



## THRESHOLDS, WALLS, AND BRIDGES: JOURNEYS THROUGH THE BORDERLANDS OF HISTORY

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# Coda

## 2024

In August 2024 I went on a road trip from Calgary to Albuquerque with my son Daniel, daughter-in-law Barbara, grandsons Stanley and Spencer, and many stuffed animals. Our trek south reversed the route Daniel and I had driven to Calgary a quarter century earlier. Along the way we stopped at the Ludlow Massacre site, and I got to tell my grandsons what had happened there and show my family the plaque designating Ludlow as a National Historic Landmark. In Albuquerque, we showed the boys their dad's elementary and junior high schools, and the houses where he'd lived. We had a wonderful visit with my brother Phil and sister-in-law Marjorie, who provided major support during our years in Albuquerque.

Then, on August 17, 2024, another hot Albuquerque summer morning, I hugged Phil and Marjorie goodbye, climbed into an overloaded SUV with Daniel, Barbara, Stanley, and Spencer (but thankfully no cats), and drove north toward home.



# Epilogue: The Times They Are a-Changin'<sup>1</sup>

I have used section introductions to provide the contexts in which I wrote my lectures. I offer this final chapter to provide a sense of the contexts in which I finished this book. If I were still giving annual Chair's Lectures, this is what I would have said in May 2025. I would have begun by saying that I was in the final stages of publishing a book of my Chair's Lectures, which would wind up my years as the Imperial Oil-Lincoln McKay Chair at the University of Calgary. In a broader sense, I would say, *Thresholds, Walls, and Bridges* caps my years of teaching and scholarship, and this final lecture is about the contexts in which that book, and the career it represents, will be published.

It's a challenging time for historians, for teaching and writing the kinds of history in these pages. I used to conclude my women's history classes by saying that I hoped that what we had studied would remain history—that my students would not face the same inequalities as previous generations of women. Events are changing quickly, and I can only hope that by the time a reader sees this Epilogue, that it, too, will be history.

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The American Historical Association proclaims on its website and publications that "Everything Has a History."<sup>2</sup> "Everything" includes this book. It originated as annual public lectures I presented at the University of Calgary as the Imperial Oil-Lincoln McKay Chair in American Studies. I added the footnotes and introductions during the COVID-19 pandemic, when research libraries were closed, which slowed my progress. It was hard to find peer reviewers for the manuscript during COVID, as historians faced illness and loss, learned to teach on-line, and struggled to conduct research without access to libraries or archives. Those pressures further slowed publication.

The COVID pandemic was only one of the contexts that influenced this volume. Contemporary events influenced my perspective and choice of subject for each lecture. So did the more personal contexts of my journey from the United States to Canada, as I adjusted to living and working in a new country.

This Epilogue locates *Thresholds, Walls, and Bridges* in some disturbing contexts in which it nears completion. The subtitle, “Journeys Through the Borderlands of History,” refers most literally to my personal journey across national borders and through their borderlands. It also refers to the essays, which, in various ways, traverse the boundaries of national histories. Some compare how the United States and Canada have addressed common issues or have imagined our respective pasts. Some challenge the belief that the nation itself is the only important subject of history, focusing instead on daily acts and grass roots social movements. Some cross disciplinary boundaries, reflecting my graduate training in the University of Michigan interdisciplinary Program in American Culture. Its actors go beyond the “battles, dates, and politicians” of my childhood history classes to include women, workers, and people historically marginalized by virtue of race or sexuality. These boundary crossings have all faced official attacks in the United States from the second Trump presidential administration.

When I arrived in Calgary, I was unsure how American history might speak to Canadians. I probed what linked and separated our histories and sought in my teaching and public lectures to make humanity visible across national and social boundaries. Crossing national borders challenged my assumptions about national loyalties as well. I remain an engaged American citizen; I became a Canadian citizen in 2017. I never imagined that I could be caught in a conflict between my two countries. When I moved to Canada in 1999, the U.S.-Canada border was celebrated as the longest unpoliced border in the world. Canada and the United States were longstanding allies and trading partners, with linked economies and national security interests. I’ve lived in Canada for twenty-six years and regularly crossed the border to visit friends and family, do research, and attend professional conferences. Those border crossings were largely uneventful. The Immigration Officers of both countries generally welcomed me “home.” I was at home on both sides of the border.

This work nears completion in less welcoming contexts. Since Donald Trump regained the presidency on January 20, 2025, his administration has challenged the Canada-U.S. relationship, the historical profession,

academic freedom, education, and the significance of the border itself. This book has become uncomfortably timely and its content surprisingly controversial.

Even before re-gaining office, President Trump discredited the international boundary treaties between the two nations, threatened to “get rid of that artificially drawn line” (the border), discounted Canadian sovereignty, and asserted his intention to annex Canada as the 51<sup>st</sup> state through economic force.<sup>3</sup> There has been no similar border threat since the 1840s, when the boundary between British North American and United States territory remained undetermined from the crest of the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. In 1819 Britain and the United States agreed to a “joint occupation” of Oregon Territory from the northern boundary of California to the southern boundary of Russian America, 54°40' north latitude. During the 1844 presidential campaign, American expansionists supported James K. Polk for president and chanted “54-40 or fight,” threatening war unless Britain ceded all claims to the territory. Instead, the victorious Polk provoked a war with Mexico and claimed all or part of the present states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah, and Colorado. Polk couldn’t fight two wars at once, so in 1846 he negotiated the Oregon Treaty with Britain, establishing the 49<sup>th</sup> Parallel as the boundary between British North America and U.S. territory from the Rockies westward, with a slight jog south to keep Vancouver Island in British North America. Which is how that “artificially drawn” portion of the border was established.

Trump’s threats became concrete on February 1, 2025, when he announced 25 percent tariffs on all Canadian and Mexican goods, blaming both countries for an alleged “major threat of illegal aliens and deadly drugs killing our Citizens, including fentanyl.” Since then, the details of the tariffs imposed on Canada have changed frequently, as the President exempted some goods and increased tariffs on others and then announced 10 percent tariffs on goods imported from many more countries. Some Americans believe Trump’s depiction of the Canadian threats; most Canadians are united against Trump’s tariffs and annexation plans.

Trump’s chaotic tariff wars threaten to destabilize international economies in ways unparalleled since the U.S. Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930 destroyed two-thirds of international trade and helped escalate precipitous economic decline into a worldwide depression. The “major threat” of the fentanyl crisis is real in Canada and Mexico as well as the United States, but in 2024 only one percent of the fentanyl entering the United States

came from Canada. Nonetheless, Canada appointed a “fentanyl czar” to coordinate increased border security; deployed sixty additional U.S.-made drones, two Black Hawk helicopters, and extra canine teams to the border; promised an increase of 10,000 “frontline” border personnel at a cost of \$1.3 billion Canadian; and invested \$200 million Canadian in new intelligence gathering.<sup>4</sup>

These facts don’t matter. The President manufactured the crisis because he needed a loophole to circumvent Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the power to “lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,” and to regulate commerce with foreign countries. Congress delegated that power to the President in emergencies through the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act, which grants the president broad authority over economic transactions when faced with an “unusual and extraordinary threat” from foreign sources, generally presumed to refer to an armed invasion or threat of similar magnitude. Fentanyl deaths are a public health tragedy, but no extraordinary threat from Canada caused U.S. fentanyl overdoses.

If the international trade crisis was artificial, the threats to the U.S. historical profession are alarmingly real. The conditions in which historians work have shifted radically since I wrote my lectures, changing in ways that would have impeded or prevented my work and that may affect its reception.

In the early months of his second administration, Donald Trump attacked archives, libraries, universities, and government institutions essential to historical scholarship. The President fired the National Archivist, decimated the staffs of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and threatened to destroy the U.S. Department of Education. His administration arrested foreign students for exercising free speech, cancelled the government loans that enabled countless U.S. students to attend university, and withheld federal support from universities deemed hostile to his ideology.

Barely two months into the second Trump presidency, on March 24, 2025, the American Historical Association (AHA) condemned “the dismantling of federal departments and agencies through the indiscriminate termination of federal employees and elimination of programs, including historical offices.”<sup>5</sup> The AHA is the largest historical association in the world, with over 10,400 members in May 2025. Nineteen other historical organizations co-signed its statement, protesting executive orders and acts

of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) that threatened the National Archives and Records Administration, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the National Park Service. They opposed the President's plan to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education and "many other vital agencies [that] employ and support the work of historians and interpret history for the public."<sup>6</sup>

The AHA focused particular attention on staff terminations at the National Archives, which preserves and accesses the records of the federal government and its agencies. On February 7, 2025, Trump fired Colleen J. Shogan, Archivist of the United States. Other senior NARA staff and dozens of recently hired employees were also fired or forced to resign, leaving the National Archives without experienced professional leadership. In the interim, Trump named Secretary of State Marco Rubio the acting NARA director. "Closing federal history offices, rolling back protections granted by the Freedom of Information Act, firing archivists, and dismantling departments responsible for education, the humanities, arts, and sciences will render it impossible for Americans to learn about and from the past," the AHA warned, cautioning that a "scorched-earth approach to the federal bureaucracy," would rob the nation of "the records and accumulated knowledge to make well-informed decisions."<sup>7</sup>

Eleven days later, the AHA and the same co-signers condemned "the evisceration" of the National Endowment for the Humanities, after DOGE notified some 75 percent of NEH staff that they had been placed on administrative leave and informed hundreds of NEH grant recipients that their funding had been terminated. The DOGE grant termination letters said NEH funds were being reallocated to "a new direction in furtherance of the President's agenda."<sup>8</sup>

Established in 1965 by an Act of Congress, the National Endowment for the Humanities provides grants that support humanities research, professional development workshops for teachers, preservation of historic sites, and a wide variety of public programs. DOGE declared that the termination of these programs was "an urgent priority for the administration." In response, the AHA denounced DOGE's "frontal attack on the nation's public culture" as "unpatriotic, anti-American, and unjustified." "Under the guise of 'safeguarding' the federal government," it continued, "DOGE has terminated grants and diminished staffing to a level that renders it impossible for the agency to perform its mission responsibly and with integrity. These actions imperil both the education of the American public and the preservation of our history."<sup>9</sup>



The “urgent priority for the administration” became clearer on April 24, 2025, when an NEH press release announced that future awards would “be merit-based, awarded to projects that do not promote extreme ideologies based upon race or gender.” NEH had therefore “cancelled awards that are at variance with agency priorities, including but not limited to those on diversity, equity, and inclusion (or DEI) and environmental justice, as well as awards that may not inspire public confidence in the use of taxpayer funds.” The grant terminations complied with Trump’s Executive Orders, including “Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing,” “Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government,” and “Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling.”<sup>10</sup>

In response, the American Historical Association, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Modern Language Association filed suit against NEH and DOGE, challenging the dismantling of NEH as unconstitutional. “Most fundamentally, the Constitution grants Congress—not the President—the power to create and prescribe the duties of Federal agencies, and Congress maintains the exclusive power of the purse in directing how Federal funds must be spent,” the suit argued. “The President cannot unilaterally shut down an agency that Congress has created, nor may an agency refuse to spend funds that Congress has appropriated.” Such Executive action, it charged, violates the constitutional separation of powers, the Impoundment Control Act of 1974, and the Administrative Procedure Act. The suit further argued that DOGE was not a legal federal agency, because Congress did not create it or grant it authority to do anything. DOGE’s actions and DOGE itself were therefore unconstitutional. The three organizations sought “to enjoin and set aside Defendants’ unlawful actions, and to require the Trump Administration to operate NEH as Congress intended, unless and until Congress says otherwise.”<sup>11</sup>

If these constitutional arguments prevail, they could apply to other Trump administration executive orders and actions as well.

These events directly touch me and my work. I belong to the American Historical Association and to four organizations that co-signed the AHA statements: the Organization of American Historians, Western History Association, Labor and Working Class History Association, and the Alliance for Texas History.<sup>12</sup> I conducted research for two chapters of this book at the National Archives, with the help of professional archivists and of staff who fetched countless boxes of Homestead Proof Statements and patiently removed straight pins and paper clips that had been rusting in

brittle files for over a century. An NEH summer stipend supported some of the background research for chapter 3. An NEH affiliate, the Colorado Humanities Program (CHP), funded my first work in public history.<sup>13</sup> CHP grants sent Women's Studies scholars to present our work in eleven Colorado communities from 1981–1983. Another CHP project, “With These Hands,” took me to three small towns in 1982 to discuss Colorado labor history. The CHP funded three annual Colorado Women's History Week celebrations that I chaired. Another CHP grant allowed me to co-produce a slide-tape and video, “We Were Never Supposed to Be Rich,” based on my oral history interviews with descendants of Cripple Creek miners. Some of their stories appear in chapter 3.

The Colorado Humanities Program and the Association for the Humanities in Idaho provided grant support for the first Women's West Conference in 1983, a catalytic meeting of scholars who established the field of western women's history, represented here in chapters 2, 3, 9, and 13. The Women's West conference generated a book, *The Women's West*, which I co-edited with Susan Armitage; a professional organization, the Coalition for Western Women's History; and professional networks that continue to nourish scholarship on women, gender, and sexuality in the North American West.<sup>14</sup> The opening plenary of the conference introduced me to Canadian historian Sylvia Van Kirk, whose pathbreaking *Many Tender Ties* placed Indigenous women at the center of the western Canadian fur trade.<sup>15</sup> Van Kirk's participation helped generate cross-border networks and exchanges among women's historians that continued through my years at the University of Calgary.

My work is the kind of history the Trump administration wants to suppress—work that addresses class, race, and gender; work “including but not limited to . . . diversity, equity, and inclusion (or DEI).” This administration seeks to erase histories that include people of color, women, workers and LGBTQ2S+ people, or topics like slavery and colonialism that might cause feelings of discomfort. I have worked to achieve a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive history, focusing on the histories of labor, women, gender, and social change movements devoted to justice and equity. I include these actors and topics not to indoctrinate or promote an ideology, but to be historically accurate.

Efforts to censor history predated recent political campaigns and animated many who voted for President Trump. In recent years, attacks on DEI content have banned histories of racial and gender discrimination from school libraries and classrooms in many states, led by Florida and

my home state of Texas. *Newsweek* magazine reported in October 2024 that over 3,000 books had been banned across various states, “primarily driven by debates over race, gender identity, and LGBTQ+ rights.”<sup>16</sup> PEN America documented nearly 16,000 book bans in public schools nationwide since 2021, more than at any time since the Red Scares of the 1950s. It counted over 10,000 public school book bans during the 2023–2024 school year, finding that “everywhere, it is the books that have long fought for a place on the shelf that are being targeted. Books by authors of color, by LGBTQ+ authors, by women. Books about racism, sexuality, gender, history.”<sup>17</sup> *Books about history*.

I love historical research. I love to read. I have spent countless happy hours in archives and libraries. As I wrote this Epilogue, President Trump fired the Librarian of Congress, Dr. Carla Hayden, the first African American and the first woman to hold the position. I learned of her firing shortly after it happened on May 8, 2025, in a Facebook post from New Mexico Senator Martin Heinrich:

President Trump fired our nation’s Librarian, Dr. Carla Hayden, by email at 6:56 pm tonight, taking his assault on America’s libraries to a new level.

Over the course of her tenure, Dr. Hayden brought the Library of Congress to the people, with initiatives that reached into rural communities and made the Library accessible to all Americans, in person and online.

While President Trump wants to ban books and tell Americans what to read—or not to read at all, Dr. Hayden has devoted her career to making reading and the pursuit of knowledge available to everyone.

Be like Dr. Hayden.<sup>18</sup>

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said that Dr. Hayden was fired because the administration decided she “did not fit the needs of the American people” and because of “quite concerning things that she had done at the Library of Congress in the pursuit of D.E.I.” including allowing “inappropriate books in the library for children.” Leavitt did not specify the alleged “D.E.I.” pursuits or offensive books.

The Library of Congress is the world's largest library, housing over 34 million books and printed materials. It houses the Congressional Research Office and the U.S. Copyright Office and receives several copies of most books published in the United States. It is a research library and does not lend books to anyone, including children. Dr. Hayden pioneered digitizing many of the documents in the Library, including maps and material essential to some historical research.<sup>19</sup>

The attacks on "DEI" implicitly encompass much of the content of this book, which includes histories of women, work, race, and movements for women's rights, African American rights, and LGBTQ2S+ rights. These subjects and the focus on "ordinary" people as historical change makers are at odds with the Trump administration's attacks on DEI programs as "Woke" (and therefore bad). The attack rhetoric pits diversity and inclusion against merit. It presumes that women, workers, LGBTQ2S+ people, and people of color are, by definition, less meritorious than straight White elite men, who constitute the appropriate subjects of history and whose work is, by definition, of superior merit.

People who hold these assumptions would never open this book. But people who might want to read it may be prevented from doing so by policies that would ban it in schools and libraries.

The second Trump administration is censoring the history that can be shared in federal libraries, museums, and public sites, and the words that can be used on federal websites and in federal documents. Under orders from Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, the U.S. Naval Academy library removed 381 books about race, racism, and gender from its shelves but kept books defending White power. The purged books include Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*; Bryan Massingale, *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*; and Matthew F. Delmont, *Half American: the Epic Story of African Americans Fighting World War II at Home and Abroad*. Jane Jacobs, *Memorializing the Holocaust: Gender, Genocide, and Collective Memory* is gone but *Mein Kampf* remains. And Robert Shellow, *The Harvest of American Racism: The Political Meaning of Violence in the Summer of 1967* was removed from the library. I worked for Dr. Shellow in 1967 as a Research Assistant at the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. *Harvest of American Racism* includes work I helped research. Dr. Shellow kindly mentioned me and acknowledged my work in the banned volume. I cite his book in chapter 7, which addresses *Harvest of American Racism's* contested history.<sup>20</sup>

On Friday May 9, 2025, the Pentagon instructed all U.S. military educational institutions, including the War Colleges and Military Service Academies, to review their libraries, eliminate “divisive concepts” and “gender ideology,” and to identify and “sequester” all “potentially incompatible” materials by May 21. Twenty keyword search terms were provided to identify the “incompatible” materials—among them “affirmative action,” “anti-racism,” “diversity, equity, and inclusion,” “critical race theory,” “transgender people,” and “white privilege.”<sup>21</sup>

The Trump administration banned or discouraged the use of many of the proscribed terms at government agencies and on federal websites. On March 7, 2025, the *New York Times* published a list of words its reporters found on federal documents that ordered the words expunged from public websites or on documents that ordered the elimination of other materials (including school curricula) in which the words might be found. The *Times* compared federal websites before and after Trump took office, revealing 250 websites that had amended their content to comply. The italics in the examples below denote deletions; bold type denotes new text:

#### **Federal Aviation Administration’s job page**

Working at FAA offers a unique opportunity to experience a career where your impact not only reaches throughout the aviation industry but around the world as well. You’ll be a part of a *diverse* workforce utilizing the latest technology and systems dedicated to maintaining the safety and integrity of our civil airspace.

#### **National Park Service’s Stonewall National Monument web page**

Before the 1960s, almost everything about living openly as a lesbian, gay, bisexual (**LGB**) *transgender*, or *queer* (LGBTQ+) person was illegal. The Stonewall Uprising on June 28, 1969 is a milestone in the quest for LGBTQ+ civil rights and provided momentum for a movement.<sup>22</sup>

Some of the banned or discouraged words appear in this book, including—but not limited to—race, gender, women, Black, Latinx, LGBTQ+, diverse, inclusive, Native American, marginalized, feminism, social justice, Gulf of Mexico, and historically.

Articles and images containing the banned words disappeared from Department of Defense websites after Secretary Hegseth ordered content removed that highlighted diversity.<sup>23</sup> The Associated Press reported on March 7, 2025, that it had obtained a database flagging over 26,000 photos and online posts for removal. The purged materials included videos of the Tuskegee Airmen, the first African American U.S. military pilots, who served in a segregated unit during World War II; articles and images about the Navajo Code Talkers; the historic photo of six Marines hoisting a U.S. flag on Iwo Jima in 1945 because it was on a page celebrating Army Pfc. Ira Hayes, a Pima Indian; and articles and images of baseball legend Jackie Robinson, who served in a segregated Army unit during World War II and was court martialed for refusing to move to the back of a bus. A photo of the airplane that dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima was deleted because the pilot named it for his mother, Enola Gay—so it contained the word “gay.” A biography of World War II veteran and slain civil rights leader Medgar Evers disappeared from the Arlington National Cemetery website. Some of the material was restored in the wake of widespread public protests, including the tributes to Robinson and the Code Talkers. The Pentagon acknowledged that it had made mistakes and that it would be reviewing purged material, but some of it is still missing.<sup>24</sup>

Words matter. The proscribed words were part of a larger project to censor history, as the missing references to transsexuals on the Stonewall National Monument web page demonstrated. Led by the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians, forty-two organizations signed an AHA–OAH Joint Statement on Federal Censorship of American History that condemned:

... recent efforts to censor historical content on federal government websites, at many public museums, and across a wide swath of government resources that include essential data. New policies that purge words, phrases, and content that some officials deem suspect on ideological grounds constitute a systemic campaign to distort, manipulate, and erase significant parts of the historical record. Recent directives insidiously prioritize narrow ideology over historical research, historical accuracy, and the actual experiences of Americans.<sup>25</sup>

Two weeks later, the President signed an executive order “Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History,” charging that:

Over the past decade, Americans have witnessed a concerted and widespread effort to rewrite our Nation's history, replacing objective facts with a distorted narrative driven by ideology rather than truth. This revisionist movement seeks to undermine the remarkable achievements of the United States by casting its founding principles and historical milestones in a negative light. Under this historical revision, our Nation's unparalleled legacy of advancing liberty, individual rights, and human happiness is reconstructed as inherently racist, sexist, oppressive, or otherwise irredeemably flawed. Rather than fostering unity and a deeper understanding of our shared past, the widespread effort to rewrite history deepens societal divides and fosters a sense of national shame, disregarding the progress America has made and the ideals that continue to inspire millions around the globe.<sup>26</sup>

The President focused much of his attack on the Smithsonian Institution. Founded in 1846 "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge," the Smithsonian is a group of twenty-one museums, twenty-one libraries, fourteen education and research centers, the National Zoo, and historical and architectural landmarks, most of them in Washington D.C. It operates as a trust and is not formally part of the federal government. Its museums include the Museum of American History, Air and Space Museum, American Art Museum, National Museum of the American Indian, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture. In 2020, Congress voted to create the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum, which is still in the planning stages. Asserting that the Smithsonian "has, in recent years, come under the influence of a divisive, race-centered ideology," Trump critiqued depictions of race at the National Museum of African American History and Culture and in a Museum of American Art exhibit, "The Shape of Power: Stories of Race and American Sculpture." He was particularly concerned that the forthcoming Smithsonian American Women's History Museum would celebrate transsexual women athletes. Accordingly, the President ordered Vice President J.D. Vance, through his role on the Smithsonian Board of Regents, to seek "to remove improper ideology" from Smithsonian properties and "recommend to the President any additional actions necessary to fully effectuate such policies." He directed Vance and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to "work with the Congress" to

guarantee that the American Women's History Museum would "not recognize men as women in any respect in the Museum," and to ensure that future Smithsonian appropriations would "prohibit expenditure on exhibits or programs that degrade shared American values, divide Americans based on race, or promote programs or ideologies inconsistent with Federal law and policy." Trump instructed the Secretary of the Interior to "ensure that all public monuments, memorials, statues, markers, or similar properties within the Department of the Interior's jurisdiction do not contain descriptions, depictions, or other content that inappropriately disparage Americans past or living (including persons living in colonial times), and instead focus on the greatness of the achievements and progress of the American people."<sup>27</sup>

The American Historical Association replied that Trump egregiously misrepresented the Smithsonian's work and that it was "among the premier research institutions in the world, widely known for the integrity of its scholarship, which is careful and based on historical and scientific evidence." The AHA contested Trump's assertion that Smithsonian museums displayed "improper, divisive, or anti-American ideology."

This is simply untrue; it misrepresents the work of those museums and the public's engagement with their collections and exhibits. It also completely misconstrues the nature of historical work.

Historians explore the past to understand how our nation has evolved. We draw on a wide range of sources, which helps us to understand history from different angles of vision. Our goal is neither criticism nor celebration; it is to understand—to increase our knowledge of—the past in ways that can help Americans to shape the future.

The stories that have shaped our past include not only elements that make us proud but also aspects that make us acutely aware of tragedies in our nation's history. No person, no nation, is perfect, and we should all—as individuals and as nations—learn from our imperfections.

....



Patriotic history celebrates our nation's many great achievements. It also helps us grapple with the less grand and more painful parts of our history. Both are part of a shared past that is fundamentally American. We learn from the past to inform how we can best shape our future. By providing a history with the integrity necessary to enable all Americans to be all they can possibly be, the Smithsonian is fulfilling its duty to all of us.<sup>28</sup>

The AHA statement expresses much of what I value about inclusive national histories. It also captures the understanding of patriotism my parents taught me as they resisted segregation to make the United States, the country they loved, more fair, just, and humane. It's part of why I studied movements for social justice.

The Trump administration's anti-DEI agenda erased diverse actors and perspectives from history, distorting the past and creating a false celebratory narrative. Policies that ban books, sequester national records, and censor historical narratives are intended to block access to knowledge and to deny power and authority to historically marginalized people.

These policies have affected public and private educational institutions, which have lost federal funds if they refuse to dismantle DEI programs or otherwise resist Trump administration demands, including federal control of curricula. The president threatened to cancel hundreds of millions in federal funding at prominent universities, sometimes because they maintained DEI programs and policies, sometimes because they did not prevent campus protests following the Hamas terrorist attacks on Israel of October 7, 2023, and because he charged that they had not protected Jewish students from antisemitism in the wake of October 7.<sup>29</sup>

These last justifications require a brief contextual digression. On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched the deadliest single attack on Jews since the Holocaust, killing some 1200 people and taking another 240 hostages in Gaza. In response, Israel cut off humanitarian aid to Gaza and launched a military campaign that by April 2025 had claimed over 50,000 lives.<sup>30</sup> Hamas cynically jeopardized civilians by placing its headquarters in schools and hospitals, and probably confiscated some humanitarian aid destined for innocent Palestinians. Those facts did not erase the widespread devastation of the Israeli campaign.

The devastation of Gaza and of innocent Palestinians generated international protests, including on U.S. and Canadian university campuses,

and including some Jewish individuals and organizations that support Israel. A prominent dissent from Israel's Gaza campaign appeared in a May 12, 2025, *Washington Post* opinion column by Rabbi Rick Jacobs, President of the Union for Reform Judaism, the largest Jewish denomination in North America. Beneath the headline: "I'm a rabbi. Starving Gaza is immoral," Jacobs began, "Among the terrible lessons of Oct. 7, 2023, was that it became perfectly clear Hamas is willing to sacrifice the Palestinian people in its war to destroy Israel and the Jewish people. Israel must not help Hamas by sacrificing its own morality." Rabbi Jacobs opposed the complete ban of food and supplies Israel had imposed for the preceding two months, arguing that "Starving Gazan civilians neither will bring Israel the 'total victory' over Hamas it seeks nor can [it] be justified by Jewish values or humanitarian law. . . . Hamas is willing to sacrifice thousands of Palestinians by hoarding humanitarian aid; Israel must not."<sup>31</sup>

The heated rhetoric surrounding October 7 and Israel's response often failed to recognize differing opinions among Jews. On and off campuses there was a rise in antisemitic and Islamophobic rhetoric. Antisemitic attacks escalated in the United States and Canada. Some Jewish students were attacked either verbally or physically. University administrations struggled to balance the rights to free speech and protest while preventing hate speech and violence.

Tensions on campuses heightened as the Trump administration targeted foreign students and faculty for pro-Palestinian views. In March it deported Dr. Rasha Alawieh, an assistant professor at the Brown University Medical School, as she returned from visiting family in Lebanon. According to court documents, Dr. Alawieh was held for thirty-six hours at Boston's Logan Airport before being sent back to Lebanon in violation of a federal court order and despite her H-1B visa for her employment in the Brown Medicine Nephrology Department. Her deportation raised alarms for the treatment of foreign faculty on other campuses.<sup>32</sup>

Tensions continued to rise as the Trump administration cancelled foreign students' visas without notifying them or their universities and arrested and detained some for alleged antisemitism or terrorism. Two of the most prominent cases concerned the arrests of graduate students Mahmoud Khalil and Rumeysa Öztürk, who had voiced support for Palestinians. Khalil, a Columbia University graduate student and a legal permanent resident married to an American citizen, was taken from his student apartment on March 8, 2025, by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents without an arrest warrant. His student visa was

revoked, and he was detained in the federal LaSalle Detention Center in Jena, Louisiana. Born in a Syrian refugee enclave to Palestinian parents, Khalil had helped lead pro-Palestinian protests on the Columbia campus. He was denied bail while contesting his arrest on the grounds that his rights of free speech and due process had been violated, rights guaranteed to all persons residing in the United States, regardless of citizenship.<sup>33</sup>

Tufts University doctoral student Rumeysa Öztürk was taken into custody on the street outside her Summerville, Massachusetts home on March 25, 2025, by six masked plainclothes agents of the Department of Homeland Security. Öztürk, a Turkish citizen and a Fulbright Scholar, was apparently targeted because she co-authored a pro-Palestinian opinion column in the Tufts student newspaper. Despite a U.S. District Court order, she, too, was sent to the Louisiana prison. Secretary of State Marco Rubio confirmed that he had revoked Öztürk's student visa, but did not disclose that he revoked it on March 21, four days before her arrest, without notifying either Öztürk or Tufts. Other universities discovered that the visas of more than 1200 foreign students had been revoked without notifying them or their educational institutions. Rumeysa Öztürk was freed from detention on May 9 after a Vermont federal court ordered her release and returned to Massachusetts pending a court hearing.<sup>34</sup>

In a similar case, on April 30, 2025, a judge ordered the release of Columbia University student Mohsen Mahdawi, a Palestinian arrested on April 14 at an interview to finalize his U.S. citizenship. Mahdawi, a U.S. permanent resident who also participated in pro-Palestinian student protests at Columbia, was among the first students successfully to challenge his arrest. He graduated from Columbia on May 19 amidst the cheers of his fellow graduates.<sup>35</sup>

The Trump administration had cancelled nearly 2,000 students' visas by mid-May 2025, often for minor traffic violations. Louisiana immigration attorney David Rozas, who represented students held in the LaSalle detention facility, reported that increasingly clients "with strong cases for release, some of whom had lived in the United States for years, were giving up, as hearings were delayed for weeks and as they got the feeling that the country simply did not want them."<sup>36</sup>

These actions further increased tensions on U.S. campuses already torn by protests. Students protested on Canadian campuses as well; anti-semitic acts escalated in both countries in the wake of Israel's Gaza offensive. But the situation was never as simple as Trump's rhetoric suggested. Canada was also divided about responses to the student protests, but it did

not revoke student visas or threaten to deport student protesters or foreign faculty.

The Trump administration began directly targeting some universities, using various charges related to campus antisemitism and university DEI programs to justify its attacks. It accused Columbia University of not protecting Jewish students from antisemitism. To avoid losing \$400 million in federal funding, Columbia accepted some administration demands in March, including outside supervision of its Middle East studies department. Cornell, Brown, Northwestern, and Princeton were also charged with failing to combat antisemitism and threatened with loss of federal dollars. The University of Pennsylvania was attacked for allowing a transsexual athlete on its swim team. In March, the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights threatened to penalize sixty educational institutions for failing to protect Jewish students. The University of Michigan, my graduate school alma mater, was among them, threatened with the loss of federal funding if it didn't scrap its DEI policies.<sup>37</sup>

Long recognized as a leader in DEI initiatives, Michigan adopted its first DEI strategic plan in 2016, and had since achieved a 46 percent increase in students whose parents hadn't attended university and a 32 percent increase in admissions from low-income families. DEI programs can provide financial aid, tutoring, and mentorship to help students from underrepresented groups adjust to the university. As Michigan's successes suggest, the programs are not limited to increasing representation by race or gender but can also help students with disabilities or who are the first in their family to attend university. Rather than lose federal funds, the University of Michigan closed its DEI office in March 2025.<sup>38</sup>

After Columbia capitulated, it appeared that other schools would follow suit. Then, in two letters to Harvard University on April 3 and 11, 2025, the Trump administration demanded that Harvard abandon all DEI considerations in admissions and hiring, deny admission to international students "hostile to the American values and institutions," that Harvard commission an external party "to audit the student body, faculty, staff, and leadership for viewpoint diversity, such that each department, field, or teaching unit must be individually viewpoint diverse." And the administration mandated an independent audit of programs, schools, and centers suspected of fostering antisemitism, including:

the Divinity School, Graduate School of Education, School of Public Health, Medical School, Religion and Public Life

Program, FXB Center for Health & Human Rights, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Carr Center for Human Rights at the Harvard Kennedy School, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, and the Harvard Law School International Human Rights Clinic.

Harvard was ordered to “immediately shutter all diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs, offices, committees, positions, and initiatives”; ban masks on campus; and refuse to support and recognize student organizations that engaged in alleged antisemitism, including the Harvard Palestine Solidarity Committee, Harvard Graduates Students 4 Palestine, Law Students 4 Palestine, Students for Justice in Palestine, and the National Lawyers Guild.<sup>39</sup>

Harvard President Alan Garber rejected the administration’s demands and filed suit to oppose their implementation. Garber, who is Jewish, said it was clear that the government did not want to work with the university “to address antisemitism in a cooperative and constructive manner. Although some of the demands outlined by the government are aimed at combating antisemitism, the majority represent direct governmental regulation of the ‘intellectual conditions’ at Harvard.” The university’s legal response outlined changes in university policies and accountability procedures during the preceding fifteen months. “It is unfortunate, then, that your letter disregards Harvard’s efforts and instead presents demands that, in contravention of the First Amendment, invade university freedoms long recognized by the Supreme Court.” Whereupon the government froze \$2.2 billion in research funds and threatened to withhold the university’s tax-exempt status. The administration’s Joint Task Force on Anti-Semitism accused Harvard of “the troubling entitlement mindset that is endemic in our nation’s most prestigious universities and colleges—that federal investment does not come with the responsibility to uphold civil rights laws”—a particularly disingenuous charge given the demand that Harvard cease all DEI programs and initiatives.<sup>40</sup>

The Harvard chapter of the American Association of University Professors sued the Trump administration for withholding research funds, charging that this “was an illegal exploitation of the Civil Rights Act and an effort to impose political views upon the institution.” It also joined other faculty groups in a lawsuit challenging the Trump administration’s efforts to arrest and deport pro-Palestinian student activists.<sup>41</sup>

Harvard's resistance inspired other universities. Hundreds of college presidents signed a letter generated by the American Association of Colleges and Universities and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences on April 22, 2025 opposing "unprecedented government overreach and political interference" that threatened U.S. higher education. "We will always seek effective and fair financial practices, but we must reject the coercive use of public research funding," they wrote. By May 16, 2025, 652 college and university presidents had signed the statement.<sup>42</sup>

A leading U.S. Jewish Advocacy organization, the American Jewish Committee (AJC), urged the Trump administration to change the tactics it chose to combat campus antisemitism. A coalition of prominent educational organizations joined the call, including the Association of American Universities and the American Council on Education. "The proper and essential role for the U.S. government in addressing antisemitism is through the nation's powerful anti-discrimination laws," they stated. Asserting that federal law provided the framework for "vigorous enforcement" without endangering vital research or unfairly targeting individuals or schools, they cautioned that "overly broad" cuts to research funding "imperil science and innovation, and ultimately detract from the necessary fight against antisemitism while threatening the global pre-eminence of America's research universities."<sup>43</sup>

Despite growing resistance to pressure from the Trump administration, the situation on many campuses remained tense and unsettled. In late April 2025, as it negotiated its legal challenge to the administration's demands, Harvard renamed its office of diversity, equity, and inclusion the Office of Community and Campus Life in an apparent attempt to placate Trump. Other universities made similar adjustments to calm conservative critics who considered DEI programs left-wing indoctrination projects.<sup>44</sup> At the same time, two Harvard taskforces released highly critical reports about antisemitism and anti-Arab, anti-Muslim and anti-Palestinian bias on campus. They conducted a survey of some 2,300 students, faculty, and staff which found that 15 percent of Jewish respondents and 47 percent of Muslim respondents felt threatened on campus. They reported widespread fear to express personal views among 92 percent of Muslims, 51 percent of Christians, and 61 percent of Jews. These included Jews critical of Israel who were afraid to voice their opinions at Jewish campus organizations. Harvard president Alan Garber responded that the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack and ensuing war had brought long simmering tensions to

the surface and promised to address issues raised in the taskforce reports. “Harvard cannot—and will not—abide bigotry,” Garber insisted.<sup>45</sup>

The Trump administration’s attacks on universities’ controls of hiring, admissions, and free speech are deeply troubling to me as an educator. I have taught students of color admitted through DEI initiatives and poor students who received federal education loans. I attended graduate school with the support of a National Defense Education Act fellowship. This book would likely not exist without that financial support. The foreign students in my classrooms have enriched the educational experience for everyone. As a scholar, the cancellation of federal research funds to enforce the administration’s ideological agenda is cause for profound concern. And as a Jew, I am heartsick that the administration uses antisemitism as an excuse to stifle free speech and threaten universities.

In the unsettled circumstances at United States borders and in U.S. higher education, the Canadian Association of University Teachers advised its members on April 15, 2025, that, “Given the rapidly evolving political landscape in the United States and reports of individuals encountering difficulties crossing the border, CAUT strongly recommends that academic staff travel to the U.S. only if essential and necessary.”<sup>46</sup> It warned that travellers from Canada to the United States were “increasingly vulnerable to preclearance zones and border searches that may compromise research confidentiality and academic freedom.” It cited the deportation of Brown University professor Dr. Rasha Alawieh and a March 2025 report from France’s interior minister that a French researcher had been denied entry by U.S. border agents after they found messages on his phone criticizing the Trump administration’s policies on academic research. CAUT therefore cautioned that “[a]cademics should carefully consider what information they have, or need to have, on their electronic devices when crossing borders and take actions to protect sensitive information where necessary.”<sup>47</sup>

The CAUT travel advisory recommended that six categories of academics “exercise particular caution when considering travel to the U.S.”:

- Citizens or residents of a country identified in media reports as likely to be subject to a travel ban
- Citizens or residents of a country where there are diplomatic tensions with the U.S.



- Travellers with passport stamps evidencing recent travel to countries that may be subject to a travel ban or where there are diplomatic tensions with the U.S.
- Those who have expressed negative opinions about the current U.S. administration or its policies
- Those whose research could be seen as being at odds with the position of the current U.S. administration
- Travellers who identify as transgender or whose travel documents indicate a sex other than their sex assigned at birth<sup>48</sup>

I fit three of these categories. I am a citizen of a country with diplomatic tensions with the United States. I have expressed negative opinions about the current U.S. administration and its policies, including in this essay. My research can be seen as being at odds with the position of the Trump administration. I have reluctantly decided that until these situations change, I will not be able to cross the border to help launch my book in the United States, and the University of Calgary Press has worked to adjust its marketing plan to reach American readers.

It might seem in these circumstances that my determination to make humanity visible across national and social boundaries is hopelessly naïve. I think it's more urgently needed. I taught Canadian and American students that though the United States has not always lived up to its values of democracy and equal opportunity, that American citizens have resisted injustice and fought for those values throughout American history. I taught the histories of movements for workers' rights, civil rights, women's rights, and LGBTQ2S+ rights out of great admiration for those who struggled to make the American promise a reality for everyone. Today, I am heartened by widespread citizen protests in the U.S. and by the organizations fighting to preserve academic integrity, access to knowledge, and inclusive histories. Former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau recognized humanity across national borders in his remarks on February 1, 2025, after President Trump signed an executive order imposing 25 percent tariffs on imports from Canada and Mexico. Trudeau first spoke directly to the American people:

As I have consistently said, tariffs against Canada will put your jobs at risk, potentially shutting down American auto



assembly plants and other manufacturing facilities. They will raise costs for you, including food at the grocery stores and gas at the pump. They will impede your access to an affordable supply of vital goods crucial for U.S. security such as nickel, potash, uranium, steel and aluminum. They will violate the free trade agreement that the president and I, along with our Mexican partner, negotiated and signed a few years ago.

But it doesn't have to be this way. As President John F. Kennedy said many years ago, "Geography has made us neighbours, history has made us friends, economics has made us partners and necessity has made us allies." That rang true for many decades prior to President Kennedy's time in office and the decades since. From the beaches of Normandy to the mountains of the Korean Peninsula, from the fields of Flanders to the streets of Kandahar, we have fought and died alongside you during your darkest hours.

During the Iranian hostage crisis, those 444 days, we worked around the clock from our embassy to get your innocent compatriots home. During the summer of 2005, when Hurricane Katrina ravaged your great city of New Orleans, or mere weeks ago, when we sent water bombers to tackle the wildfires in California, during the day the world stood still—Sept. 11, 2001—when we provided refuge to stranded passengers and planes, we were always there, standing with you, grieving with you, the American people.

Together, we've built the most successful economic, military and security partnership the world has ever seen; a relationship that has been the envy of the world. Yes, we've had our differences in the past, but we've always found a way to get past them.<sup>49</sup>

Trudeau's rhetoric employed real historic ties to link the American people with Canada against the threat of Trump's divisive policies. It was part politics, but a politics that recognized mutual human experiences and interests. Many Americans appeared to see Canadian humanity in return. Canadians returning home from the U.S. have reported receiving frequent apologies from Americans for Trump's tariffs, and numerous expressions

of support. I've gotten the same caring messages from American friends, along with heartbroken messages from colleagues who have lost research funding and who fear for their students. Looking across our borders I can separate Trump and his policies from the Americans they hurt and who are resisting.

I have written this to locate *Thresholds, Walls, and Bridges* in the difficult contexts in which it will be published. I am grieved by policies that hurt people in both my countries, that hurt refugees and foreign students, that threaten my profession and the people it serves. But I maintain the faith, expressed in these essays, that people make history—that ordinary people joining together can make positive change. We always stand on the threshold of history. We may need at times to erect protective walls around the values and institutions we cherish, but we can also build bridges of compassion across boundaries that divide us. I write with that hope.

#### NOTES

- 1 Bob Dylan, "The Times They Are a-Changin'," title track, album of the same name, 1964.
- 2 American Historical Association website, <https://www.historians.org/>, accessed April 30, 2025.
- 3 See for instance Mike Crawley "Trump has threatened Canada in all sorts of ways. What does he really want?," Analysis, CBC News, posted January 9, 2025, <https://www.cbc.ca/lite/story/1.7426281>, accessed April 24, 2025; The Politics Desk, "Canada, Greenland and the Panama Canal: Trump keeps up talk of U.S. expansion," NBC News, January 7, 2025, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/trump-us-expansion-talk-canada-greenland-politics-desk-rcna18671>, accessed April 24, 2025.
- 4 Vjosa Isai, "What to Know about Canada's Role in the Fentanyl Crisis," *New York Times*, February 6, 2025.
- 5 "American Historical Association Condemns Indiscriminate Cuts to the Federal Government," Statement Approved by the AHA Council, March 24, 2025, and endorsed by the Alliance for Texas History; American Society for Environmental History; Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies; French Colonial Historical Society; Historians for Peace and Democracy; Immigration and Ethnic History Society; Labor and Working Class History Association; LGBTQ+ History Association; National Council on Public History; North American Conference on British Studies; Organization of American Historians; PEN America; Reacting Consortium; Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations; Society for Historians of the Gilded Age & Progressive Era; Society for the History of Children and Youth; Society for US Intellectual History; Southern Association for Women Historians; and Western History Association. American Historical Association website, <https://www.historians.org/news/american-historical-association-condemns-indiscriminate-cuts-to-the-federal-government/>, accessed April 30, 2025. For AHA membership, see American Council of Learned Societies, American Historical Association, and Modern Languages Association v. Michael McDonald, National Endowment for the Humanities, United States DOGE

Service, et al, Case 1:25-cv-03657, Document 1, Filed May 1, 2025, 6 (hereinafter cited as ACLS, AHA, and MLA v. NEH). The Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, was created by President Trump without Congressional approval or authority. Under the leadership of Elon Musk, it summarily fired employees of many government agencies and raided their data bases.

- 6 “American Historical Association Condemns Indiscriminate Cuts to the Federal Government.”
- 7 “American Historical Association Condemns Indiscriminate Cuts to the Federal Government.”
- 8 “Historians Defend the National Endowment for the Humanities and American Public Culture,” Statement of the American Historical Association, April 4, 2025, American Historical Association website, accessed April 30, 2025.
- 9 “Historians Defend the National Endowment for the Humanities and American Public Culture.”
- 10 “An Update on NEH Funding Priorities and the Agency’s Recent Implementation of Trump Administration Executive Orders,” Press Release, National Endowment for the Humanities, April 24, 2025, Washington, D.C., <https://www.neh.gov/news/update-neh-funding-priorities-and-agencys-recent-implementation-trump-administration-executiveBottom>, accessed May 6, 2025. The Executive Orders are available on the White House web page under Presidential Actions: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-orders/>. of Form
- 11 ACLS, AHA, and MLA v. NEH, 4–5. In conjunction with the lawsuit, on May 14, 2025 the ACLS, AHA and MLA filed a motion for a preliminary injunction to prevent the unlawful dismantling of NEH. Email from AHA Executive Director Jim Grossman, May 15, 2025.
- 12 I have held elective office in most of these organizations. I served on the Councils of the Labor and Working Class History Association (LAWCHA), Western History Association (WHA), and the Pacific Coast Branch – American History Association (PCB -AHA); on the Nominating Committees of the Organization of American Historians and WHA; and as President of the PCB – AHA and the WHA.
- 13 The Colorado Humanities Program has gone through several name changes and has also been called the Colorado Endowment for the Humanities and Colorado Humanities.
- 14 Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, eds., *The Women’s West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987).
- 15 Sylvia Van Kirk, “*Many Tender Ties*”: *Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670–1870* (Norman & Winnipeg: University of Oklahoma Press and Watson & Dwyer, 1980).
- 16 Billal Rahman, “Map Shows State with Most Banned Books,” *Newsweek*, October 3, 2024.
- 17 “Book Bans: PEN America tracks book bans and fights censorship in public schools and libraries across the country,” PEN America website, <https://pen.org/book-bans>. PEN America, founded in 1922, is a non-profit organization of writers devoted to the advancement of literature, and the protection of freedom of expression and human rights. PEN stands for poets, essayists, novelists. PEN America is the largest of over 100 PEN centers worldwide that together comprise PEN International. For more on educational book bans and censorship, including state laws and policies that paved the way for Trump administration policies, see PEN America, “America’s Censored Classrooms 2024,” report issued October 8, 2024, <https://pen.org/report/americas-censored-classrooms-2024/#heading-5>, PEN America website, accessed May 12, 2025.

- 18 Senator Martin Heinrich, "BREAKING: President Trump just fired our nation's Librarian," Facebook, posted Friday night, May 8, 2025. See also Tim Balk, "Trump Administration Fires Librarian of Congress," *New York Times*, May 8, 2025.
- 19 Erica L. Green, "Trump Fired Librarian of Congress Over D.E.I.," *New York Times*, May 9, 2025. For more information see the Library of Congress website, <https://www.loc.gov/>.
- 20 John Ismay, "Who's In and Who's Out at the Naval Academy's Library?: An order by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth's office resulted in a purge of books critical of racism but preserved volumes defending white power," *New York Times*, April 11, 2025; List of Removed Books from Nimitz Library Released: April 4, 2025, published in "Read the Naval Academy's List of Removed Books," *New York Times*, April 4, 2025.
- 21 The full list of search terms is: Affirmative Action Programs — Law and Legislation — United States; Affirmative Action Programs — United States; Affirmative Action; Allyship; Anti-Racism — United States; Critical Race Theory; Discrimination — Law and Legislation — United States; Diversity in the Workplace — United States; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Gender Affirming Care — United States; Gender Dysphoria; Gender Expression; Gender Identity — United States; Gender Nonconformity; Gender Transition; Transgender Military Personnel — United States; Transgender People — United States; Transsexualism — United States; Transsexuals — United States; White privilege (Social structure). PEN America, "Pentagon Review of Military Libraries Poses Grave Threat to Intellectual Freedom," Press Release, May 10, 2025, <https://pen.org/press-release/pentagon-review-of-military-libraries-poses-grave-threat-to-intellectual-freedom/>, accessed May 12, 2025.
- 22 Karen Yourish, Annie Daniel, Saurabh Datar, Isaac White, and Lazaro Gamio, "These Words Are Disappearing in the New Trump Administration," *New York Times*, March 7, 2025. The *Times* list of banned or discouraged terms was on at least one agency's list and may not apply to all agencies. Some of the banned terms listed with a plus sign represent combinations of words that, "when used together, acknowledge transgender people, which is not in keeping with the current federal government's position that there are only two, immutable sexes." The full list of terms, which the *Times* acknowledged was probably incomplete, was: accessible, activism, activists, advocacy, advocate, advocates, affirming care, all-inclusive, allyship, anti-racism, antiracist, assigned at birth, assigned female at birth, assigned male at birth, at risk, barrier, barriers, belong, bias, biased, biased toward, biases, biases towards, biologically female, biologically male, BIPOC, Black, breastfeed + people, breastfeed + person, chestfeed + people, chestfeed + person, clean energy, climate crisis, climate science, commercial sex worker, community diversity, community equity, confirmation bias, cultural competence, cultural differences, cultural heritage, cultural sensitivity, culturally appropriate, culturally responsive, DEI, DEIA, DEIAB, DEIJ, disabilities, disability, discriminated, discrimination, discriminatory, disparity, diverse, diverse backgrounds, diverse communities, diverse community, diverse group, diverse groups, diversified, diversify, diversifying, diversity, enhance the diversity, enhancing diversity, environmental quality, equal opportunity, equality, equitable, equitableness, equity, ethnicity, excluded, exclusion, expression, female, females, feminism, fostering inclusivity, GBV, gender, gender based, gender based violence, gender diversity, gender identity, gender ideology, gender-affirming care, genders, Gulf of Mexico, hate speech, health disparity, health equity, hispanic minority, historically, identity, immigrants, implicit bias, implicit biases, inclusion, inclusive, inclusive leadership, inclusiveness, inclusivity, increase diversity, increase the diversity, indigenous community, inequalities, inequality, inequitable, inequities, inequity, injustice, institutional, intersectional, intersectionality, key groups, key people, key populations, Latinx, LGBT, LGBTQ, marginalize, marginalized, men who have sex with men, mental health, minorities, minority, most risk, MSM, multicultural, Mx, Native American, non-binary, nonbinary,

oppression, oppressive, orientation, people + uterus, people-centered care, person-centered, person-centered care, polarization, political, pollution, pregnant people, pregnant person, pregnant persons, prejudice, privilege, privileges, promote diversity, promoting diversity, pronoun, pronouns, prostitute, race, race and ethnicity, racial, racial diversity, racial identity, racial inequality, racial justice, racially, racism, segregation, sense of belonging, sex, sexual preferences, sexuality, social justice, sociocultural, socioeconomic, status, stereotype, stereotypes, systemic, systemically, they/them, trans, transgender, transsexual, trauma, traumatic, tribal, unconscious bias, underappreciated, underprivileged, underrepresentation, underrepresented, underserved, undervalued, victim, victims, vulnerable populations, women, women and underrepresented.

- 23 Hegseth said he ordered the material removed in compliance with Trump's executive order ending DEI programs throughout the federal government. Tara Copp, Lolita C. Baldor, and Kevin Vineys, "War heroes and military firsts are among 26,000 images flagged for removal in Pentagon's DEI purge," Associated Press, March 7, 2025.
- 24 Copp, Baldor, and Vineys, "War heroes and military firsts"; Seb Starcevic, "Pentagon admits to mistakes in campaign against 'DEI' content," *Politico*, March 21, 2025.
- 25 AHA-OAH Joint Statement on Federal Censorship of American History, March 13, 2025. The following organizations signed on to the statement: African Studies Association, Alliance for Texas History, American Academy of Religion, American Association for State and Local History, American Federation of Teachers, American Journalism Historians Association, American Society for Environmental History, American Studies Association, Asian & Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation, Association for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies, Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Association of University Presses, College Art Association, Conference on Asian History, Education for All, French Colonial Historical Society, Historians for Peace and Democracy, H-Net Executive Council, Immigration and Ethnic History Society, Labor and Working Class History Association, LGBTQ+ Historians Association, National Council for the Social Studies, National Council on Public History, Network of Concerned Historians, North American Conference on British Studies, North American Society for Oceanic History, North American Society for Sport History, Norwegian Historical Association, Oral History Association, PEN America, Polish American Historical Association, Royal Netherlands Historical Society, Social Welfare History Group, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, Society for US Intellectual History, Society of Architectural Historians, Southern Association for Women Historians, Urban History Association, Western History Association, Western Society for French History, World History Association. American Historical Association website, accessed April 30, 2025.
- 26 "Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History," Executive Order, March 27, 2025, available on the White House website under Presidential Actions: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-orders/>.
- 27 "Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History."
- 28 American Historical Association, "Historians Defend the Smithsonian," Statement released March 31, 2025, American Historical Association website, accessed April 30, 2025.
- 29 These events were reported in numerous news sources and are effectively summarized in Joe Friesen, "'For what's next, look to Michigan': Fear and anxiety engulf the University of Michigan as Trump targets higher education," *Globe and Mail*, May 11, 2025.
- 30 "Death toll in Gaza rises to 52,000, territory's health ministry says, as Israel continues offensive," CBS News, April 27, 2025, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/war-gaza-israel-death-toll-april-2025/>, accessed May 15, 2025; Ahmed Yussuf, Brianna Morris-Grant, Eric

Tlozek, and wires, “A closer look at the human toll in Gaza as deaths pass 50,000,” ABC News, March 24, 2025, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-03-24/gaza-death-toll-50000-explained/105088110>, accessed May 15, 2025; Nidal Al-Mughrabi and Emma Farge, “Gaza death toll: how many Palestinians has Israel’s offensive killed?,” Reuters, March 24, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/how-many-palestinians-has-israels-gaza-offensive-killed-2025-01-15/>, accessed May 15, 2025.

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