A Hard Day’s Knight


ALSO INSIDE

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OUR FRACTURED STATE

Washington is bitterly divided. The humanities can help.

By Julie Ziegler

THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS did not vote for Trump. They did not vote for Clinton. They have no opinions on immigration or healthcare. But they’ve come to symbolize the solid divide between us and them, them and us. Why are we a blue state on one side and a red state on the other?

It wasn’t always this way. In a fascinating animation created by The Seattle Times, the presidential election results by county in Washington State are shown in sequence since 1968. They begin as an often random splattering of light blue and light red, or occasionally just red (yes, Puget Sound has sometimes voted Republican). In the 2000 election, it all changed. The contrast became more intense as many light colored counties turned dark, and we sorted into red and blue with the Cascades in the middle. The state’s political geography split neatly in two—a yin/yang symbol of anger and mistrust.

There are theories about why this happened. One—among many—is that western Washington may have the collectivist perspective that often emerges from cities, while eastern Washington’s perspective emphasizes the self-reliance and independence necessary in more agricultural communities. But that still doesn’t explain why now and not before.
As a statewide organization tasked with traversing this geography, and one that often holds conversations on polarizing topics, we’re in a unique position to see the anger and division tearing at our state. We’ve brought conversations on immigration and Islam to more conservative areas like Yakima, and we’ve brought pro-death penalty and pro-nuclear power experts to talk to largely liberal crowds in Seattle. But we, too, lack answers.

Yet something has become clear to us in our travels throughout the state: We can’t agree. We won’t agree. And we may never agree. But we must embrace our disagreement.

The power of the humanities does not lie in agreement or resolution. Like the Cascades, it resides in the gaps between polarized regions and rises high above them, giving us a fuller view of both sides.

To come to an important discussion or event expecting a feel-good coming together moment (or as our program director Zaki Barak Hamid likes to call them, “a kumbaya moment”) is to guarantee frustration. Because when vital questions are explored—particularly with those who disagree with you—that search is painful, complicated, and hard.

The humanities is not a game with winners and losers, but an exploration. A good conversation or a good book aids us in searching for the truth, some of which we can know objectively, and some subjectively. But at its heart, we should realize that agreement is not the goal; instead, the goal is to recognize the unique differences of our experiences and what we have in common.

Of course, it’s hard to pitch the mission of our nonprofit as “we make it difficult for people.” But difficult conversations are the engines of change. A great state and nation is formed through the collision of different ideas, and is reliant on the courage of its citizens to be open and honest in their opinions, even if those opinions are unpopular.

The Cascade Mountains were formed by the collision of huge, often violent oppositional forces: volcanoes, tectonic shifts, and glaciers. Though those forces will never disappear completely, they are largely dormant now—and the result is breathtaking.

With sincere appreciation,

Julie Ziegler, Executive Director
Humanities Washington
Though we often romanticize the Revolutionary War, it was more complicated—and brutal—than many of us would care to remember.

By Jefferson Robbins
IT WASN’T ALL Delaware crossings, Valley Forge winterings, and Cornwallis surrenderings. Don Glickstein’s overview of the American Revolution involves a much wider canvas—stretching from the Colonies to India, depicting horror as well as heroism, and it questions the primary causes of the war.

“It’s always been a debate — was the Revolution launched by noble freedom fighters, or by greedy merchants who were upset because Britain had cracked down on their smuggling operations?” Glickstein says. “The truth is probably somewhere in between.”

The author of After Yorktown: The Final Struggle for American Independence surveys this Revolutionary landscape in the Humanities Washington Speakers Bureau talk, “What Our Teachers Never Told Us about the American Revolution.”

“The key message I want to send out is to always question assumptions,” Glickstein says. “If we have the tools to separate fact from opinion when looking at the Revolution, we’ll have the tools to separate fact from opinion in our current-day politics.”

**Humanities Washington: What do we think we know about the Revolutionary War that is actually wrong?**

**Don Glickstein:** History belongs to the winners of wars. The United States clearly won the war against Great Britain; therefore, the history that we grew up with was written generally from the perspective of the winners — a very country-centric perspective. And if you look at many popular books written about the Revolution, they assume that the only patriots fighting in that war were those led by George Washington. In reality, Loyalists were just as patriotic as the rebels — and certainly Native Americans, most of whom fought the rebels, were just as patriotic, and just as American. African-Americans, a small percentage, ended up fighting for the rebels, but most supported the British, because often the British offered freedom in exchange for fighting — and the British, I might add, kept their end of the deal. We also don’t get the perspective of our allies the French, or our co-belligerents the Spanish and the Dutch. We only get the tip of the iceberg of what really happened.

**All nations tell unifying stories about themselves and their creation. Is our Revolution story a function of nation-building?**

I guess I would ask the question, whose nation? Is it the nation of enslaved people? Is it the nation of the Native Americans, the nation of the Canadians? I suppose you’re right — that’s part of how nations are built. But if you do history right, then you do question assumptions. And certainly in our current politics, we don’t question assumptions. We don’t teach kids how to separate fact from opinion. In some instances it’s even Orwellian: real news is being labeled as fake news, and fake news is being labeled as real news, because we’ve lost the ability to differentiate fact from opinion.

**The original title of your talk was “The American Revolution and the First War on Terror.” Who were the terrorists in the American Revolution?**

There was terror everywhere you looked, because this was a total war. There was certainly terror among the Loyalists, starting in Massachusetts, where good loyal Americans, who were trying to do their job and uphold the British government — which was their government—were intimidated by insurgents and rebels. Those who tried to uphold law and order were tarred and feathered, their houses were gutted, and their families threatened. The Loyalists soon learned that discretion was the better part of valor. Some had to flee their homeland, their native America, and live on the frontier.

For years, Native American nations sent peaceful protests to colonial governments, and said, “Hey, you’ve got to control these land thieves coming into our territories.” Yet one of the great land speculators of all time, of course, was George Washington, and some of the so-called treaties that were signed were really trumped up. The Iroquois were famous for giving away land that they didn’t own. But other times, more often than not, Native Americans would be coerced, or somebody who was unauthorized to speak for the entire nation would sign a treaty, and the Whites would say, “Hey, it’s legal for us to move in and take this land.” There was terror on both sides, between Native Americans and again, depending on your perspective, the land thieves or the pioneers and settlers. There certainly was a torture culture among Native Americans, which was quickly adopted by White settlers. Colonial governments offered bounties for scalps, and the White settlers didn’t
quite care whether those were male scalps, or female scalps, or the scalps of children. There was utter brutality on both sides, with one exception — it’s generally agreed that Native Americans never raped White women, and it’s generally acknowledged that Indian women were open territory for White soldiers, at least in the East.

**Present-day Washington State was pretty distant from the Thirteen Colonies, but was it a theater for any Revolutionary action?**

It was not, but interestingly, we have named many, many of our landmarks after sworn enemies of George Washington and the American rebels. Mount Rainier was named after Peter Rainier, a British lieutenant. He was injured in 1778 while capturing a rebel privateer. George Vancouver was a British lieutenant and fought in the Battle of the Saintes. Peter Puget fought in the Caribbean for the British when they took the island of Saint Kitts. James Vashon, of Vashon Island, was also at the Battle of the Saintes, and was captain of a ship that fought in one of the last naval battles of the Revolution. My favorites, of course, are Hood Canal and Mount Hood, named after Samuel Hood, who was this absolutely brilliant and caustic admiral for the British, who also fought in the Caribbean and was a sworn enemy of the American rebels. About the only things that weren’t named after sworn enemies of America were Washington State itself and Cordova, Alaska, which was named after the Spanish admiral Luis de Córdova — one of our co-belligerents who fought against the British in several naval battles, including the Great Siege of Gibraltar. None of these people ever made it out here, with the exception of George Vancouver, but their names still stand. Vancouver, after the Revolution, led an expedition in the 1790s, and he named a lot of landmarks — or his officers did. Of course, in the 1790s, the United States was nowhere in the Pacific Northwest region. It was the British trying to stake out turf against the Russians to the north, and the Spanish to south.

**What was the propaganda situation? How did each side spread its narrative of the war?**

The rebels used amazing new technology, the Facebook and Instagram of the 18th century: pamphlets and broadsides that were really cheap to produce. And they had wonderful propaganda artists, like Paul Revere — you’re probably familiar with the great depiction that he drew of the so-called Boston Massacre. They were geniuses at propaganda. They also had this innovation called the Committees of Correspondence, a communication network, like an 18th-century internet. Each rebel group in each colony set up these committees, and each of these separate colonies, almost separate nations, were able to communicate in a very fast and efficient way. In upstate New York, a Loyalist woman, Jane McCrea, was accidentally killed by Native Americans. But it was the rebels who used it as propaganda, saying here’s this young lady — and they conveniently ignored the fact she was a Loyalist — who got murdered by the bloodthirsty savages, and we need to defend against the British who are enabling all these savages. It helped lead to the rebel success at the Battle of Saratoga, because it was such an effective recruiting tool. But was it an exaggeration? Yes.

Don Glickstein is presenting his free Humanities Washington talk “What Our Teachers Never Told Us about the American Revolution” around the state as part of Humanities Washington’s Speakers Bureau. Find out where he’s appearing next at humanities.org.

Peter Rainier Photo courtesy of National Parks Service

Mohawk Chief Thayendanega, also known by his English name Joseph Brant, fought with the British and was falsely accused of war atrocities.
Join us for the 6th Annual Spokane
bedtime stories FUNDRAISER

An evening of food, wine, and words with authors:
Thom Caraway | Kate Lebo | Shann Ray | Sharma Shields

OCTOBER 27, 2017 AT 5:30 P.M. AT THE SPOKANE CLUB
TICKETS: $100 | Register now at humanities.org

Sponsored in part by The Spokesman-Review
Over a summer, a grandson helps care for his ailing grandpa with love, affection, and medieval parapet building. Originally written for Humanities Washington’s Bedtime Stories event in Spokane.
Your goddam kids wanna send you to the booby hatch?

They go and make shit salads of their own lives—two divorces and a bankruptcy between ‘em and these ripe geniuses think you’re the crazy one? Think you’re the one who belongs in a home? Why—’cause you can’t always remember the date? Or who the president is? Well, you sure as shit didn’t forget to put a roof over their heads. You sure as shit didn’t forget to raise them.

So how about they spend four years in the Navy, pull thirty-five loading semis in a warehouse, and then bury the person they love most. See how much of that life they want to remember.

“Nother Coors Light, Wayne?”

“Depends.” Goddam—a beer glass is a pleasing thing to hold. “How many have I had, Carla?”

“So far? Every one I put in front of you.”

“Well then … guess I about got ‘er figured out, don’t I?”

Carla laughs. “Nah, you only had one so far, honey.”

Honey? Well, lookie there. Someone digs the old Wayner.

Carla leans across the bar, grabs your glass. “Basil said you could have two.”

“Who?”

“Basil? Your grandson?” She nods at the door behind you. “Kid who drove you here. ‘Member?”

You dismount the barstool and walk past the guy playing pool alone to peer out the window of the bar. Sure as shit, there he is, your great big goof of a grandson sitting on the curb outside, beneath a street lamp, wearing that crazy hat, flipping through his weirdo cards. Some kind of medieval role-playing game he’s always playing. Wait, did Brian drive you here? Another memory in the shadows: your kids won’t even let you drive no more.

“That kid a queer?” asks the jackass playing pool.

“Basil?” Carla says. “He just said he was Wayne’s vassal.”

“His vessel?” asks the guy playing pool.

“Vassal,” says Carla. “It’s a knight who serves a higher rank of nobleman.”

“Oh, for Chrissake.” You spin away from the door. “His name ain’t Basil. It’s Brian. And unless vassal means moron, he ain’t one of them neither.”

Sometimes you can recall the lost things, like wind blowing sand off the truth.

Goddam disease.

“Said he quit college and his mother sent him to stay with you?” Carla says.

“Yeah, that’s right.” You’re good with old memories. You could name every car you’ve ever owned. But new ones just don’t hold. They’re mysterious men in dark suits always sliding back in the shadows. You know they’re there—just can’t make ‘em out. But then you pull one from the shadows, like this: your daughter Lizzy in Seattle agreeing you didn’t have to go to the booby hatch if you let your 19-year-old grandson stay with you.

Carla says, “He seems sweet. Adores you, Wayne.”

“Yeah. How about you adore me with another beer, Carla.”

“Done and done,” she says, slides a cold one.

“I don’t know,” says the guy playing pool. “Kid looks queer to me.”

You glare at the guy playing pool. He’s gotta be thirty years younger than you, but you’ve folded bigger tents than that one. He’s playing biker, all leathered up, but if he’s a biker, you’re a goddam astronaut.

The pool guy says, “You got a problem, old man?”

You stand. “I sure as shit do.”

“Wayne,” Carla says gently.

So you sit back down and your hand closes around the skinny waist of a schooner. Goddam, a beer glass is a pleasing thing to hold. But there’s something—you peer into the shadows … what was it, a promise that you wouldn’t drink so much. “How many—a-these I had, Carla?”

“That’s your second, Wayne. Your grandson said you could have two.”

“My grandson?” You look around the bar. “Is Brian here?”

The biker playing pool laughs.

Carla pats your hand. Well, hey now. Someone digs the old Wayner.

* * *

Oh, cruel fate. Oh sorrowful heart, why doth love elude thee even as the hare runneth from the bowman? How long must a poor Knight endure this cold earth alone? And yet, hope persists: this very eve plans are afoot to present thyself to the fair maiden Katherine who liveth in the manor just beyond your lord’s southern walls.

A cell phone buzzes and breaks your train of thought. On the curb outside your Grandpa’s bar, you jump, thinking maybe
someone has made a play in the Kingdom, but it’s not your cell. It’s Grandpa’s flip-phone. Your mom. Oh crap. Be cool.

“You have reach-ed Basil, vassal knight to the good Wayne, Duke of Bowdish Street, fiefdom of Spokane Valley, kingdom of Washington. Speak thy business—”

“Hey Brian. How’s Grandpa?”

“M’lord is without equal in all the land, madam.”

“Can I talk to him?”

“Presently m’lord acquits himself of… the True-Value hardware store, my good woman.”

“What? Why aren’t you with him, Brian? He didn’t drive himself?”

“No, Mom. Chill. I drove him here. I just stepped out to take a phone call.”

“What’s he buying at a hardware store?”

“Oh. Um. Bee repellant?” You make a face.

“Bee repellant?” Mom makes it sound like if he actually was buying bee repellant it would be the craziest thing in the world. “Brian, he’s not drinking, is he?”

A huff of indignation: “M’lady, even in his addled state, methinks the Lord of Bowdish Street would ne’er stoop to quaffing bee repellant!”

“Brian, please talk like a normal person.”

Then the other phone buzzes—oh, this is it! “One sec, Mom—” And you switch to your iPhone. It’s a message from the Game Manager: Danios the Splendid has played an expulsion card. He’s expelling the blacksmith! Clearly, Danios knows you’ve planted a spy in his realm but he thinks it’s the blacksmith. Oh sweet joyous deception!

His suspicion is well placed—when Danios seized a stack of your vulnerable peasant cards you did plant a spy, but your true spy card is Alenia the tavern girl! You pull out your journal and make a notation.

“Brian!”

“Oh. Sorry mom. Danny just made a play so I had to write it down. He totally fell for my trick.”

“Brian! Listen to me. Go get your grandpa out of the tavern.”

Crap. The cunning pup proveth no match for the sly mother fox.

Your mother sighs. “And how’s the shed coming?”

“Great. We’re almost done.” Last winter the snow caved in the roof on Grandpa’s backyard shed and you and he have been rebuilding it. Which was why Grandpa needed a beer tonight.

“Is Grandpa teaching you to use his tools?”

You can practically see the Hallmark movie playing in your mom’s head—the kindly grandfather teaching woodworking to the fatherless college flameout.

On Golden Shed.

“Yep, hammers, saws, everything.”

Mom relaxes a little. “And are you enjoying yourself?”

“Oh yeah, He’s teaching me all sorts of cool stuff, about, you know, being a man, fixing cars.”

You might be piling it on a little heavy because her voice shifts. “And are you guys talking?”

“Nah, we communicate through grunts and whistles.”

“You know what I mean, Brian.” Your mom takes a deep breath. “What about Katy. Have you seen her?”

“Yeah, I saw her.”

“And—is she still adorable.”

“It’s only been a week, Mom.” The other movie playing in your mother’s head is a cute romantic comedy in which you fall in love with the girl who lives behind Grandpa—the girl you used to play with when you were little, when you and mom would come to Spokane from Seattle every summer. Before Grandma died. And indeed, fair Katy hath grown into a comely maiden and caught thine eye—that bewitched orb even now filled with images of Lady Katherine in black running tights and pony-tail, waving across the back fence.

“You should go knock on her door. Ask if she wants to get a hamburger.”

“A hamburger? You think maybe I should take her to the malt shop?” The movie playing in Mom’s head is from 1958.

“Okay, Brian. Just … go get Grandpa, okay. And no more beer tonight.”

“Okay, Brian. Just … go get Grandpa, okay. And no more beer tonight.”

“And talk to Katy!”

Ah yes, fair Katy … yes—Worry not mother, for while this good Knight arriv’d in the Valley of Spokane weary of soul, the fair Katherine hath awakened something in him, and lo, before the sun riseth next on hard morrow, Katy shall know fully the measure of thy humble servant’s heart.

* * *
Christ, a beer glass is a pleasing thing to hold. “You got one more—a these back there, Carla?” You wave the schooner at her.

She smiles. “Sorry, Wayne. Two’s the limit. Basil’s orders.”

“Who?” That name Basil is familiar, just beyond your vision, in the shadows.

The guy with the pool cue pipes in. “Jesus! You’re a skipping record. Your queer grandson Brian, you crazy old shit!”

You’re not sure why, but you’ve had it with that guy with the pool cue. You look over. He’s younger but you’ve folded bigger tents than that.

He points at you with the stick. “I’m tellin’ you old man, you keep lookin’ over here we’re gonna have a problem.”

“Oh I sure as shit hope so.”

And that’s when the tavern door flies open, like some kind of Western, and you half expect Gary Cooper to walk in and shoot the pool-playing asshole, but it’s your grandson Brian. And the memory men emerge from shadows—Brian is babysitting you for the summer. Lizzy’s orders. Calls himself Basil and wears that weird knight’s stocking cap with the ridge on top. He’s playing some medieval card game all the time—weird sweet kid.

“Oh what, wa—” Basil stops midsentence. He spins on the guy. “I know you. Didn’t we spend the night together at a truck stop?” He turns to Carla, a flirty aside: “You should see what this guy can do with a beefstick and a can of Pringles.”

The pool stick guy mutters as he leans over to shoot, “Don’t start your fag shit with me—”

And suddenly there’s no Basil to be found, just Brian, the old high school linebacker, who unfolds his full frame and takes two strides to the pool table, leans over and yanks the stick from the stunned pool guy’s hands. “Listen Cletus, I don’t give two shits what the AM radio in your Silverado tells you to think … whatever bigoted billionaire made you afraid of gay people and Mexicans. Just keep that shit to yourself, okay?”

The pool guy stares. Brian tosses the cue on the table, scattering the balls. Then he turns to you. “Come on, Grandpa. Let’s go before Cletus here doth protest me right into bed.”

* * *

M’lord Grandpa Wayne, Duke of Bowdish Street, siefdom of Spokane Valley, it is I, your knight-errant Basil, servant to you and all your good deeds. Let us take leave of this fine establishment to finish work upon our parapet.”

The guy with the pool stick mutters, “Better listen to the fairy.”

You’ve about had it with that guy.
You feel awful about losing your temper at the guy in the bar. “Please avail me of your forgiveness, m’lord. That nave in the tavern weren’t kinsman to thee, I pray?”

“What?”

“You didn’t know the guy in the bar—”

“No. And I sure as shit don’t care to.”

Grandpa looks strange in the passenger seat of his Dodge Diplomat. He has no idea what to do with his hands. They’re folded in his lap like a dead bird. That’s been tough for him, letting someone else drive. He looks so small sitting there. Grandpa used to seem so big. He played football too, or so he tells you twice a day.

He glances over. “What’re you doing here, Brian?”

“Mom wanted me to help you out this summer—”

“I don’t mean that.” He gets irritated when you’re too simple with him. “I mean why ain’t you in school. You was studying engineering?”

“Yeah. At U-Dub.” You never know what he’s going to remember. He runs in a good groove for a while, is sharp as ever, but then it gets all foggy and he repeats himself, asks the same questions over and over. The beer probably doesn’t help, but the man has so little joy in his life. What’s a beer or two?

“I think you told me what happened, but I can’t remember.”

“My roommate … uh … killed himself.”

“Right.” Grandpa nods. “Right. I was thinking it was something like that.”

Cole. Quiet kid from Centralia. Went home for spring break and took a whole bottle of his dad’s pain medication.

“And he was a gay? Right?”

You think about correcting Grandpa: not a gay, just gay. But you’ve told him that before. “Yeah. He had just come out to his family. I guess they weren’t too pleased. And some assholes on our dorm floor gave him shit. I just tried to be normal. But maybe I could’ve done more. Talked to him about it … or I don’t know.”

Your grandpa clears his throat. Looks out the window. “I knew a guy in the Navy, talked with a lisp. I worked on the carrier deck with him. One night some fellas filled a pillow case with spoons and paid him a visit.” Grandpa takes a breath, remembering. “I just laid on my bunk and let it happen.”

You’ve reached Grandpa’s house. “But after that,” he says, “I wasn’t ever afraid to stand up again. That’s all you can do, Brian.”

You ease the Diplomat into the garage.

Your grandpa laughs a little. “I already told you that story, didn’t I?”

And you laugh, too, because something just occurred to you. After Cole killed himself, everyone wanted you to talk about it. Counselors at school. Brian, how do you feel? Your mom. Brian, you need to stop hiding in that game and talk to someone. But the last thing you wanted to do was to talk.

And now, look: twice a day for a week you’ve had to tell your senile Grandpa about it. And twice a day he has told you about the guy in the Navy with the lisp, and that once you realize you have to stand up for what’s right, that’s what you’ll always do.

“No Grandpa,” you say, “that’s the first you’ve told me that story.”

He follows you into the backyard to put the final touches on the new shed roof.

“Tell me again,” Grandpa says, “what’s this goddam thing called?”

You are climbing the ladder, a string of shop-lights in your hands. “M’lord, we have constructed a balcony with crenelated edges like the walls of a great castle. ’Tis a parapet—the plans of which I hath acquired from the Internet.”

“A parapet.” He chuckles. “Well it sure as shit is the fanciest goddam shed roof I ever seen.”

“Finest in the land, I’d venture.” Your cell phone buzzes and you glance down at the message. “Guess again, Danios, you douchetool.” You put the phone away.

The parapet rises like a tower, eight feet off the shed roof into small squared battlements. It is supported by new double-joists inside the shed. The parapet opens in back, and this is where Lord Wayne’s extension ladder leans over the shed wall, and where you stand in the moonlight, glancing across the backyard as you hang your grandfather’s shop lights on the parapet walls.

* * *

Knights once believed that beyond the known world lay a land of flying serpents and talking beasts, of giants whose feet rose above their heads as they walked backward toward a black sun.

But the world of shadows is no different than the world of light. Across the chain link fence that marks the end of Wayne’s
kingdom is just more grass—your own backyard, where, as children, you and Brian once teeter-tottered on your swingset.

And you’ve just gotten home from work at the coffee shop when you see through the back slider, some kind of lights in old Wayne’s backyard. You sit down to dinner with your parents, text Melanie about hanging out later, when your dad says, “No phones at the table, Katy.”

Then he sees what you see, stands and walks to the window. Squints across the backyard. “What … in hell is Wayne building back there?”

“His grandson’s helping him,” your mother says. “He calls it a parapet.”

“A parakeet?” your father asks.

“A parapet? It’s a special balcony. Like on a castle.”

“On a shed?” Your dad comes back to the table. “Wayne’s lost it.”

You take your dishes to the sink. At the kitchen window you look across your backyard again. Sure enough, there’s a square tower rising off the back of Wayne’s toolshed, the fresh wood red and sore where it’s been sawed and nailed. It’s all lit up with hanging lights. It does make the shed look like a tiny castle, or like the set of a play. Brian’s on top, wearing that weird hat you saw on him a few days ago. He sees you in the kitchen window and waves for you to come out.

So you open the slider into the backyard. It’s a nice summer evening, a little breeze coming off the foothills. You walk past the big maple and the swing-set. There’s a dip in the chain link where Brian used to crawl over to play. Over the last eight years, you’d see him every once in a while, getting taller and cuter, giving a little wave when he visited with his mom. You heard he was at University of Washington, where you’re going in the fall.

“Hey Brian. What’re you doing up there?”

He puts his hand on his heart. “As these stars bear witness, I was awaiting thee, fair Katherine.”

You smile. “Katy’s fine.”

“Indeed, Katy is fine—the finest Katy in all Christendom. And I am merely the fool who seeketh her gaze—but a fool I be happily, for if thou hast not made a fool of thyself, then thou hast never loved.”

You laugh. But hopefully not in a mean way. It’s just—big goofy Brian standing up there in that light, in a knight’s stocking cap, hand over his heart. “So we teeter-totter ten years ago and now you’re in love with me?” You take a few more steps across the backyard.

“Love is too small a word, Katy. I long to be as the dew rising on thy morning grass.”

“Yeah, I’m not sure my parents would want you dewing on my grass.”

Now Brian laughs. “I beg thy forgiveness for my impetuous tongue.”

You look back at the house. Your parents have come onto the back porch and are watching this with screwed-up looks on their faces. Brian’s grandpa is watching, too, grinning at the base of his shed.

“Fair Katy,” Brian starts again, “I have made a bumbling stew of this. Wouldst thou love a humble knight who seeketh thy heart? For whilst thou has not made a fool of this knight, thou mightst have made a fool of thyself, and I see thou art not in love.”

You wonder if Brian’s grandpa is in on this, if he has his own lines, maybe a Do as thou wilt. Instead, he blesses the union with his own lovely valediction: “You sure as shit can.”

A few minutes later, Brian is backing the Diplomat out, you on the seat next to him. In the headlights his grandfather stands inside the garage, smiling. As if exerting one last bit of control on this fading life, Wayne reaches up and presses the button to close the garage door himself—bringing the curtain down on the good Lord of Bowdish Street, Fiefdom of Spokane Valley, Kingdom of Washington, travel tired, weary with toil—but for now, still king of all that he surveys … for now … the drawbridge slowly coming down … like the maw of a terrible beast.

Jess Walter is the New York Times bestselling author of Beautiful Ruins, Citizen Vince, We Live in Water and other books. He’s been the winner of the Humanities Washington Award, a finalist for the National Book Award and won the Edgar Allen Poe Award, among other accolades. A Hard Day’s Knight was written for Humanities Washington’s Bedtimes Stories literary fundraiser in Spokane.
A History of Washington Literature
IN FOURTEEN BOOKS

A list of prominent works that could only have emerged from our state’s history, culture, and spirit.

By Dan Lamberton

BEFORE WE BEGIN: This isn’t an argument for Washington’s best books. It’s a list of books born from our state’s landscape and culture, and that helped put us on the literary map. But of course there are hundreds of books—and hundreds of opinions—that can lay claim to regional significance. As a start, I recognize that I left out some great writers and organizations: Copper Canyon Press, Poetry Northwest, Theodore Roethke, Frank Herbert, David Guterson, Charles Johnson, Tess Gallagher, Denise Levertov, Jonathon Raban, Betty MacDonald, and many more. So we want to know: What books would you include? Let us know on Facebook or Twitter.

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Harry Robinson, Write It on Your Heart: The Epic World of an Okanagan Storyteller (1989)

There are many recorded narratives, poems, and speeches by Natives, but this particular book, the first of three by a storyteller from the upper Okanagan Valley, is unlike any other Native account I know. Robinson’s stories came down to him from his grandmother as well as from other Okanagan elders. Write It on Your Heart is a delightful, humorous, and geographically precise account of Native culture and history in the Northwest. What makes this work different from so many other accounts is the way his transcriber, the anthropologist Wendy Wickwire, inserted Robinson’s vocal pauses as line-breaks, which makes the stories appear as poems. These breaks give the stories accurate emphases and timing. As the novelist Thomas King says, when reading Robinson, “one is virtually forced to read the story out loud, thereby closing the circle, the oral becoming the written becoming the oral.”
George Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and Around the World* (1798)

Who named Mt. Baker, Mt. Rainier, and Puget Sound? It was the rather grumpy and meticulous George Vancouver, who thrived on taking measurements, and who disparaged those “theoretical geographers” who backed his own voyage in hopes he’d find a passage from the Northwest coast to some great inland sea or a shortened way to the Atlantic. To his credit, as reflected in this sprawling and detailed account of his voyage, he noticed what we notice still: our state is spectacular. One day, shortly after entering Puget Sound, he wrote, “Our attention was immediately called to a landscape, almost as enchantingly beautiful as the elegantly finished pleasure grounds in Europe.” Our region, he continued, was “designed by art.”


Unless you’re Native, your family arrived here from somewhere else, and perhaps they would have continued West if it hadn’t required swimming. And given the constant rain, the first soggy settlers on the Pacific shore must have felt themselves afloat even on land. Ivan Doig, an original Montanan, deliberately set himself on the same spot as had James Swan, a nineteenth century Bostonian-turned-pioneer. From 1862-1890, Swan kept a faithful diary about our edge of America, in particular about the islands of our Salish Sea. Doig imagined a brotherhood with Swan in this century-separated book. Swan’s stories, wrote Doig, “carry a sense of this rough margin of the West as true as a thumb testing the teeth of a ripsaw.” Doig knew how to write voice. With his PhD in history, he researched local language, and nobody has handled the regional vocabulary as winningly or as inventively. Read him and you’ll swear you’ve found someone who learned our landscape’s grammar.


If you’ve climbed any cliff or peak of consequence in this state, chances are Fred Beckey helped you up. He is unofficially recognized as the climber with more first ascents than any other climber in the world. By his detailed and generally clear directions, his guidebooks have helped hundreds of climbers and scramblers to summit safely. Published in 1969, *The Challenge of the North Cascades* is a colorful history of the mountains we Washingtonians see day by day—weather permitting. For the last sixty years, Beckey was often up there looking back at us. “Sleep came in starts and fits amid the night-long noises of falling rock and ice,” he wrote about bivouacking on a new route up Mount Rainier. “In the chill, on our beds of sharp stones, we tossed and turned. We could see the Seattle-Tacoma Airport beacon and the faint orange beads of the Lake Washington Floating Bridge. I remember thinking about the ice cliff above. It seemed so menacingly poised.”

Five Poets of the Pacific Northwest, Edited by Robin Skelton (1966)

In the late 1940s, when poet William Stafford began his long tenure in Portland, and Theodore Roethke stormed down on Seattle, the region’s poetry life was middling. To be sure, there was the 24-year-old, Seattle-born Audrey Wurdemann, who won a 1935 Pulitzer for her volume *Bright Ambush*—she was and remains the youngest poet to win a Pulitzer. Roethke, Wagoner said, helped the region’s editors, schools, and students “wise up to what’s corny.” Roethke won the Pulitzer in 1954, and Stafford the American Book Award in 1964. *Five Poets of the Pacific Northwest* is an important book, being the work of William Stafford and four Roethke-influenced poets—Carolyn Kizer, Richard Hugo, David Wagoner, and Kenneth O. Hanson—who had been together at the University of Washington during Roethke’s era. *Five Poets* shows solid evidence of the region “wising up.” All of the writers in *Five Poets* taught other young poets, and the region’s quality of writing grew significantly because of them.
Monica Sone, *Nisei Daughter* (1953)

We live in a time of heated talk about deportations, border walls, and immigration bans. The country’s done it before—gathered up its citizens for isolation, deportation, and imprisonment. In 1953, when *Nisei Daughter* was first published, many Americans were not ready to regret the imprisonment of Japanese-Americans, and most of those Japanese who lost property, family connections, and years of their lives were not eager to talk about it. With perspective, humor, and understanding, Monica Sone describes growing up in Seattle in the 1930s, then being deported with thousands of other Japanese Americans during World War II. Her descriptions of the roundup, the move to the Puyallup fairgrounds, and life in the camps opened the hearts and eyes of her readers, and the book continues to urge Americans to be more decent to all its people.


Robinson is from north Idaho, but as she says of her childhood, “I looked to Galilee for meaning and Spokane for orthodonture.” For a lot of us who grew up east of the Cascades and west of the Rockies, Spokane was our capital city in a wide, dry land. After Coeur d’Alene High School and Brown University, Robinson got her PhD from the UW, so let’s call her ours. *Housekeeping* is the story of two orphaned sisters, their series of substitute mothers, and the individual personalities that keep the sisters together and then push them apart. You’ll never see a deep lake or a railroad bridge quite the same way again. It is an ideal book for introverts, for readers who retreat to the imagination, yet wander silently among the regular folk. Robinson wrote in her 1990 essay “My Western Roots,” “I went to college in New England and have lived in Massachusetts for twenty years, and I find that the hardest work in the world—it may in fact be impossible—is to persuade easterners that growing up in the West is not intellectually crippling.” *Housekeeping* proved something important: that great writing can come from under Ponderosa pine trees, from the shores of lonely Northwestern lakes, and from youthful scholarship among the tomes held in small school libraries.

Fantagraphics

Seattle is now an international center for serious comic art. Fantagraphics leads the industry by publishing comics that are elegant, eloquent, and edgy, with a roster that includes Daniel Clowes, Peter Bagge, the Hernandez brothers, and Charles Burns. In fact, the *New York Times* says that Fantagraphics is publishing “the finest cartoonists working today.” But in addition to publishing iconic indie series like *Love and Rockets*, Fantagraphics also publishes bound editions of familiar, serialized newspaper comics including the *Complete Peanuts*, *Prince Valiant*, and *Krazy Kat* collections. Fantagraphics does its part to keep Seattle and Washington State its unconventional self. Washington was settled, according to demographers, by independent, reclusive, idealistic, and unconventional citizens. The others went to Oregon.


Sherman Alexie was born in 1966 to parents of the Spokane and Coeur d’Alene tribes, and he grew up in Wellpinit, Washington, on the reservation northwest of Spokane. Alexie has published, at this writing, 25 books, and won numerous literary awards. His novel for young readers, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, has been the most frequently banned book in America—a testament to how often it’s taught in schools. To pick one of his books is mostly arbitrary, but I’ll offer *The Summer of Black Widows* as the book I read most frequently because of its remarkable range. Alexie is masterful at what’s also present in Harry Robinson: the rhythm of natural storytelling. To be a storyteller often means to present an un-consenting person’s story as if it were your own; Alexie admits this, and wonders if he’s “become an accomplished liar” in his stories from the reservation. Regardless of which book of his you choose, reading Sherman Alexie is like boxing with a tragicomic pugilist who’s considerably above your weight class—you can’t decide whether to duck for cover or crack up and take it.

A book of immense bravery and beauty, it was assembled by Carver and his wife Tess Gallagher shortly before his death from lung cancer in 1988. It is a book of prose, poetry, and epigraphs, mostly by Carver but also by his inspirations: Anton Chekhov and Czeslaw Milosz. The result is a scrapbook of courageous meditations. To read this book, composed with the knowledge of impending death, is to marvel at how Carver held to love and art, how it fortified and clarified his life. Carver is best known as a short story writer, but to understand his own life, read his poems. This book shows his generosity of spirit—his desire to give us all a final gift.


Daniel James Brown tells the story of the University of Washington men’s crew team who battled through injury, illness, and class boundaries to win the Olympic Gold in the 1936 Berlin games, crushing Hitler’s planned display of German superiority. Of course, the book’s driven by stories of scrappy, lower- and middle-class public school boys overcoming the odds, but the book goes far beyond the usual plot of underdog triumph. It is a finely researched, fully human exploration of what is possible through belief, rigor, craft, teamwork, and striving. Readers around the world have been inspired by this book to cheer with every pull of the historic crew’s oars.


Anyone who reads *Citizen Vince* by Spokane’s Jess Walter will consider citizenship in a new light. The Edgar Award-winning book makes you want to get out there and vote. Vince Camden is a Witness Protection Program fellow from New Jersey who has gone state’s witness against a mobster. He’s sent for his own safety to Spokane, where he sells maple bars at a shop called Donut Make You Hungry, and persists in his larcenous arts as well. But Vince has been given, with his new identity, a voter’s ID, and it changes him. It’s a rollicking, profane, and convincing novel.

Horace Cayton, *Long, Old Road* (1963)

Certainly there were Black settlers and citizens in our state early on. But in the literary realm, and the socio-political realm as well, the Cayton family is singularly significant. Born in Seattle in 1903, Horace Cayton was the son of a Seattle newspaper editor and a strict Quaker-rooted mother whose father, Senator Hiram Revels of Mississippi, was the first Black man elected to a national legislature. Horace Cayton’s autobiography shows how the relative freedom of the Northwest disoriented him as he later worked in Chicago and New York as a sociologist and United Nations reporter. But living in the Northwest, Cayton wrote, “allowed me to develop more completely the aspirations which all Americans have.” It is an honest, funny, fiery revelation of a particular Black experience in our state during the early 20th century.


Tom Robbins books always unleash a troupe of trickster words that flip, bounce, break wind, and do loops in front of mirrors and windows. And, like townsfolk at the circus, Robbins’ crowd of readers feel something of him in themselves: some general anarchy, and perhaps some connection to the mysteries that our forest floors—mushrooms, specifically—contain. And reading Robbins might let one feel the art those dancing chemicals cook up in a gifted writer. His recent autobiography, *Tibetan Peach Pie*, describes how he grew his art. Part of it was, of course, preternatural. The child performer became the young rake, who became the literary star, who became the well-seasoned old guy at the La Conner tavern. The soil of every culture grows its particular fruit, and Robbins is one of the Northwest’s largest and ripest offerings.

Dan Lamberton directs the Humanities program at Walla Walla University. He is the author of *On the River Through the Valley of Fire*, and with the University of Washington’s John Findlay wrote an on-line anthology called “Reading the Region” for the UW’s Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest. He is a board member of Humanities Washington.
Tracks

by Sherman Alexie

My back is too injured to drive
So I ride the Amtrak from Seattle to Portland—
A short jaunt past barely dormant volcanoes—
But I rent a small sleeping compartment

So I can lie flat during the four-hour trip.
I fall asleep, of course, and dream
Of my ancestors, those Spokane Indians
Who still fished for wild salmon.

Those wild salmon are ghosts now.
As are my ancestors. But what did
My grandparents think when they first saw
A locomotive? Did they know
Those trains would change everything?
They would bring millions of white people.
They would bring the wood and metal
And wire. They would bring heat
And electricity and books and alien
Fruits and vegetables. I imagine my grandparents
Grew to hate the trains. I imagine their ghosts
Hate the trains, too. But I am one indigenous man
Who has forgiven the past. Well, I’ve forgiven
Trains, at least. Or maybe I love
Trains now because they are still loud
And they have grown old. These trains

Are the grandparents of those cars
On the highway and those airplanes in the sky.
These trains are always threatened to be replaced
With something faster, something more sleek

And contemporary. But I love the slow roll
Along the tracks. I love the frequent stops.
I love the way these trains have barely changed.
So, maybe, if something new lasts long enough,

Then it becomes something ancient and sacred.
Maybe this train is my grandmother. After all,
My train cradles me as I sleep. It holds me
In one calm and dark place, as everybody else

Quickly streams from one place to the next.
Oh, Grandmother Train, I know I rarely visit,
But I still need you. Next time, I will ride with you
Over a river that is still filled with wild salmon.

Grandmother, we’ll sing through every switch and
detour.
We’ll praise all of those good things that somehow
endure.
JOIN US FOR AN EVENING WITH MS. MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVELIST
G. WILLOW WILSON

G. Willow Wilson lies at the epicenter of multiple fault lines of American identity.

Originally a self-described “upper-middle-class American White girl,” she converted to Islam while in college, worked as a journalist in Mubarak’s Egypt, and now writes the hugely successful comic series Ms. Marvel—the first Muslim superhero in the history of Marvel Comics to have her own series. Join us for a discussion on American identity through the story of Ms. Marvel and its author. Moderated by KUOW’s Jamala Henderson. Books will be for sale courtesy of Elliot Bay Books, and a signing will take place after the discussion.

This conversation is part of Humanities Washington’s fall series, “The Big Split: Conversations about Our Divided State and Nation.” More at humanities.org.

OCTOBER 23 • 7:30PM • LANGSTON HUGHES PERFORMING ARTS INSTITUTE
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT HUMANITIES.ORG
God Behind Bars

Faith-based ministries are on the rise in US prisons. They help countless people, but also raise questions of bias, coercion, and separation of church and state.

by Jefferson Robbins

THERE’S A REASON the word “penitentiary” contains the word “penitent.”

“The first penitentiaries in Pennsylvania and New York were created by Quakers and Methodist reformers,” says Tanya Erzen, a professor at the University of Puget Sound. “The idea was for a person to become penitent. In the case of the Quakers, the purpose was to isolate them—they’re really the architects of solitary confinement — so that that person could pray in solitude and redevelop their relationship with God.”

But while religion and the penal system have historically mingled, the modern prison ministry movement has grown exponentially in recent decades. Its rise brings important questions about separation of church and state, coercion, bias toward one faith and not others (the ministries are overwhelming run by evangelical Christians), and what constitutes effective rehabilitation practices.

The prison ministry movement took off in the 1970s when Watergate felon-turned-proselytizer Chuck Colson founded Prison Fellowship, and it’s been a growth industry ever since. Erzen has been studying this rise in faith-based prison interventions in America. Her research forms the basis of her Humanities Washington Speakers Bureau talk “God Behind Bars,” as well as her recent book, God in Captivity: The Rise of Faith-Based Prison Ministries in the Age of Mass Incarceration. What she’s found is a movement by ministries to take over functions of counseling, education, and rehabilitation in penal institutions — often to the exclusion of tested secular methods and non-Christian faiths.

“I don’t want to be overly negative,” Erzen says, “but I think [prison ministries] should perhaps focus on the policy reasons behind mass incarceration. But I also think, talking to people inside prisons, ministries are a real lifeline for a lot of people — for dignity, for community.”

Humanities Washington: When evangelical groups campaign for “prison reform,” what are they asking for?

Tanya Erzen: There’s a real split. On the one hand you have [conservative activists] Pat Nolan and Chuck Colson who say prisons are a problem—that we have too many people in prison. They see it as, “Prisons are not cost effective — how do
we improve conditions?” At the same time, the vast majority of groups that go into prisons and prison ministry—they might be from a local Way of Holiness church—they’re not thinking about prison reform; they’re there because it’s a captive population, and they can proselytize. There are so many broad issues that religious groups could address [with inmates] in a really profound way, as ethical and political questions, and they just don’t, because they’re really focused on [proselytizing to] individuals. Something like 80 to 90 percent of women in prison have experienced some kind of violence before going into prison. That’s not to say people aren’t responsible for what they’ve done, but that’s an astronomical number. So you have women inside with all this trauma, and what kinds of groups are coming in to address that? What happens when you have a religious group imposing their perhaps socially-conservative agenda on a group, as opposed to people who know how to bring trauma counseling and healthcare? But [religious groups] can do it much more cheaply for the state, so I think that’s appealing.

**Do other faiths have the same access and impact in prisons as Christian teaching?**

The short answer to that would be no. Many prisons have a diversity of religious groups, so they might have an outside volunteer come in and facilitate a particular group. But in terms of heavy presence of ministry, groups tend to be 80 percent Protestant Christian. But the way chaplaincy works is that a chaplain can have lots of discretion within a prison to decide who is allowed access. There are all kinds of ways that other religions are marginalized. If you’re a prison that tends to be fairly rural, and in a state where the closest organizations are evangelical Christian, that’s going to shape who comes into the prison. In Florida, when I went to one of the faith-based prisons, the chapel had been refurbished and paid for by an evangelical megachurch. It had instruments and a sound system, and it was the only air-conditioned building in the whole prison — in central Florida. Things like that are very basic examples of the coercion that goes on.

There’s no difference, in terms of better outcomes, for people in an evangelical program versus a secular program.

**The Nation of Islam has a long history of religious outreach to black prisoners in America. Does that persist?**

I did research in Angola prison, and some of the men who were part of that Black Muslim organizing really helped to change the conditions of that prison. After Elijah Muhammad died, the congregation split and many people became more aligned with traditional Sunni Islam. The prisons are very aware of that history, and I think sometimes say, “You don’t have a space to meet, you don’t have a particular person to meet with.” They’re very concerned, because they’re aware of that history. But if you have a warden who’s Christian, they’re going to be biased toward Christian groups.

**You’re involved in education for prison inmates. Between ministry and secular education, which has proved more valuable to inmates?**

The Rand Corporation did a study in 2013 on inmates who received education in prison, and they’re 43 percent less likely to return to prison. With a lot of prisons, especially in the South, there’s this whole movement — the Baptist seminaries are running college programs in prison, and they’re the only opportunity those inmates have to get a college degree. Inmates get an associate’s degree, and sometimes a bachelor’s degree, in Christian ministry. This was started in Angola Penitentiary, and it’s not for people getting out soon — it’s for people who have 20-plus years. The idea is that they will send graduates of the seminary to other prisons in that system to be missionaries. They don’t use that term, because of potential legal connotations, but they say those people will be “moral guides” to other prisoners.

**What do we know about the recidivism rate among ex-inmates who received religious counseling?**

There were studies commissioned by Prison Fellowship Ministry and others to look at this question. There’s a law professor who very methodically went through all of these studies and showed there’s no difference, in terms of better outcomes, for people in an evangelical program versus a secular program. Many ministry studies contain selection bias and problems with methodology. But a prison ministry will say, “We can effect a change that secular programs can’t. We transform people from the inside.” It’s called a heart change. Well, that can’t be measured empirically.
The Big Split: Conversations about Our Divided State and Nation

America no longer disagrees, it rages. This fall, Humanities Washington will explore what underlies our increasingly tense, fractured America in a statewide Think & Drink series aimed at exploring and bridging the divides in our communities.

“The Big Split: Conversations about Our Divided State and Nation” will focus on three centers of American life where divisions often starkly reveal themselves. The Divided Classroom will focus on the cultural gap between Washington State students and teachers; The Divided Library will explore how what we read and watch can help or harm our understanding of others; and The Divided Campus will examine the campus protest movement and the questions it raises about free speech and what is deemed offensive. Each of five cities—Spokane, Richland, Yakima, Seattle, and Tacoma—will host at least one of the three topics, with a total of 11 events taking place.

In addition, a large public event featuring renowned Ms. Marvel graphic novelist and journalist G. Willow Wilson will take place on October 23 in Seattle. The Hugo award-winning series features the first Muslim character to headline a Marvel comic.

Check out humanities.org/the-big-split for the full schedule.
Washington Stories Fund grants awarded

Washington Stories Fund grants highlight the little-known stories of a person or group whose contributions add to the cultural richness and health of Washington State. Humanities Washington presented two grants this year. This first is to the Washington State Historical Society for their project *McNeil’s Legacy*, which examines the lives of those incarcerated in the now-closed McNeil Island Corrections Center. Told through the personal stories of inmates, staff, and island residents, this six-part podcast is designed to provide an intimate look at the lives of those who lived at McNeil Island during its history. The podcast will be released concurrently with an exhibit, “McNeil: Washington’s Infamous Island Prison,” at the Washington State History Museum.

The second award is to WSU Vancouver for *Clark County Stories: How We Came to This Place*. Clark County is among the fastest-growing regions in the nation—at 500,000 residents, its population has doubled since 1988. This rapid growth includes the descendants of early settlers and new arrivals from other states and nations, each with their own stories of “how we came to this place,” but not always mutually understood. The project consists of a series of outreach and community-building workshops and conversations featuring residents whose experiences have been underrepresented in past Clark County Historical Museum exhibits: urban Indians, Latina/o, African American, Asian, Muslim, LGBTQ, blind, and deaf communities. The workshops will train participants to explore their histories, encourage conversations between Clark County residents about the changing landscapes of the region, and develop a new professionally designed exhibit to open in October 2018.

Update on funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities

Your calls are working. A bill funding the National Endowment for the Humanities at close to its current level has passed a House appropriations committee. This is a good sign that Congress still understands the value of the humanities to the American people. Many hurdles remain, and Humanities Washington will not know for certain the fate of the NEH until at least December, when the current Continuing Resolution expires. But thank you sincerely for the support you have shown, and will continue to show, as the process continues.
JOIN US!

A selection of upcoming Humanities Washington events around the state

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**SPOKANE**
**OCTOBER 10, 7:00 P.M.**
The Magic Lantern Theatre

**Think & Drink: The Divided Library**

Though seldom mentioned as a factor in our increasingly divided country, the stories we tell about one another matter. Stories are the glue that hold a culture together—but they can also act as a wedge to drive cultures apart. The Divided Library invites us to consider the ways literature and media have the potential to break down walls between cultures and get us closer to our common humanity.

**POULSBO**
**OCTOBER 17, 6:00 P.M.**
Poulsbo City Hall

**The Pine and the Cherry: Japanese Americans in Washington State**

In the lead-up to World War II, Japanese immigrants from Seattle to Eastern Washington prospered. Then came Executive Order 9066. Those born in Japan, as well as their American-citizen offspring, were sent to concentration camps in windswept deserts without due process. And when they returned, most had lost everything and could not find jobs. How did they face this injustice and rebuild their lives? How does a lively immigrant community face racist or religious hatred? The 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 is in 2017, and Mayumi Tsutakawa, whose father was renowned sculptor George Tsutakawa, will reveal her family’s 100-year history against the backdrop of this dramatic American story.

**WENATCHEE**
**OCTOBER 21, 2:00 P.M.**
Wenatchee Public Library

**Hollywood and the Homefront: Tinseltown’s Contribution to World War II**

During World War II, the War Department realized the importance of not only keeping up the morale of America’s fighting forces abroad, but the morale of those at home. The result was an unprecedented push by Hollywood to contribute morale-building war dramas, troop entertainment, and training films to the war effort. Experience the still–powerful images, radio, and film that emerged from this dramatic time in American history. Audio historian and former broadcaster John Jensen shares rarely known stories and anecdotes from Hollywood’s war effort, and shows examples of wartime propaganda through various media that was used to educate, inform and sway American public opinion.
SEATTLE
OCTOBER 23, 7:30 P.M.
Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute

An Evening with G. Willow Wilson

“Ms. Marvel” graphic novelist G. Willow Wilson lies at the epicenter of multiple fault lines of American identity.

Originally a self-described “upper-middle-class American White girl,” she converted to Islam while in college, worked as a journalist in Mubarak’s Egypt, and now writes the hugely successful comic series Ms. Marvel—the first Muslim superhero in the history of Marvel Comics to have her own series. Join us for a discussion on American identity through the story of Ms. Marvel and its author. Moderated by KUOW’s Jamala Henderson. Books will be for sale courtesy of Elliot Bay Books, and a signing will take place after the discussion.

ABERDEEN, PULLMAN, SPOKANE
OCTOBER 17, 2:00 P.M.
Aberdeen Museum of History

OCTOBER 26, 3:00 P.M.
Neill Pullman Public Library

OCTOBER 27, 10:00 A.M.
Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture (Spokane)

Cultural Traditions
Community Meetings

Launching this fall, the Center for Washington Cultural Traditions will be Washington State’s new folklife and traditional arts program, and we are hosting a series of community meetings to get your input on the Center’s development.

What is folklife, and what are traditional arts? They are activities and objects that are inseparable from a cultural community. They are expressions of people’s heritage and help tell their story: foods, occupations, crafts, traditional medicine, storytelling, music, and more.
ABOUT HUMANITIES WASHINGTON

Founded in 1973, Humanities Washington is the state’s flagship nonprofit for public humanities programming, our work brings people together to learn about their unique pasts and shared present, promotes respect for other perspectives, encourages community dialogue, and nurtures relationships that enable us to move toward a more prosperous future.

By acting as a catalyst and facilitator, we support and partner with a wide network of communities, organizations, and individuals across the state. Together, we provide low- or no-cost, high-quality cultural and educational programs that engage audiences in conversation, civil discourse, critical thinking, and the democratic process.

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Humanities Washington is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in Washington State.
OUR MISSION

*Humanities Washington sparks conversation and critical thinking using story as a catalyst, nurturing thoughtful and engaged communities across our state.*

OUR PROGRAMS

**FAMILY READING** uses storytelling and discussion to explore cultural and ethical themes in children’s literature and emphasizes the importance of families reading together.

**GRANTS** assist local organizations in creating opportunities for their community to come together to discuss important issues using the humanities.

**SPEAKERS BUREAU** draws from a pool of leading cultural experts and scholars to provide free conversational lecture events for community partners to offer local audiences throughout the state.

**THINK & DRINK** brings hosted conversations on provocative topics and new ideas to pubs and tasting rooms around the state.

**WASHINGTON STATE POET LAUREATE** builds awareness and appreciation of poetry — including the state’s legacy of poetry — through public readings, workshops, lectures, and presentations throughout the state. (In partnership with ArtsWA.)
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