



CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON VERMONT

THE BILLINGS BUILDING
ANNUAL REPORT
2018-2019



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
COLLEGE OF ARTS
AND SCIENCES

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dr. Richard Watts



At the Center, our goal is to support research in the Vermont "laboratory"

...research that provides original knowledge to the world through examining the state's social, cultural and physical environment.

We are committed to bringing attention to original work, connecting researchers and our members, and engaging students in everything we do.

Vermont is a fascinating place. We have our challenges, but we also have a scale that allows us to communicate with each other. It's a place where neighbors talk to neighbors. And it's a place where there is rich original work taking place. Our job is to bring those stories to life.

This report describes some of that work, including the creation of a new minor in Reporting & Documentary Storytelling, an international conference, and plans for a multi-media book on Senator George Aiken.

It's your Center, so please let us know your thoughts, or even better, come visit us in our new space in the renovated Billings Library.

Best wishes, Richard Watts
Director, Center for Research on Vermont

Cover photo by Sophia Trigg; Photo of Richard Watts by Rose Watts.

Intern Peter Ackerman ('19), photo by Sophie MacMillan



CENTER INTERNS



Intern Colleen Wilson ('21), photo by Sophie MacMillan

The Center's internship program provides experiences to about 20 students each year on projects ranging from Vermont research to creating videos and podcasts. Students use the laboratory of Vermont to explore issues that reach beyond its borders.

This past year, interns staffed the Center's social media platforms, wrote briefs for the research newsletter, dove into the debate around Act 46, coordinated events and guest speakers, started a new podcast and photo project, explored the Center's archives, and worked with Vermont native Eben Bayer to develop mycelium products.

2018-2019 Center Interns:

Peter Ackerman | Kirsti Blow | Peter Carpe | Kyra Chevalier | Emily Connolly | Chris Crowl | Monica Drimbarean | Jamieson Dunne | Shannon Hall | Jack Larizedeh | Leah Kelleher | Taylor Kracher | Sophie MacMillan | Jordan Mitchell | Kendyl Moats | David Rush | TJ Wasserman | Audrey Wilbur | Colleen Wilson

Special thanks to Eliza Giles ('18) and Ben Howe ('18)

ON THE MOVE



The Billings building was UVM's original library, dedicated in 1885 and paid for by Frederick Billings to house the collections of George Perkins Marsh. The building was designed by the well-known architect Henry Hobson Richardson. In the summer of 2018, UVM completed an \$11.4 million renovation to restore the building. Joining the Center in the newly renovated space are the Miller Center for Holocaust Studies and the UVM Humanities Center.

Photo courtesy Whittingham's Archive

In the fall of 2018, the Center moved into a suite of offices on the top floor which includes a room for students and Community Fellows named in honor of Vermont historian Samuel B. Hand. Two floors below the Center lies the Silver Special Collections Library boasting the largest collection of Vermont books in the world.

NEWLY RENOVATED BILLINGS LIBRARY

Photo by Sophia Trigg

THE LAKE BETWEEN

To the Abenaki, Lake Champlain was Bitawbagok, “the waters in between”, separating Abenaki and Iroquois homelands. Today, the lake links Vermont and New York with the province of Quebec, and the United States with Canada. The Lake Between conference examined the past, present and future of this economic and cultural resource and explored its 400-year shared historical legacy of imperial colonization, conflict, international trade, and tourism. The conference also looked to the future, drawing on regional solutions for the cross-border management of its fish and fisheries, agricultural run-off, lake pollution, and flood control.

LE LAC QUI NOUS UNIT



An International Conference

This year's bi-annual international conference drew 200 attendees connected culturally, scientifically, and emotionally to Lake Champlain.

Sponsored by Canadian Studies, CRVT, and the Government of Quebec. (Photos on left: Lori Fisher, David Massell, Eric Howe, Richard O'Bomsawin and Pierre-Yves Caux.)

Photos by Sophie MacMillan

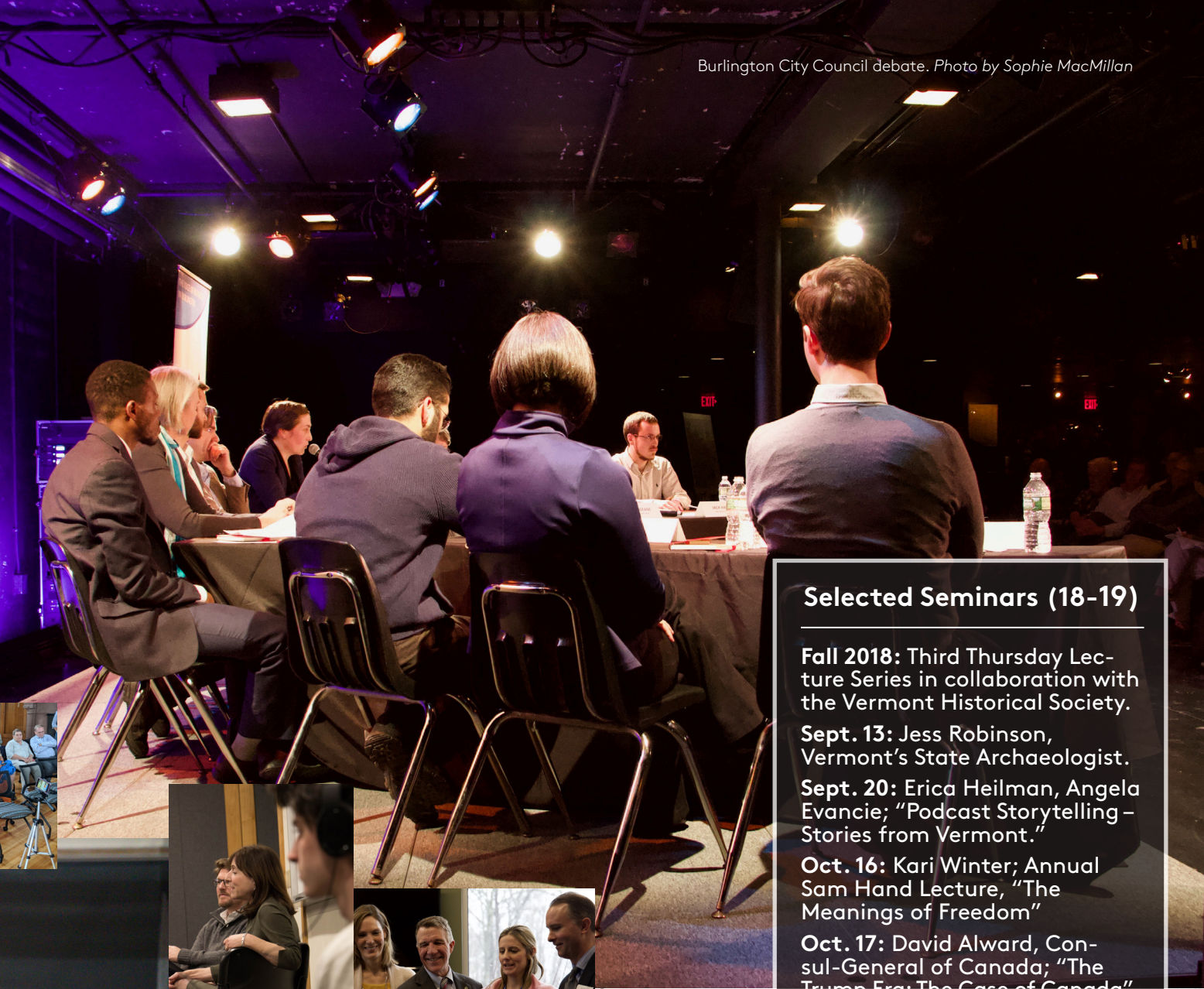


Map (left) courtesy Silver Special Collections Library

A YEAR OF EVENTS

This year, the Center hosted or collaborated on more than twenty conferences, seminars and lectures. Some of the highlights included co-hosting the third annual Samuel B. Hand lecture, a talk by *New Yorker* writer Jane Mayer, and bringing Governor Phil Scott to the *Introduction to Vermont* class to talk about his Vermont roots.

For the first time, the Center brought Vermont History Day to the University of Vermont. Organized by the Vermont Historical Society, this day long event drew more than 500 middle and high school students and their parents to the Davis Center to celebrate the study of History.



Burlington City Council debate. Photo by Sophie MacMillan

Selected Seminars (18-19)

Fall 2018: Third Thursday Lecture Series in collaboration with the Vermont Historical Society.

Sept. 13: Jess Robinson, Vermont's State Archaeologist.

Sept. 20: Erica Heilman, Angela Evancie; "Podcast Storytelling – Stories from Vermont."

Oct. 16: Kari Winter; Annual Sam Hand Lecture, "The Meanings of Freedom"

Oct. 17: David Alward, Consul-General of Canada; "The Trump Era: The Case of Canada"

Oct. 25: Jane Mayer; "Writing about American Politics"

Oct. 30: Governor Phil Scott; "Elections and the Future"

Dec. 3: Eben Bayer; "Designing Systems that Support the Planet"



Photos by Sophie MacMillan, Glenn Russell and Sophia Trigg

REPORTING & DOCUMENTARY STORYTELLING MINOR



Intern Monica Drimbarean documents Christine Hallquist's concession speech on election night 2018. Photos by Glenn Russell



Student journalists meet with VT Digger editor Jim Welch every Friday. Photo by Sophie MacMillan

TELLING STORIES THAT MATTER

Starting in fall 2019, UVM students will be able to minor in Reporting & Documentary Storytelling (RDS). This interdisciplinary and liberal arts-based look at non-fiction and fiction writing, documentary filmmaking, podcasting, and photography helps students tell socially and culturally engaged stories in multiple formats. RDS is based in the Center.

Students are already interning in media organizations, social media storytelling, podcasting and videography. The photos on the left are from events students covered during the 2018-2019 school year.

For more on the program go to uvm.edu/cas/storytelling



Students hold signs at the No Names for Justice rally in February 2019. Photo by Sophie MacMillan



RESEARCH

Vermont has a story to tell in many areas: Town Meeting and democracy, criminal justice, civil rights, community preservation, Lake Champlain, innovative agriculture and many more. The Center's mission is to tell that story through both traditional and new media.

This work is possible through the support of our members, collaborators, and alumni. Join the Center by becoming a member! Visit go.uvm.edu/crvt-member to apply.

Or, join our email newsletter mailing list to keep up to date on Center happenings and news. Visit go.uvm.edu/crvt-newsletter.

The Center's use of social media platforms & electronic media continues to grow with interns and staff working on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.





 @CRVTuvm  @crvt_  YouTube  @crvt_



Photo by Glenn Russell



CENTER UPDATES

The programs of the Center are only possible through the support of its members and collaborators. Here are some of the highlights from 2018-19 that were possible only with your help:

Highlights

Created new minor in Reporting & Documentary Storytelling.

Coordinated 16-20 interns working on Center promotion, events, activities and research.

Hosted **The Lake Between**, an international conference focused on the past, present and future of Lake Champlain (in partnership with the Canadian Studies Program).

Vermont Research Newsletter:

Published 20 newsletters summarizing Vermont research news and events. Mailing list: 5,000.

Community Research Fellows:

- Steph Yu, Senior Analyst, Public Assets
- Jim Welch, Special Projects Manager, VT Digger
- Julie Campoli, Urban planner, Terra Firma
- Steve Terry, Writer & Researcher

Started a new podcast – “Mudseason”

Mudseason strives to “cut through the mud” to bring you engaging stories from the Vermont laboratory. Past guests include Darby Bradley, Bill Lippert, Stephanie Seguino, Kathy Fox and many others.



Listen on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Play, or your favorite podcast app.



TOWN MEETING DAY DATA COLLECTION

This year we continued Frank Bryan's Town Meeting research project by sending student volunteers to 25 Vermont towns to collect participation data. Students then crunched the numbers and produced each town's "Real Democracy Score." This year, Belvidere repeated again as Vermont's most "Democratic" town.

While the data contributes to the understanding of what Dr. Bryan called "Real Democracy," it is the impact on the students that has big results as they see first-hand the power of local decision-making.



LOOKING FORWARD

Expanding our network of scholars, highlighting Vermont research and engaging students remains our top priority. But growing the Reporting and Documentary Storytelling program will also be a 2019-2020 focus.

A new book on Senator George Aiken by Steve Terry, in partnership with CDE and the Aiken Lecture series, is in the works. And of course, we'd like to continue to grow support for scholars and students through funding for Vermont research.

Back cover photo by Sophia Trigg



BRINGING SCHOLARSHIP TO LIGHT



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