.org](http://www.kansashumanities.org).

JANUARY 2013





**KHC's *The Way We Worked* Speakers Bureau** features presentations and discussions about work in Kansas—our people, places, and history. Stories of work help define our way of life, our sense of who we are, and the values we hold important over time and across generations.

Topics in the Speakers Bureau complement the Smithsonian Institution's traveling exhibition, *The Way We Worked*, which will begin a nine-month tour of Kansas sponsored by the Kansas Humanities Council beginning in fall 2012. Using the resources of the National Archives, the exhibition explores the remarkable stories and images of the American worker from the past 150 years.

Nonprofit organizations within the state of Kansas are invited to participate in the KHC Speakers Bureau. The presentations in this edition are available through December 31, 2013 or as funding allows.

## BOOKING A PROGRAM

### How To Bring a KHC Speaker to Your Event

- Review the Speakers Bureau catalog and select a speaker and topic.
- Contact the speaker and confirm time, date, and location.
- Apply online for a Resource Center Support Grant to bring the speaker to your community.
- Publicize your event. Download a press release, speaker bio, photo, and KHC logo poster.
- Tell us how it went. After the event, download and fill out a Speakers Bureau Evaluation and Cost-Share Form and email them to Leslie Von Holten ([leslie@kansashumanities.org](mailto:leslie@kansashumanities.org)).

## CONTACT

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**Program Officer**  
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The opinions expressed by the speakers do not necessarily reflect those of the Kansas Humanities Council.

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## The Rise of the Bumper Sticker

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Forest P. Gill, a silkscreen printer from Kansas City, Kansas, is credited with inventing the self-sticking bumper sticker in the late 1940s. Needing packaging labels for his printed stock, Gill turned to the new daylight fluorescent inks and self-stick paper to develop a bright, adhesive sticker that suited his needs. This presentation will discuss how manufacturing advances in adhesives, inks, and printing during World War II were crucial for Gill's invention, and how his timing could not have been better: as more Americans purchased automobiles, advertisers recognized the car's potential as a moving billboard in the post-war era. *Presented by Whitney Baker.*

*Whitney is a book conservator and librarian at the University of Kansas Libraries.*

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## The Race to Work and the Work of Race: Marcet Haldeman-Julius's 1927 Kansas Anti-Racism Campaign

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By the mid 1920s, racial conflict in Kansas was such that the Ku Klux Klan was building a membership into the tens of thousands. Inspired by an article in the NAACP's *The Crisis*, newspaper publisher and author Marcet Haldeman-Julius became an advocate for African American college students across the state. Join us as we discuss how she surveyed, interviewed, and hosted students, ultimately taking her fight to the University of Kansas where she played a part in changing the institution's racist policies.

*Presented by Jason Barrett-Fox.*

*Jason teaches English at Hesston College.*

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## African American Women Domestics: The Story of Two Kansans

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Growing up in rural Nicodemus, Kansas, in the large Williams family, Ernestine and Charlesetta learned basic cleaning and cooking skills from their mother and grandmother who had been enslaved in Kentucky by the family of Vice President Richard M. Johnson. When the sisters moved to California in the 1950s, their domestic and cooking skills provided many employment opportunities; they even cooked for such greats as Walt Disney and John Wayne. Eventually Ernestine opened her own restaurant in Pasadena before returning to Nicodemus in the 1970s to operate a barbecue restaurant. Learn about the family legacy of domestic work through Ernestine's cookbook and Charlesetta's work scrapbook in this unique presentation. *Presented by Angela Bates.*

*Angela is the executive director and past president of the Nicodemus Historical Society. She also hosts private and group tours of historic Nicodemus.*

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## The Kansas Work Ethic of Dwight D. Eisenhower

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Ike's parents worked hard to feed and clothe their family of six boys. In addition to the daily chores each brother was assigned, all of the Eisenhower boys found ways to earn extra money to help support the family. Young Ike worked various jobs from selling vegetables and his mother's hot tamales door-to-door, to laboring as a farmhand and working for several years at the Belle Springs Creamery. He managed these jobs while earning good grades in school and participating in sports and community activities. This talk will explore how Ike's Kansas work ethic prepared him for military and presidential greatness. *Presented by Roy Bird.*

*Roy is an author, historian, and the former director of the Kansas Center for the Book, Kansas State Library.*

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## Products of the First Kansans

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This presentation will illustrate the working lives of the first Kansans. Although these early Native Americans did not leave written records, it is possible to gain some understanding of how they worked by examining the products of their labor and the artifacts they left behind. By exploring prehistory, this talk examines how the nature and definition of work varies over time and cultures. PowerPoint. *Presented by Don Blakeslee.*

*Don is an expert on prehistoric and early historic Plains life.*

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## The Harvey Girls' Service with Style

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In 19th-century Kansas, single women had few choices when it came to reputable work. The Harvey Girl was considered more than a waitress, providing professional and stylish service in the Harvey House chain of restaurants along the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad lines from 1876 to the early 1950s. This presentation will explore the job duties, pay scales, and working conditions of Harvey Girls and compare them with other occupations available for single women during that time period. *Presented by Michaeline Chance-Reay.*

*Mickey is an author and historian who teaches at Kansas State University.*

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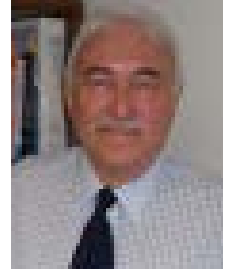
## Mexican American Workers Help Build the Kansas Economy

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In the Argentine, Armourdale, and West Bottoms communities of Kansas City, Kansas, immigrant Mexican, Serb, and Croatian workers helped build the railroad and meat packing industries, sometimes as strikebreakers during labor disputes. Through oral histories of Mexican American descendants of these early 20th-century laborers, this presentation will explore the labor conditions, opportunities, and legacies of these *trabajadores mexicanos* in Kansas. *Presented by Gene T. Chávez.*

*Gene consults on diversity issues as president of Chávez and Associates.*

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## Civil Rights Working in Kansas

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The Civil Rights movement of the 1950s–1970s dramatically affected the way we work in Kansas. Employment discrimination kept African Americans confined to low-pay work, and in the southern states they were vulnerable to arrest for “vagrancy,” only to be released to businesses to “work off their fines.” This presentation explores the involvement of Kansas in this type of discrimination and how the Civil Rights movement changed these practices. By implementing various strategies, Civil Rights advocates forced the state and other government agencies to alter their policies. PowerPoint. *Presented by Gretchen Cassel Eick.*

*Gretchen is an historian and author of the book Dissent in Wichita.*

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## Kansas Women, Work, and the Civil War

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During the Civil War, employment opportunities for women opened up, from nursing (which had been an all-male profession until then) to army laundresses to spies. Women assumed clerical positions in the U.S. government; turned their homes into cottage factories to make blankets, bandages, and uniforms; and even disguised themselves as men in order to serve as combat soldiers on the battlefield. This presentation uses historical photographs and current research to tell the fascinating story of women’s work during the Civil War, with special emphasis on notable Kansas women. PowerPoint. *Presented by Diane Eickhoff.*

*Diane is an independent historian.*

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## Waiting on—and for—Dignity: Black Waiters before the Civil War

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In 1820's urban America, the nascent commercial dining industry demanded a new occupation: restaurant waiter. It was a job scorned by white, native-born men; however, free black men prized the positions. Many African American waiters strove to instill pride, status, and dignity into their work, even though it was more or less the same job performed by those enslaved in southern homes at the time. Attention to this remarkable process in one of the few non-segregated northern occupations is revealing of how free African Americans endeavored to raise the status of their labor and sheds light on the enduring centrality of work to the American identity. *Presented by Kelly Erby.*

*Kelly is an historian of early American history and teaches at Washburn University.*

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## The Sternberg Family: Pioneers of Modern Paleontology

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Charlie Sternberg and his sons George, Charles, and Levi were the first paleontologists to develop the means of preserving and preparing the remains of prehistoric sea creatures collected in Kansas and exhibited in museums around the world. Join us to learn how many of the Sternberg specimens were partially prepared in the field, then enclosed in a steel-reinforced plaster slab that was later removed in the laboratory. The specimens included giant mosasaurs, plesiosaurs, and pterosaurs. Charlie and George also used photography to document their work in the field and in their laboratories, leaving a fascinating record of their accomplishments. PowerPoint. *Presented by Michael J. Everhart.*

*Mike is an adjunct curator of paleontology at the Sternberg Museum of Natural History, Fort Hays State University.*

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## 150 Years in Kansas Law

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Lawyers arrived in Kansas Territory shortly after it was created by the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Most of the territory's early lawyers had received training in law offices, although the quality of that training varied. Law school graduates were scarce on the frontier, but with the establishment of law schools at the University of Kansas and Washburn University, formal education became the preferred, and eventually exclusive, means of preparation for a law career. Join us to compare how social, economic, and technological advances continue to change the work of lawyers and judges today. *Presented by Leon Graves.*

*Leon is a lawyer and an independent scholar of early Kansas legal history.*

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## Frontier Kansas Cattle Towns

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**B**uilding a cattle depot on the plains was an innovative idea in 1867. Texas ranchers could drive their wild longhorn cattle to market without the conflicts experienced with farmers in the more densely populated Missouri. As a result, an exciting atmosphere of frontier entrepreneurs found opportunities in the Kansas cattle towns. Join us to discuss how cowboys, cattle buyers, saloon keepers, madams, merchants, and settlers came together, and how the relationships that were formed shaped a national industry. *Presented by Jim Gray.*

### A Bullwhacker's Life Freighting Supplies over the Plains

**B**ullwhackers traveled the Kansas frontier over and over again, freighting supplies and shaping a profession now enjoyed by today's long-haul truck drivers. Traveling the Santa Fe, California-Oregon, and Smoky Hill Trails, commercial and independent bullwhackers walked beside their ox-drawn wagons, courting danger with every trip. This presentation examines how fortunes could be won or lost and how bullwhackers tested their skills at peaceful negotiation as they passed through lands controlled by prairie bands of Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, and Comanche peoples. Only through tribal blessing were the bullwhackers allowed safe passage. *Presented by Jim Gray.*

*Jim is an author, speaker, and promoter of cowboy heritage in Kansas.*

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## Succeeding Generations: African American Agriculture in Kansas

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**O**ur state's deep agricultural roots and pioneer history are familiar to most Kansans. Less known, however, is the history of the thousands of African American pioneers in Kansas who settled to farm, such as Junius Groves, born into slavery, who became a millionaire in Kansas agriculture and the nation's wealthiest black farmer of his era. By 1910, black Kansans farmed a greater average acreage, and enjoyed a higher average farm value, than farmers of any race in the American South, and other African American farmers in most states. Many of these agricultural operations endure today. Overheads or PowerPoint. *Presented by Anne Hawkins.*

*Anne is a historian and teaches at Washburn University.*

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## Kansas Brewers and Breweries

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**A**s settlers streamed into Kansas, brewers set up their mash tuns and wort kettles when making beer was still an art and state prohibition a bemusing notion. A reassuring fixture in German enclaves, Kansas's 90+ breweries fueled social events and made brewers one of the most influential citizens in town. Discover these brewers of early Kansas, German social customs, livelihood loss, and the emergence of artisan brewing today. *Presented by Cindy Higgins.*

*Cindy is a journalist and Kansas historian.*

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## Singing the Cattle North

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Cowboy folksongs were more than entertainment on the lonely prairie: they told the story of a way of work that has since changed radically. Through trail-driving songs, night-herding songs, and bunkhouse/chuckwagon songs, cattle drovers produced a musical culture that still appeals to today's ranchers who have traded their horses for four-wheelers and six-guns for cell phones. Join us as we learn about this important folk tradition of the prairie. *Presented by Jim Hoy.*

## A Photographer's Work and the Work of Western Kansas

Francis Marion Steele arrived in Dodge City in 1890 with a buggy outfitted with glass-plate photography equipment, setting out to document cowboys at work on the open range. As the prairie began to fence up and cattle ranching gave way to crop farming, Steele's photographs traced the cultural changes with dramatic images of sod-busting, wheat farming, and sugar beet production. His camera also captured railroad construction, irrigation projects, and town boosterism. Come and enjoy images from Steele's camera as we discuss the dramatic ways work changed at the turn of the 20th century. *Presented by Jim Hoy.*

*Jim teaches folklore and literature at Emporia State University.*

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## The March of the Amazon Army

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In 1921, thousands of women in southeast Kansas marched in protest of the hazardous working conditions, poor pay, and discrimination that their husbands and male relatives were facing everyday in the coal mines. Representing an ethnic mix of French, Swedish, British, Italian, German, and Eastern European immigrants that was unique to Kansas, the marchers were dubbed the "Amazon Army" by the *New York Times*. Learn how their spirited act brought men and women together in one of the most dynamic pages of American labor history. *Presented by Linda O'Nelio Knoll.*

*Linda is an educator, author, and historian who works on the local history of southeast Kansas.*

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## Images of Depression-Era Work in Kansas Post Office Murals

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Between 1936 and 1942, the federal government's Fine Arts Section of the Procurement Division of the Treasury Department partnered with local citizens in Kansas and professional artists and architects to select images for post office murals. The murals portrayed the workers, scenic landscapes, and heritage of the state and celebrated the productivity of local citizens during the Great Depression. Learn how the resulting heroic, if not fully accurate, depictions of agriculture, industry and state history preserved local autonomy while projecting the New Deal values of optimism and communal progress. *Presented by Lorraine Madway.*

*Lorraine is the curator of Special Collections and university archivist at WSU Libraries.*

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## 19th-Century Rural Kansas Women at Work

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Learn about the various ways Kansas women of the late 1800s worked. Although most tended children, managed family gardens, butchered livestock and game, and canned and preserved winter rations, some women also augmented their family incomes by bartering agricultural products in nearby towns. Many single women worked as domestics in the city or teachers in the one-room school houses that dotted the prairie; some returned to take up the rural labors that their mothers had performed, but others elected to never return to farm life. PowerPoint. *Presented by Isaias McCaffery.*

*Isaias is a professor of history and the chair of the Humanities and Social Sciences at Independence Community College.*

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## Bushwhackin' the Jayhawks along a Civil War Border

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Through an exploration of letters and diary entries from Civil War personalities such as Webster Moses, Samuel Ayers, various women on the homefront, and those formerly enslaved, this presentation will explore how residents lived, dressed, prepared for battle, and worked on a daily basis to ensure that their side would be victorious, whether they were Missouri bushwhackers or Kansas jayhawkers. Although the Civil War dominated the lives of those living along the border, the residents continued to live as normally as possible, farming, building communities, and rebuilding their shattered lives once the war ended. PowerPoint optional. *Presented by Brian Craig Miller.*

*Brian teaches history at Emporia State University.*

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## Kansas Working Women in the Movies

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**K**ansas women's work took place both in front of and behind the cameras of the film industry. This unique presentation will explore the impact that many key women had on the development of the medium. Using rare and historic film footage and interviews, this talk reveals how talented women battled against studio bosses and the conventions of the day in order to pursue their dreams. Major topics include the mainstream cinema's depiction of women's work across class and race, the lost women pioneers of silent cinema, and the contributions beyond Hollywood of such filmmakers as adventurer Osa Johnson of Chanute, Kansas.

*Presented by Eric Monder.*

*Eric is a writer, documentary filmmaker, and instructor at Bethany College and McPherson College.*

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## The Work Culture of Food in Early Kansas

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**L**ooking at Flint Hills communities founded before 1900, this talk explores early food production, preservation, and preparation and how those are closely linked to both culture and labor. Assumed familial roles in food preparation, the evolution of food culture when Old World practices were adapted to a new environment, and the way that labor practices required for food culture left traces behind in the land itself will be discussed. Surviving ice houses, spring houses, common pastures, community slaughterhouses, and whole-community canning events illustrate the rich food culture of early Kansas. *Presented by M.J. Morgan.*

## Ethnic Labor and Small Towns on the Rock Island Rail Line

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**P**erceived as transient laborers and barely mentioned in railroad histories, ethnic crews not only worked the rail lines, they also impacted the cultures of rural Kansas communities. Focusing on the railway town of Broughton and the Rock Island High Line in the 1920s, this talk details the oral histories of residents who remember when Mexican and town women exchanged food recipes, Mexican workers lived in boxcars near the rail lines, and residents could hear the sounds of Greek music echoing over the fields at twilight. *Presented by M.J. Morgan.*

*M.J. is a Kansas historian and research director at the Chapman Center for Rural Studies at Kansas State University.*

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## Hucksters, Barkers, and Sideshows

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**S**ee! and Hear! how the hucksters, barkers, and sideshow workers of Kansas plied their craft. This talk explores the businessmen, eccentrics, and entrepreneurs who took their work to the smallest communities across the country with transient show-based setups, selling entertainment, promise, and miracle cures and shaping how we hype, advertise, and “turn the tip.” From the carnival and sideshow culture of Kinsley (Midway, USA) to the infamous “goat gland doctor” John R. Brinkley of Milford, you’ll be Amazed! and Awed! at their inventiveness and chutzpah. *Presented by Erika Nelson.*

## The Tall-Tale Postcards of Dad Martin and Pop Conard

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**W**illiam H. “Dad” Martin and Frank D. “Pop” Conard were pioneers of the postcard printing business who found inspiration in the trials and tribulations of Kansas culture. From the early 1900s through 1940, their carefully crafted images pushed the medium of photography, promoting Kansas as a land where ears of corn grew so large that farmers used logging saws to slice them and monster grasshoppers could stop a train in its tracks. This talk includes a PowerPoint presentation, postcard samples, and a how-to demonstration so you can make your own “hopper whopper.” *Presented by Erika Nelson.*

*Erika is the creator and curator of the World’s Largest Collection of the World’s Smallest Versions of the World’s Largest Things Traveling Roadside Attraction and Museum.*

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## Converting Pasture Paths to Public Roads

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**A**utomobiles granted a freedom to travel that suddenly made the need for roads an emergency. The transition from local and county roads to state and interstate highways required vision, energy, and collaboration. Learn about the early years of our roadway system when Kansas farmers cleaned and maintained the roads that crossed their properties and early travelers had a unique culture of collaboration and adventure. The work and planning by farmers, bankers, and town boosters make Kansas public road construction a dramatic story of the way we worked in the early 20th century. PowerPoint optional. *Presented by Joan Nothern.*

*Joan is president and co-founder of the Solomon Valley–Highway 24–Heritage Alliance.*

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## Serving the Needs of New American Workers: Chicago's Hull House

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At the turn of the 20th century, immigrant workers were drawn to Chicago's industry. There they faced poor working conditions and were often left entirely without aid. To help ease these social, cultural, and educational deficiencies, Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr opened Hull House, a "settlement house" to serve the needs of one neighborhood's residents. This talk details how women from established middle- and upper-class families lived in the immigrant neighborhood and provided a structure through which residents could gain job skills, learn English, enjoy social events, and become part of the American political process. PowerPoint optional. *Presented by Abby Pierron.*

*Abby is an American Studies scholar and works at the Watkins Community Museum in Lawrence.*

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Travel restriction: 3 hrs. from Lawrence



## You Be the Judge: The United States Supreme Court in Review

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Find out whether you agree with recent decisions by our nation's highest court. Kansas judges will lead your group in a re-creation of actual Supreme Court cases, with the audience playing the roles of the litigants, lawyers, and judges (no preparation needed). You'll have fun as you gain new perspectives on the judicial process and debate rights and responsibilities in America today. Minimum audience of 50 required. Offered in cooperation with the Kansas Judiciary and the Kansas Bar Association. *Presented by Judge G. Joseph Pierron, Jr.*

*Joe enjoys sharing the drama of the legal process with Kansans, young and old.*

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Travel: 3 hrs from Topeka



## Imagining the Future of Work at World's Fairs, 1933–1965

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From the 1933 Century of Change exhibition in Chicago through the 1964–1965 New York exhibition, one of the central projects of American world's fairs was to imagine the shape of the future. Many of these projected futures have become familiar lore, such as the imagined highways of New York's 1939 World of Tomorrow fair and the monorail of Seattle's 1960 Century 21 Expo. Join us to discuss a feature of futurist predictions that has been relatively unexamined: how did world's fairs imagine the workplace, and the work duties, of the future? *Presented by Tom Prasch.*

*Tom chairs the Department of History at Washburn University.*

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## Black Newspapers and African-American Communities in Kansas

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**B**lack newspapers served as a pipeline for information, a platform to denounce injustices, and a promoter for racial uplift through education and entrepreneurship. Some editors were bi-vocational while others established themselves as journalists. Learn about these 19th-century papers and the African American press pioneers. Overheads or PowerPoint. *Presented by Aleen Ratzlaff.*

## Editorial Cartoons in the Black Press

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**E**ditorial cartoons appeared regularly in African American newspapers published at the turn of the 20th century. Cartoonists, who also worked as engravers, illustrated concerns about such topics as politics, equality, and identity that were relevant to their readers. Overheads or PowerPoint. *Presented by Aleen Ratzlaff.*

Aleen has researched the black press of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

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## Hard Working Entertainers on the Kansas Frontier

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**A**cting on the Kansas frontier was a grueling way to earn a living but was enthusiastically pursued by many. Learn how Harry Houdini's wife Bess rescued the young Buster Keaton from a burning hotel, how Eddie Foy entertained the cowboys of Dodge City, and other firsthand accounts by 19th- and 20th-century performers as they brought live entertainment to the residents of Kansas. PowerPoint. *Presented by Jane Rhoads.*

*Jane is an author and a 2009 Notable Kansas Book award winner.*

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## Kansas Takes the Checkered Flag in American Racing

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Stock car racing is generally associated with the South, and drag racing is considered a West Coast phenomenon. Kansas, however, played a vital role in the development of stock car and drag racing. Some of the earliest drivers of NASCAR (National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing) and the NHRA (National Hot Rod Association) came from Kansas and brought many early trophies home to the Sunflower State. This talk examines how Kansas race tracks in Halstead, Belleville, and Topeka gave rise to innovations that are still keeping the motors of race cars running across the nation. *Presented by Sara Jane Richter.*

## The Frontier School Teacher

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Often with the barest of education themselves and modest supplies and curriculum materials, frontier teachers taught all subjects to all students of varying ages, usually in one-room schoolhouses with little heat and light. Weather and agricultural planting and harvesting schedules kept their students from attending regularly. Female teachers often had contracts that prohibited them from marrying or even being seen in the company of men not related to them. Regardless of their limitations and obstacles, the teaching profession attracted many bright and tenacious instructors who enlightened pioneer children about Shakespeare, the multiplication tables, and American history. *Presented by Sara Jane Richter.*

*Sara teaches English and is Dean of the School of Liberal Arts at Oklahoma Panhandle State University in Goodwell.*

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## Bucket Lists & Looking Back: What Was Worth the Work?

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“Bucket lists” are wish lists of accomplishments people hope to do before they die, or “kick the bucket.” What life goals will you look back on and believe were the best work for your life? In researching this talk, Karen posed the question, “What was worth the work?” to Kansans living past their 95th year. Join us to hear their answers and explore where they worked, why they worked, and what work they have continued through the years. PowerPoint optional. *Presented by Karen Ridder.*

*Karen is a freelance journalist specializing in Kansas topics.*

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## How a Poet Works

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“I loafe and invite my soul, / I lean and loafe at my ease observing a spear of summer grass”: so Walt Whitman describes the work of a poet who activates the subtle machinations of the mind, heart, and soul. We may see the poet chewing grass, lost in a Kansas field, studying Lewis and Clark’s impressions of the Missouri River, or addressing a legislative committee. This talk explores notions of work, the relevance of poetry, the “busy” life of a person who appears “lazy,” and the importance of art to the soul of a nation. *Presented by Susan Rieke.*

*Susan is a professor of English at the University of Saint Mary.*

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## Kansas Politics Working for Change, 1880–1920

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Between 1880 and 1920, Kansans worked for political, social, and economic change. This presentation will explore the lasting legacies of the prohibition, populist, socialist, and progressive Republican parties as they developed during this volatile time period. Prohibition, women’s suffrage, workman’s compensation, the 8-hour workday, corporate regulation, direct popular election of senators, unionization, environmental protections, tax reform, and health care reform were many of the issues that Kansans worked to change or install during this time. Charismatic figures such as John P. St. John, Carry A. Nation, William Allen White, and others will also be discussed. PowerPoint. *Presented by Randy Roberts.*

*Randy is a curator of Special Collections and university archivist.*

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## The Millers of Kansas

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Flour milling was one of the major economic enterprises in Kansas from the 1880s into the 1950s. Mills were often the foundation of many Kansas towns and provided the basis for community life, attracting workers, post offices, railroads, and schools. This discussion will explore the lives of mill workers, the impact milling had on communities, and how those communities coped when mills began consolidating and closing after World War II. Overhead projector. *Presented by Norman E. Saul.*

*Norman specializes in Russian history and international relations.*

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## Ornithologists, Artists, and Bird Paparazzi of Kansas

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**K**ansas has produced some of the nation's foremost experts on birds, men and women who have devoted their lives to studying and portraying avian life with a passion that few might understand. This talk examines the rich and colorful history of ornithology as a profession in Kansas and the significant contributions of artists, photographers, and cinematographers who focus on birds as their subjects. Is there a particular psyche that drives "bird people," and what is the unique interplay between professional and amateur bird people? Scientists, artists, and hobbyists directly influence the field of ornithology and the greater scientific world at large. *Presented by David Seibel.*

*David is an ornithologist and professor of life sciences at Johnson County Community College.*

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## The Work of Rural Kansas Children

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**F**rom gathering firewood and hunting game to tending stock and weeding gardens, children's activities were crucial to families' survival on Kansas homesteads, farms, and ranches. This presentation will dramatize differing perspectives on rural children's work, from the nostalgia of Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House on the Prairie* to the grim social criticism of Marcet and Emanuel Haldeman-Julius's *Dust*, as well as recently published memoirs of growing up in the Flint Hills during the 1930s. New research on the history of American childhood, African American children in Kansas settlements, and orphans resettled on Kansas farms will be included. PowerPoint optional. *Presented by Margy Stewart.*

*Margy is a professor emeritus of English and co-founder of the Prairie Heritage Institute.*

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## Annie Diggs: A Voice for Working People

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**J**ournalist, advocate, and librarian Annie Diggs (1848-1916) came to know the conditions of Kansas workers while working as a reporter to supplement her family's income. Learn how her own struggles to earn an education, overcome poverty, and find employment led to her fight for women's suffrage, for farmers' rights to control money and transportation as well as land, and for workers' rights to fair wages and decent working conditions. As Kansas State Librarian, Annie established the Kansas Library Association so librarians could gather and share ideas, and the traveling library system to bring books to all parts of the state. PowerPoint optional. *Presented by Joan Stone.*

*Joan is a retired professor of dance history and choreography at the University of Kansas.*

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## Our Food and Our Land

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From Native women utilizing bison scapula hoes to ethanol-powered, satellite-controlled, robotic drones, agriculture in Kansas has transitioned from a farming folk-culture to a corporate agri-culture. This presentation explores these transformations in food production and asks what these changes mean to our state and residents. Have changes in food production changed what it means to be a Kansan? *Presented by Joyce Thierer.*

*Joyce specializes in agricultural and women's history.*

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## Creativity As Art and Labor

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Products of creativity such as poems, short stories, novels, autobiographies, songs, and photographs seldom emerge as full-blown, complete works. Nearly all artists confess to a process of making and reshaping their work before they achieve a sense of satisfaction with it. Thus the act of creativity demands writing and rewriting, taking and retaking photos, or simply doing and redoing. It requires, in other words, *work*. This talk explores the nature and function of creative labor in selected works by famous Kansas artists Langston Hughes, Gordon Parks, and Frank Marshall Davis. *Presented by Edgar Tidwell.*

*Edgar teaches African American and American Literature at KU.*

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## From Fatherland to Farmland: German POWs in the Great Plains

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Thousands of German soldiers captured by Allies during World War II were sent to the United States to perform agricultural labor. Many of these prisoners were housed in POW camps in rural Kansas. By virtue of their work on the farms and the close proximity the prisoners shared with their guards and local populations, both groups had ample opportunity to learn about one another and even develop friendships. Learn how many prisoners took up new hobbies or enrolled in classes, and curious townspeople saw firsthand that they had more in common with their captured foes than they might have imagined. PowerPoint. *Presented by Matthew Thompson.*

*Matthew is a registrar at the Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum.*

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## African American Work beyond Menial Slave Labor, Sharecropping, and Industrial Occupations

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This presentation expands popular perceptions of African Americans' historic role in the U.S. economy, exploring how some engaged in entrepreneurial and managerial activities despite the heavy restrictions of slavery and Jim Crow. During slavery, some enslaved individuals were trained to manage agri-business operations. By the late 19th century, while most African Americans were trapped in modified slavery known as sharecropping, a significant minority of blacks, through ingenuity and hard work, became landowners and entrepreneurs. Similarly, during the early 20th century when millions of African Americans found work in factories and steel mills, some actively worked to be entrepreneurs. PowerPoint optional. *Presented by Robert Weems.*

*Robert is the Willard W. Garvey Distinguished Professor of Business History at Wichita State University.*

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Travel restriction: 3 hrs. from Wichita



## Jesse B. Semple: The Voice of Black American Workers

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Langston Hughes created his Jesse B. Semple character, often just called Simple, as the voice for working-class African Americans. Originally published as a newspaper column, the Simple stories let us hear the voices, philosophy, and social conditions of African American factory workers, many of whom were transplanted from the southern states. Join us as we learn more about Jesse B. Semple and what he means to today's workers. *Presented by Carmaletta M. Williams.*

*Carmaletta teaches English and is a professor of English and African American Studies at Johnson County Community College.*

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## Now, That's Rural: Entrepreneurs and Innovators Who Shaped Kansas Communities

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The work and life of many rural Kansas communities have been shaped by entrepreneurs and community leaders. This presentation highlights real-world examples of rural entrepreneurs who have built businesses and created jobs and opportunities, changing the way Kansans work. These businesses include manufacturing in Marysville, advertising in Downs, boats in Neodesha, trailer hitches in Humboldt, robots in Winfield, and more. The presentation also honors the emerging role of innovation, technology, and telecommunications that have brought about so many changes. *Presented by Ron Wilson.*

*Ron produces a weekly radio program and news column about rural Kansas.*

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## Urban Work Stories

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At the end of World War II, Wyandotte County was the second-largest industrial area in Kansas, whereas Johnson County was one of the strongest agricultural counties of the state. By 2012, Johnson County has become the state's most populous with local and national service businesses providing most of the employment. Wyandotte County's industrial sector remains strong, but it has also added retail, tourism, and sports attractions to its economic mix. Together, the two counties comprise one-sixth of the Kansas population. This program discusses the ways in which residents have changed the way they work over the years. PowerPoint (provided). *Presented by Bill Worley.*

## How Rural Electrification Transformed Kansas

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Prior to the 1930s, the prohibitive costs of stringing electrical lines across vast rural spaces made electricity a primarily urban phenomenon. This meant that many jobs of the farm had to be done by humans, animals, tractors, and combines. Learn how New Deal legislation established rural electrical associations (REAs) as cooperative ventures managed by farmers and supported by low-cost government loans. For the first time, farm wives could have washing and sewing machines, dairy farmers could refrigerate milk, and families could be entertained by radios and eventually televisions. Rural work productivity soared. PowerPoint (provided). *Presented by Bill Worley.*

*Bill specializes in Kansas and Missouri history at the Blue River Branch of Metropolitan Community Colleges.*

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