LITERATURE & ART
Haiku master Matsuo Bashō once wrote, “Every day is a journey, and the journey itself is home.” Since the birth of the written word, poets have crafted personal stories that complicate our understanding of what it means to be home. In this hour-long presentation, performer Adam Henze shares poems about big cities, small towns, and the search for home on the roads between them. Adam will read influential works about the hospitals, schools, churches, and prisons in our communities, weaving in his own original poems and stories about his journeys throughout the state of Indiana. Poetry is an engaging way to explore how issues impact us as people, making this an ideal presentation for teenagers and adults to consider the topics that connect and divide us as urban and rural communities.

Adam is a research associate at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community at Indiana University and a doctoral candidate in the School of Education. Adam is thrilled to be working with Indiana Humanities again on the speakers bureau, where he previously served on the One State / One Story: Frankenstein program and as the official poet of the 100th running of the Indianapolis 500. Adam is the director of Power of a Sentence, a literacy and creative writing program in Indiana prisons, and the Vice President of Southern Fried Poetry, Inc., which hosts the longest-running poetry slam festival in the world.
Arts Midwest: Poetry, People and Place

How does art foster dialogue, create/sustain community, and (re)inscribe memory?

Presenter: Dr. Lasana Kazembe, IUPUI

Contact: lkazembe@iu.edu 312.282.7590

Format: 75-minute presentation and spoken-word recitation with approximately 10 minutes of discussion/Q&A

Indiana writers and artists have a rich legacy of expressing the political and social ideas of their time. Lasana’s multimedia presentation explores how artists—from Hoosier poets to visual and performing artists—have represented the new urban industrial reality that developed in the Midwest and addressed social disillusionment across urban, rural and suburban lines. This session examines the lives, art, and ideas of four famous Hoosiers: Mari Evans, Etheridge Knight, Freddie Hubbard, and Wes Montgomery. Through their work, these artists were also responsible for bringing the collective thoughts, sensibilities, and folk wisdom of Indiana and the Midwest into the broader landscape of American artistic and intellectual traditions.

Lasana is an assistant professor at IUPUI where he holds an appointment in the School of Education (Department of Urban Teacher Education) and a courtesy appointment in the Africana Studies Program. He is a published poet, educational consultant, and scholar of the Black Arts Movement, Global Black Arts Movements, and Urban Education. His latest book, entitled *Keeping Peace: Reflections on Life, Legacy, Commitment, and Struggle*, was published in 2018 by Third World Press Foundation.
This Place of Ours in Art and Literature

How can Hoosier writers and artists inspire you and your community to define a sense of place and find ways to celebrate it?

**Presenter:** Kevin McKelvey, University of Indianapolis

**Contact:** mckelveyk@uindy.edu 317.788.2018

**Format:** 60-minute workshop

Two hundred years of art and literature in Indiana, from T.C. Steele to George Ade, Gene Stratton-Porter to Robert Indiana, Mari Evans to John Green and Adrian Matejka, serve as a jumping-off point for Kevin’s discussion of Indiana’s rural townships, towns, suburbs, and cities. Place is central to our identity and culture in Indiana, and Kevin’s discussion will evolve into a collaborative workshop to identify historical or cultural assets in your area and brainstorm ways to use contemporary arts, literature, and humanities to directly engage and strengthen local communities. Attendees will leave with ideas and plans for socially engaged art, cultural programs, community engagement, and placemaking and placekeeping.

Kevin is place-based writer, poet, designer, and social practice artist. His poetry book, *Dream Wilderness*, was published last year, and another book, *Indiana Nocturnes*, written with Curtis Crisler, will be published this year. He is at work on a novel and regularly completes workshops, art installations, and placemaking projects around Indiana. At University of Indianapolis, he serves as associate professor in the English Department and as director of the university’s Masters in Social Practice of Art program. Kevin grew up on the edge of a corn field near Lebanon, Indiana, and attended DePauw University and Southern Illinois University Carbondale.
FOOD & DRINK
Food Connects Us All

Can our efforts to increase access to healthy food – especially fruits and vegetables – connect us in other ways?

Presenter: Dr. Terri Jett, Butler University
Contact: Tjett@Butler.edu 317-940-8451
Format: 30-minute presentation, 20-minute facilitated discussion, and 10 minutes Q & A

Everyone needs to eat, and where and how food is grown complicates the idea that there is a sharp line between urban and rural. Many urban and suburban dwellers enjoy farm-to-table restaurants, shop at farmers markets or subscribe to community supported agriculture programs that deliver fresh, healthy food, including fruits and vegetables picked at their peak. Such programs give a face to farmers and literally connect urban eaters to rural growers. Then again, in recent years, urban communities themselves have planted gardens inside city lines, confounding the image we might have that farms are rural and cities are concrete jungles. All of this work is set against the backdrop of a food justice movement that works to eradicate food deserts and food insecurity and increase access to healthy food in rural, suburban and urban areas. As Terri’s talk will show, these changes in food production and distribution can redefine and expand people’s ideas about “community” across urban-suburban-rural lines.

Terri is originally from Richmond, California and has a BA in Ethnic Studies, an MPA from CSU-Hayward and a PhD in Public Policy and Public Administration from Auburn University (War Eagle!). Currently she is an associate professor of political science; an affiliate faculty member of the Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies Program and the Peace and Conflict Studies Program; and special assistant to the Provost for Diversity and Inclusivity at Butler University. Her research interests and writings focus primarily around post-Civil Rights era community and economic development as well as empowering pedagogical practices that create inclusive curricular and co-curricular spaces. Currently she is writing a book titled, Farming for Justice: Diversity, Food Access and the USDA, and another book, Talking About Race: James Baldwin and Margaret Mead Then and Now.
Beer brings people together. It mixes high and low culture to appeal to a wide variety of people. Similarly, the lines between urban, suburban, and rural blur each day as communities become more connected through online communities, digital communication, and advances in transportation. It doesn't matter if a community is urban, suburban, or rural - as communities consider creative placemaking efforts, thinking about what local craft breweries do similarly can unlock new ideas for community growth. By focusing on 18th Street Brewery in Gary, Big Woods Brewery in Nashville and Terre Haute, Bill’s talk reveals what urban, rural, and suburban areas can learn about creative placemaking from local craft breweries and how these lessons can be applied to any community revitalization effort.

Bill is a writer and assistant professor of English at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, where he directs the professional writing major. A native of Greenfield, Indiana, he attended DePauw University and earned an MFA in Creative Writing from the Ohio State University. His book, *The Milan Miracle: The Town that Hoosiers Left Behind* won bronze in the 2017 Independent Publisher Book Awards. He is at work on a second book, *Beer Run: 12 Great Midwestern Beer Trips*. He writes a monthly craft beer column and routinely presents at academic conferences on the intersection of beer and culture.
Everyone’s Water: Exploring Indiana’s Roadside Springs

Why do people gather water from roadside springs today, and what cultural meanings are constructed through the continued engagement with this tradition?

Presenter: Kay Westhues, Indiana University South Bend / Ivy Tech Community College
Contact: kwesthues@gmail.com 574.220.2156
Format: 45-minute presentation with Q&A

Urban, suburban, and rural communities are all dependent on the watersheds they share. Whether they rely on “city water” or private wells, everyone’s health and well-being are affected by access to clean water. Kay’s talk explores the use of Indiana’s roadside springs to examine how water connects us to place and our shared history. Historically, community springs supplied water to those in need before the advent of municipal systems. These types of infrastructure developments allowed for the growth of cities, but distanced people from the sources of their water supply. Springs once served rural communities, such as Carmel’s Flowing Well or Gary’s Small Farms Spring, but are now located suburban or urban areas. Through oral histories and first-hand accounts, Kay reveals the history of community springs and looks at how people in urban, suburban and rural settings continue to use them.

Kay Westhues is a folklorist and artist who is interested in examining the ways in which rural tradition and history are interpreted and transformed in the present day. Her research interests include environmentalism and water rights, public commons, oral history, and the cultural significance of place. Kay is a graduate of Western Kentucky University’s Folk Studies MA program, and has a BA in the Individualized Major Program (Photography and Ethnocentrism) at Indiana University, Bloomington. She teaches at the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts at Indiana University South Bend, and Ivy Tech Community College in South Bend.
DEMOGRAPHICS & MAPPING
**Red State, Blue City: Drawing Maps to Dream By**

*How might we understand maps as important cultural artifacts that encode a sense of self and society?*

**Presenter:** Dr. Cassandra Bausman, Trine University  
**Contact:** bausmanc@trine.edu 309.312.0179  
**Format:** 45-minute talk with Q&A

Everyone is an atlas; we construct a “map” of our world with our memories, experiences and personal landmarks. But when we see maps of the U.S., we usually see urban and rural reductively represented as red vs. blue. So where does this leave us? Are maps true? Do they really show who we are and who we live with? Many writers, geographers, theorists and thinkers posit the idea that maps are rhetorical devices, casting before the viewer a particular point of view to promote a particular story. Cassandra’s talk explores this idea in depth, with illustrations from television (the *West Wing*’s memorable take-down of the Mercator map) to history (Elizabethan cartographic propaganda) to literature, film, advertising and more. Participants will grapple with the idea that maps construct our perceptions of space, place, and relationships and will explore how they can contextualize or change the maps they see of themselves.

A recent Hoosier transplant, Cassandra earned her PhD in literature from the University of Iowa, specializing in popular and genre fiction (particularly fantasy and science fiction), gender and media studies, and cultural rhetorics. The recipient of the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts’ emerging scholar award, she now teaches courses in fantasy, science fiction, global and post-colonial literature, mythology, film, and rhetoric and composition at Trine University.
Exploring Hoosiers and the Places They Reside

*How do Hoosiers, who live in different places, think alike and differently about key political issues?*

**Presenter:** Dr. Chad Kinsella, Ball State University

**Contact:** cjkinsella@bsu.edu 859.630.6851

**Format:** 45-minute interactive presentation with 15-minute Q&A

Chad, part of the team behind the nonpartisan Old National Bank/Ball State University Hoosier Survey, is an expert on Indiana’s population and polling trends. In this lively presentation, he will first define and examine where Indiana’s rural, suburban and urban areas are. Then, using the Hoosier Survey results, he will examine how Hoosiers in different areas feel about contemporary political and social issues and their communities. At the end of presentation, participants and Chad will discuss how what they heard from the survey compares to what they experience in their day-to-day lives and whether opinions really do vary by place. The presentation uses maps, graphs, and open discussion to build understanding.

Chad is currently an assistant professor of political science at Ball State University, where he teaches state and local government and public administration. His research focuses primarily on electoral geography, but he also examines state and local government, federalism, and pedagogy. He received his PhD in political science and a master’s degree in geography from the University of Cincinnati. He also has a master’s degree from Eastern Kentucky University in public administration and has practical experience having worked at the Council of State Governments and for a member of Congress. Chad resides with his family in Muncie.
In 1960, 180,000 people lived in Gary, Indiana, a thriving industrial city. Fifty years later, only 80,000 people lived there. Why? What happened? And where did residents go? This 90-minute interactive workshop weaves together oral histories from residents of northwest Indiana and places them alongside historical contexts to document the changing racial and economic demographics of Gary and the Region, including the rise of black political power and opportunity in the 1960s and '70s, the “flight” of white residents and businesses to the suburbs, and the automation and subsequent underemployment of the steel mills. Though about Gary and northwest Indiana, the presentation offers a useful framework for thinking about how these dynamics played out in other cities and regions.

Liz Wuerffel and Allison Schuette (associate professors of art and English) codirect the Welcome Project at Valparaiso University, an online, digital story collection used to foster conversations about community life and civic engagement. They have received two National Endowment for the Humanities grants and an Indiana Arts Commission grant related to their Flight Paths, a multimedia initiative to help participants engage and analyze factors contributing to disinvestment in and the fracturing of neighborhoods, communities, and regions in post-industrial America through the specific example of Gary.
Myths and Facts: The Reality of Immigration in Indiana and Beyond

How does immigration affect our families and communities today, and what should we consider for the future?

Presenter: Dr. Emily Wornell, Ball State University
Contact: ejwornell@bsu.edu C: 503.332.5628 O: 765.285.1613
Format: 45-minute interactive presentation with 15-minute discussion

In an era of “fake news,” it can be difficult to delineate truth from fiction, particularly around hot-button political issues like immigration. But what does the data show us about immigration and assimilation in Indiana, particularly in rural areas? Among other important points about educational attainment and labor market impacts, the data shows us that immigration may be the best hope for population stabilization and gain in rural Indiana, and that keeping the second generation (the most economically active demographic group in the country) requires us to create communities that are both socially and culturally supportive of newcomers. Emily, a rural sociologist and demographer with the Indiana Communities Institute at Ball State, will share an overview of immigration data and trends in Indiana to help communities disentangle myths from reality. She will share state and county-level data about immigrants and assimilation in Indiana and engage audience members in a discussion about the changes they’re observing in their communities.

Emily is a research assistant professor in the Indiana Communities Institute at Ball State University working with the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) and the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) Center for State Policy. As a rural sociologist and demographer, her areas of specialization are inequality and population change in rural communities. Within that, she is interested in immigration and assimilation, the effect of automation-related job loss on families and communities and household livelihood strategies—or the ways that households make ends meet—in rural communities in the Midwest and around the country.
LAND & ENVIRONMENT
Bridging Urban and Rural History in the Hoosier Landscape

In what ways does the physical space of Indiana’s state parks reflect the tensions of modernity?

Presenter: Dr. Steven Burrows

Contact: smbburrows@bsu.edu 317-828-7385

Format: 35-minute lecture followed by questions and discussion

Though far from cities, rural areas are shaped by people in cities and the policies they create. It’s a complicated relationship and has been so at least since the Progressive era at the turn of the 20th century. Indiana’s state parks are a good case study for exploring this fundamental tension. Steve’s talk will look at how state leaders based in cities imagined the state parks scattered across rural areas, and how their ideas were bound up in notions of “urban” and “rural,” “heritage” and “modern.” In so doing, he reveals the ways we’re connected across urban/rural boundaries, even if it’s not always evident on the surface.

Steve is a life-long Indiana resident and currently serves as Assistant Teaching Professor of Landscape Architecture at Ball State University. He holds a bachelor’s degree in English from Denison University, a Master of Landscape Architecture degree from Ball State University, and PhD in Landscape Architecture (History and Theory) from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research interests are concerned with how the design and use of physical space informs, and is informed by, issues of cultural identity.
Valuing Hoosier Communities and Environments through Barbara Kingsolver’s *Flight Behavior*

How do you value the natural environment(s) surrounding you and your community and how might these values serve as building blocks to cultivate relations with communities beyond your own?

**Presenter:** Pamela Carralero, Purdue University  
Contact: pcarrale@purdue.edu  443.388.0379  
Format: 30-minute presentation & 30-minute discussion

Barbara Kingsolver’s novel *Flight Behavior* tells the story of a small, tightly-knit farming community that suddenly rethinks their relations to each other and their environment when thousands of beautiful butterflies mysteriously appear in a nearby wood. Pamela’s talk will engage attendees in a group reading of a selection of short scenes from the novel that will prompt reflection on why and how we value the Indiana environments we live within. Ultimately, we will consider how our notion(s) of value can help build relations with Hoosier communities beyond our own to ensure the health of regional relations, livelihoods, and ecologies. All are welcome, and no prior familiarity of *Flight Behavior* or Kingsolver’s work is necessary.

Pamela is a PhD Candidate at Purdue University specializing in the environmental humanities. Her work is poised at the intersection of sustainability studies, social justice, and environmental literature.
Claiming Kinship: Indiana’s Social and Environmental History

How have Hoosiers’ understandings of their relationship with the environment changed over time?

Presenter: Dr. Elizabeth Grennan Browning, Indiana University

Contact: eabrowni@indiana.edu 812.855.1525

Format: 40 minutes (interspersed with questions to the audience), and reserve 20 minutes for Q&A

What will your community’s and the larger state’s future environments look like in 50 years? 100 years? 200 years? What must we accomplish in the immediate future to become more resilient, and how can history help inform this process? Can Hoosiers unite across boundaries to meet the challenge of environmental change? Lizzie’s talk draws inspiration from Indiana author Scott Russell Sanders’s idea of “claiming kinship,” which posits the idea that we are family with the land we live on, tied to it and ethically obligated to care for it. She digs into the results of IU’s Hoosier Social-Environmental Survey to share the history of Hoosiers’ attitudes and actions toward the environment. She then concludes with a discussion of the questions above, asking participants to reflect on what a “livable future” will look like, and whether they agree with Sanders’s idea that land connects us across boundaries.

Lizzie is a U.S. historian, with research interests in environmental history, intellectual history, urban history, and cultural history. She is the Midwestern/Indiana Community History Fellow at the Environmental Resilience Institute of Indiana University Bloomington, where she is also an adjunct assistant professor of history. She received a PhD in history from the University of California, Davis, and a bachelor’s degree in philosophy and international studies from Northwestern University.
MEDIA & REPRESENTATION
For nearly a hundred years—ever since the first Middletown research study was conducted by Robert and Helen Lynd-Muncie, Indiana has been held up as an emblematic American city. Today, whenever journalists want to report on Middle America—and they do, more than ever, since 2016—they call up Jim, the director of Ball State’s Center for Middletown Studies. Most come with a simplistic idea of who lives in small Indiana cities: working-class whites. Few capture the complexity of these communities, which reside at the intersection of rural and urban life. Jim’s talk highlights the oversimplifications of visiting journalists and offers a fuller portrait of life in this small Indiana city and other similarly situated communities.

Jim is George and Frances Ball Distinguished Professor of History and Director of the Center for Middletown Studies at Ball State University. He teaches and writes about American urban life, ethnic history, and politics during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His most recent book, written with his colleague Frank Felsenstein, is What Middletown Read: Print Culture in an American Small City (2015). He is currently working on a book entitled The Rise and Fall of Middletown. In his role as director of the center, he has worked with dozens of journalists over the past fifteen years.
Blurred Lines: How Social Media is Changing Urban, Suburban and Rural Lines

How do the technologies that we use both connect us with, but paradoxically also isolate us from, our community?

Presenter Dr. Amanda Egan, Marian University
Contact: aegan@marian.edu 317.955.6074
Format: 45-minute presentation with Q&A

People’s social networks are no longer bound by geography as they were prior to social media. Some social media (e.g., Next Door and Craigslist) connect us with nearby Hoosiers, while other social media (e.g., Twitter and Facebook) bring those far away into the palm of our hand. How do these networks change how we relate to our near and far neighbors? How do they alter the attitudes that we hold about other Hoosiers, political issues, and our own part of Indiana? Finally, how can we maximize the potential benefits of social media for the good of all Hoosiers?

Amanda is an assistant professor of psychology at Marian University in Indianapolis. She earned her PhD in applied social psychology at Loyola University Chicago. Her research focuses on human-computer interactions and particularly how the presence of ubiquitous personal technologies like smartphones impact perceptions of self and others and their interpersonal interactions. She is interested in how these technologies can paradoxically both isolate us from but also connect us with our communities and how that impacts not only individuals but society at large.
Transcending Divides through Creative Conversations

How can communities use communication to encourage collaborative problem solving across diverse interests and concerns?

Presenter: Dr. Sara Drury, Wabash College
Contact: drurys@wabash.edu 765.361.6393
Format: 60-minute interactive lecture and small group workshop

Sara’s interactive lecture and workshop will directly engage the history of Indiana as a crossroads of America, a place where there have always been boundaries-geographic, demographic, socioeconomic—that seem to separate our communities. The question at the heart of the workshop is whether these histories and communities are as divided as they may seem. Over the course of the session, participants will learn some of this history, examine divides in their everyday lives, weigh what values they hold in common or in tension with other Hoosiers, and deliberate different ideas and pathways forward. This type of conversation will leave participants with new skills for understanding and working together to address public problems.

Sara Drury is passionately committed to productive communication for democracy, community engagement, and working collaboratively to find new approaches to enduring challenges. As Director of Wabash Democracy and Public Discourse at Wabash College, she works with students, staff, and community partners to design and conduct public forum events around the midwestern United States. As an Indiana transplant, Sara has embraced our state’s urban and rural communities. She makes her home in Montgomery County and loves traveling to local restaurants around the state. Her work connects her with large cities and small communities across Indiana.
There and Gone and Back Again

How do the cultural conversations sparked by the creative and culinary arts renew community?

Presenter: David Hoppe

Contact: davidhoppe6@gmail.com 317.441.1543

Format: 30-minute presentation with 30-minute Q&A

At the beginning of the 20th century, Indiana and the Midwest were considered, as Frederick Jackson Turner put it: "the heart of the Republic." Most people lived in the countryside and agriculture was their defining trait. This began to change in 1920 as more people moved to cities and towns. David will trace this history and bring it forward to the present, looking at how creative entrepreneurs are using our food and agricultural heritage to spark new life in and among urban, suburban and rural communities today. Despite the cultural and economic forces that have contributed to Indiana’s rural/exurban/suburban divides, David’s talk describes how some smaller communities are using the creative and culinary arts to attract new residents and revitalize their sense of place.

David is an award-winning journalist, playwright and essayist. He is currently a Contributing Editor for NUVO, the alternative weekly in Indianapolis. His books include Personal Indianapolis, a collection of NUVO columns, and Food for Thought: An Indiana Harvest, about the food renaissance in Indiana. His work has appeared in the Notre Dame Review, Utne Reader, New Art Examiner and Library Journal.

David is editor of the essay collection Where We Live: Essays about Indiana and has been awarded nine first place Indiana Society of Professional Journalism Awards and a Time-Life Creative Writing Fellowship. He lives in Long Beach, Indiana.
Corn, Phones, and Fentanyl: Commodities Across Distance and Difference

How do the products we produce and consume connect us across time and place (for better and sometimes worse)?

Presenter: Dr. Jennifer Johnson, Purdue University
Contact: jlj@purdue.edu 765.203.1894
Format: 40-minute presentation with 20-minute discussion

Jennifer’s talk examines everyday connections between rural, suburban, and urban places by focusing on three commodities important to the future of humanity at home and abroad—corn, mobile phones, and fentanyl. As she’ll show, each commodity circulates in global networks of commerce, comfort, and control, connecting people across various boundaries, including geography and social difference. By tracing the recent social and material histories of these complex commodities, Jennifer will lead participants in a timely conversation and debate around possibilities for imagining and actually working to shape a more livable future.

Jennifer is an assistant professor in the Department of Anthropology at Purdue University, where she is also affiliated with the Center for the Environment and Program in Ecological Sciences and Engineering. Jennifer’s research examines human-environment interactions through the circulations of things and thoughts, and how stories about the past shape possibilities for more livable futures. Her research has been supported by the National Science Foundation, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropology, the University of Michigan, and Yale and Purdue Universities. She holds an MS in Environmental Policy and Planning and PhD in resource policy and behavior from the University of Michigan, and a BA in international political economy from the Colorado College.
In the early 20th century, Midwestern elites envisioned Brown County as a place where Hoosier folk culture remained “untarnished by the march of time.” City dwellers came to see its rustic beauty and meet the rural “natives” who lived in log cabins, played traditional music, and made handicrafts. In the midst of rapid urbanization and industrialization, people all over the world searched for a lost “authentic” heritage; in Indiana, it was Brown County that was believed to be the place where Hoosier folk culture continued. What happened in Brown County reveals a larger story about how perceptions of urban and rural emerged, namely that cities hold our collective future, while rural communities are trapped in the past. In his talk, Jon shares this little-known history and what this particular Indiana story can teach us about the ways we think and talk about “urban” and “rural” today.

Jon directs Traditional Arts Indiana at Indiana University, where he also serves as a clinical associate professor in the Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology. He is the author of *Folk Art and Aging: Life-Story Objects and Their Makers* and the edited volume *The Expressive Lives of Elders: Folklore, Art, and Aging*. He also creates exhibitions, hosts public programs, and produces documentary videos about Indiana’s traditional arts. Jon grew up in Brown County and has spent his life researching the folk history of this rural community.
Since the inception of America, there’s been a tension about what the ideal American community looks like. Is it rural, full of self-sufficient, independent family farmers as Thomas Jefferson envisioned? Or should we strive for cosmopolitan, urban, globally connected communities, as Alexander Hamilton suggested? Here in the Hoosier State, Indiana communities have covered the spectrum. Home to historically unique communities of indigenous peoples, ethnic groups, national enclaves, and experimental communities, Indiana has reflected national trends. This interactive presentation aims to involve the audience in a lively discussion regarding points of difference and consensus between rural and urban experiences in Indiana over time.

Amanda Rumba grew up in rural Indiana but has lived in places as diverse as Pennsylvania, Belfast, and Moscow before earning her Master’s degree from University of Chicago. Amanda is currently working towards her doctorate in history from Purdue University, where her dissertation investigates stories of colonial history over time to analyze changes in the way humans record the past. Her other research interests focus on the shifts in religion, politics, identity, memory, and nostalgia between the British colonies and the early United States.