



2017 Programs and Projects Update

Public Programs

	2017	2016
Number of programs	82	56
Attendance	7,370	4,239

January 4

Author Talk: Worst President Ever: James Buchanan, the POTUS Rating Game, and the Legacy of the Least of the Lesser Presidents with Robert Strauss

Attendance: 70

Author and reporter Robert Strauss spoke on his recent book, arguing that Buchanan’s indecisiveness during his presidency led later historians to argue that his presidency set the stage for the Civil War, leading to his designation as one of the worst presidents ever.

January 8

Maeve Gilchrist and Nic Gareiss Harp Performance

Attendance: 48

This was a unique chance to see two world class performers. In addition to performing, they talked about the heritage of the harp, the history of step dancing, and other interesting facts.

January 11

Kathleen McCleery: Credit or Blame? Assessing the Media in 2016

Attendance: 115

Kathleen McCleery, the Ferris Visiting Professor of Journalism at Princeton University, offered an insightful and comprehensive post-mortem on the media’s performance during the 2016 presidential campaign to a packed community room seeking clarity on this topic. Professor McCleery walked the audience through the role of the media in the making of our new president focusing on how Donald Trump grabbed the spotlight early on and how media outlets

eagerly took the bait. She also gave a look ahead at how this election could affect the world of journalism in both the short term and long term.

January 12

WWI and American Art

Attendance: 40

Laurel McLaughlin, a curator from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, spoke on PAFA's extensive exhibit on WWI and American Art. The show commemorates the U.S. entry into the war and showcases varying interpretations of the war by American artists. Patrons were encouraged to take advantage of the library's free Museum Pass to visit PAFA.

February 2

Book Discussion: "Einstein's God" with Jennifer Morgan

Attendance: 35

In the lead-up to Krista Tippett's appearance at Nassau Presbyterian Church, a group gathered to discuss Einstein's background on faith and spirituality.

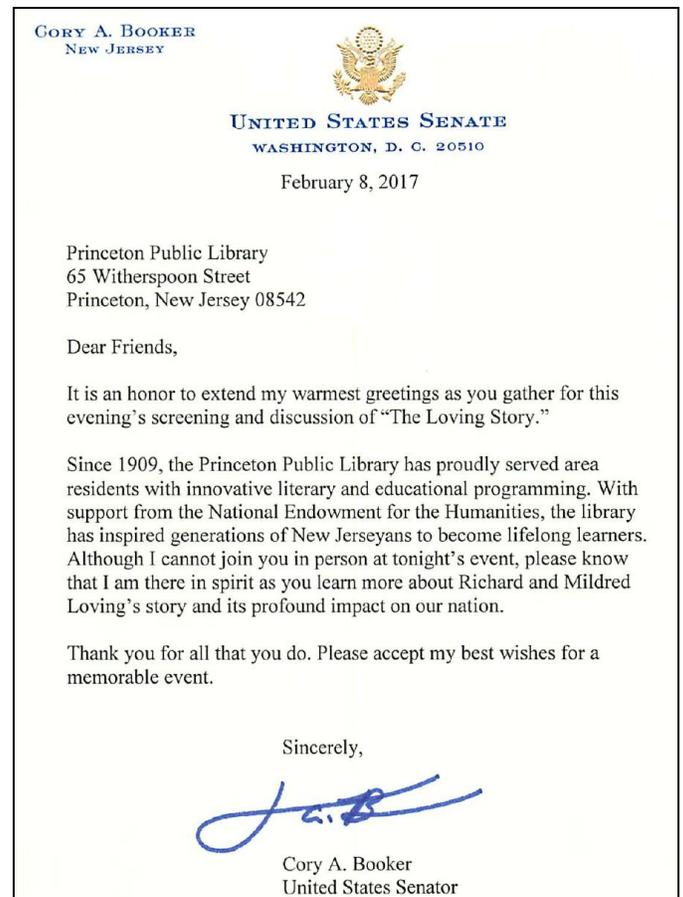
February 8

Screening of "The Loving Story" and discussion with Christopher Fisher

Attendance: 80

Eighty people gathered for a screening of "The Loving Story" and a discussion with The College of New Jersey's Chris Fisher. This documentary uses found footage and interviews with the family, friends, and lawyers of Mildred and Richard Loving to tell the story of the couple whose interracial marriage led to the 1967 Supreme Court decision legalizing interracial relationships. This program is funded by the Horizons Speakers Bureau of the New Jersey Council for the Humanities. In response to outreach efforts to local elected officials to let them know about the program, Senator Booker's office sent along the following letter which was read at the program:

COLLAB



February 22 (revised on May 24)

Speaker: Sam Daley Harris on "Writing Checks, Signing Petitions, and Protest Marches: Is That All There Is?"

Attendance: 150 (and 78)

The Community Room was packed with people eager to hear about what they can do effect change on issues they care about. Sam Daley Harris, CEO of the Center for Citizen Empowerment and Transformation, spoke about how it's important to choose one issue to focus on and devote significant time to that issue. He also advocated for people not giving up on causes because they don't see immediate change -- change takes time and hard work, particularly from volunteers.

February 23

OFFSITE

COLLAB

Author Talk: From Day to Day with Tim Boyce

Attendance: 50

Retired attorney Tim Boyce spoke about "From Day to Day," a World War II concentration camp diary secretly written by Odd Nansen, a Norwegian political prisoner. Boyce spoke of his process of finding this book in the first place (a footnote in another book that led him to Nansen's work), and the many years of work to research and annotate the book to get it back into print. Nansen's story of survival is compelling and inspiring.

This event was held at Nassau Presbyterian Church and was co-sponsored by the library, The Princeton Clergy Association, The Jewish Center, and Nassau Presbyterian Church.

February 28

OFFSITE

COLLAB

Krista Tippett and Gideon Rosen In Conversation

Attendance: 500

An excited audience gathered for this very special event at Nassau Presbyterian Church with Krista Tippett to discuss her book "Becoming Wise" in a conversation with Princeton University professor Gideon Rosen. The pair shared a 45 minute dialogue that was followed by a question and answer session with the audience. Each person attending the event received a copy of the book and Ms. Tippett signed copies for each person who wished to have it personalized. This program was co-sponsored by Labyrinth Books.

March 5

Radio Raconteur Presents Moby Dick

Attendance: 80

A large audience came to enjoy this performance of Moby Dick done in the style of an old-fashioned radio play. The group adapts classic works of literature to shorter length plays to be enjoyed by all ages, featuring dramatic lighting, sound effects, and old-fashioned radio commercials.

March 8

Person Place Thing with Kwame Anthony Appiah

Attendance: 45

A great audience gathered to hear the latest installment in Randy Cohen's recorded



podcast/radio show in which he interviews people about a person, a place, and a thing that they find important as a way to talk about their lives. In this instance, Randy was joined by Kwame Anthony Appiah, a professor at New York University and current writer of The Ethicist column in The New York Times Magazine. Randy wrote The Ethicist column in the past for twelve years. They covered a wide variety of topics and had a wonderful rapport. [The podcast is available for listening online.](#)

March 12

Molly Picon performance

Attendance: 85

This lecture-in-song by Professor Diane Cypkin explored the music and life of Molly Picon, star of the Yiddish theatre at the turn of the century. Professor Cypkin peppered her talk with Yiddish phrases and questions and many members of the audience were able to answer -- and, in fact, they were delighted to have a reason to speak Yiddish.

March 16

OFFSITE

COLLAB

Author and Illustrator Talk: Patricia Hruby Powell and Shadra Strickland on “Loving vs Virginia: A Documentary Novel of the Landmark Civil Rights Case”

Attendance at middle school and PPL combined: 839

At Princeton High School and at the Arts Council of Princeton, the author and illustrator spoke about their book “Loving vs. Virginia: A Documentary Novel of the Landmark Civil Rights Case” in this special joint appearance. The novel in verse explores the story of Mildred and Richard Loving, the couple whose marriage led to the Supreme Court decision to overturn Virginia’s law that forbid interracial marriage.

Sponsored by the Princeton Kids Events Coalition, a partnership of Princeton Public Library, jaZams Toys & Books, Labyrinth Books and Princeton Public Schools, in collaboration with the Arts Council of Princeton.

March 19

The Value of the Book with Ray Rickman

Attendance: 35

Ray Rickman, former state representative for Rhode Island, consultant, and rare book dealer offered a master's view into the world of rare book collection. Many people gathered with their bound treasures to see how much they might be worth. A hard lesson for many was the basic rule that just because a book is 'rare' or 'old' doesn't mean that it has any commercial value. Rickman reminded each attendee that whether or not books had any commercial value was only a portion of the pleasure that they might bring.

March 20

Film Screening of “Equal Means Equal” and Discussion with Amada Sandoval

Attendance: 25

As part of programming for women’s history month, the library screened this film which highlights ways in which women are treated unequally, including the pay gap, unequal access

to healthcare, and violence against women. Amada Sandoval, Director of Princeton University's Women's Center, led the audience in a discussion after the film that demonstrated how much the film had impacted the audience.

March 26

COLLAB

Book Launch for US1 Poets' Cooperative Worksheets

Attendance: 85

About 85 dedicated poets and poetry lovers filled the Community Room for the annual launch of the US1 Poets' Cooperative journal which PPL has hosted for several years. This year's journal contained selected works by 131 poets, both members of the US1 group and poets from across the world. Each poet whose work was included in the journal was invited to read their poem at the event. Co-sponsored with the US1 Poets' Cooperative.

March 27

Author Talk: Amy Gary on "The Great Green Room: The Brilliant and Bold Life of Margaret Wise Brown"

Attendance: 65

Amy Gary discussed her book which captures the eccentric and exceptional life of the woman behind the beloved children's classics "Goodnight Moon" and "The Runaway Bunny." Brown's books have sold millions of copies all over the world, but few people know that she was at the center of a children's book publishing revolution. Gary has catalogued, edited, and researched all of Brown's writings since the 1990s.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE HUMANITIES: Religion in American Life

January 18

American Prophets with Albert Raboteau

Attendance: 38

Albert Raboteau read from his new book "American Prophets: Seven Religious Radicals and Their Struggle for Social and Political Justice." The audience was moved by his readings, particularly the story of Fannie Lou Hamer. The audience wanted to continue the discussion so Albert returned on January 24 to lead an additional discussion. Many of the audience members from the week before came to discuss the book in more depth.

February 8

What Native American Spirituality Can Teach Us About Working on Climate Change

Attendance: 40

Timothy Powell, a religious studies scholar at the University of Pennsylvania, discussed his work with Ojibwe Indian communities in northern Canada to explore Native people's knowledge of maintaining the environment. The talk focused on the important intersections of scientific knowledge and traditional Ojibwe knowledge in the era of climate change.

March 21

Jewish Urban Politics in a Time of Crisis

Attendance: 15

Temple professor Lila Corwin-Berman presented on her research about urbanization and suburbanization of Jews in Detroit in the last 75 years. Her research focused on the factors that first brought Jews to urban centers in large numbers, and then what also prompted them to move to suburban areas.

April 4

Humor, Celebrity, and Religious Dissent in Early America: Thomas Paine and Lorenzo Dow

Attendance: 12

Seth Perry from Princeton University's Department of Religion spoke about an amusing moment in U.S. history: the 1804 vote in the House of Representatives in which some members voted for Lorenzo Dow (a firebrand preacher) and some voted for Thomas Paine (the closest thing to a public atheist at the time). Although neither could win, the votes were signs of religious dissent in early America. Perry engaged the audience in this narrative and expertly set up the story so the audience would understand Dow and Paine, as well as the significance of those protest votes.

JAZZ APPRECIATION MONTH

COLLAB OFFSITE

Total series attendance: 713

This series of programs was co-sponsored by the library and the Arts Council of Princeton.

The series opened with a performance by **Sonic Liberation 8 with Oliver Lake** on April 4. The enthusiastic audience of more than 90 people were thrilled to have a chance to listen to the Philadelphia-based band along with a living jazz legend.

For those less acquainted with jazz music, its history, and forms, Lewis Porter of the **Jazz History program** at Rutgers, along with musicians Adam Niewood, and Kenny Davis put on a jazz appreciation performance and discussion on April 6. The trio demonstrated a variety of jazz styles and explained the jargon used in jazz music. (64)

The **Masters of Swing** program took place on April 9 and featured Gordon James and his band playing to an enthusiastic audience of 95 people. The quartet gave the history of jazz music and musicians from the late 1920's through the 1950's while playing the favorite songs of that era. On April 10, Kinohi Nishikawa from Princeton University's Department of English and African-American studies led a group of 15 in a discussion of **Toni Morrison's book "Jazz"**.

In a very rare public screening on April 11, the audience was treated to the 1957 documentary “**Satchmo the Great**” (which is not commercially available) followed by a discussion with Ricky Riccardi of the Louis Armstrong House Museum. For the film, Edward R. Murrow followed Louis Armstrong around the world to film him performing in Paris, Sweden, England, Africa, and New York, including a performance with the New York Philharmonic. According to Riccardi, some portions of the film were staged; the film remains a wonderful glimpse of Armstrong’s performances and a conversation with Murrow. (51)

On April 23, “**Small Group A**” filled the Community Room with music to the delight of the packed room of jazz enthusiasts. With the participation of and under the direction of Princeton University’s new Jazz Director Rudresh Mahanthappa this group performed a ninety minute concert.



This town-gown collaboration was a particularly special treat as Mahanthappa has been named alto saxophonist of the year four of the past five years in Downbeat Magazine’s International Critics Polls and for five years running by the Jazz Journalists’ Association. In April 2013, he received a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, one of the most prominent arts awards in the world. (91)

Two film screenings and discussions were part of Jazz Month as well: “**Mary Lou Williams: The Lady Who Swings the Band**” (75) was shown on on April 18 at the Arts Council, and “**The Jazz Loft According to W. Eugene Smith**” (93) on April 27 at the Princeton Garden Theatre. The month closed out with a concert on the plaza on April 28 by **Applied Harmony**, a talented group of PHS musicians, as a kick-off to Communiversiity weekend. (150)

April 7

Author Talk: Geraldine Brooks

Attendance: 86

In partnership with the Friends of the Library, Geraldine Brooks discussed “The Secret Chord,” her most recent novel which chronicles the life of King David. Her presentation, which was humorous, educational, and thought-provoking in equal measure, delighted the audience.

April 23

OFFSITE

COLLAB

Author Talk: Democracy Now! Covering the Movements Changing America

Attendance: 250

The library, in a collaboration with Labyrinth Books, Wilson College Signature Lecture Series, and the Princeton University Council of the Humanities Ferris Seminars in Journalism, hosted authors Amy Goodman and Denis Moynihan to a packed house at Labyrinth Books to talk about their new book.

April 24

A Look at Criminal Justice: A Discussion of the System and Reforms: Democracy Fellowship Final Event

Attendance: 25

This culminating event for the Princeton High School Democracy Fellowship featured a presentation of what the students had learned throughout the fellowship and a robust discussion with the ACLU's Alexander Shalom and the audience. The students created a great presentation and were able to answer in-depth audience questions.

May 15

WWI monuments in New Jersey and Princeton

Attendance: 17

Commemorating the 100th anniversary of U.S. entry into World War I, historian and preservation advocate Erik L. Burro spoke about the many sites throughout New Jersey and in Princeton where WWI monuments were erected.

May 17

Lecture: The End of the 'End of History' How Democracies Are Deconstructed From Within"

Attendance: 72

Kim Lane Scheppele, Laurance S. Rockefeller Professor of Sociology and International Affairs in the Woodrow Wilson School and the University Center for Human Values at Princeton University, spoke on the issues facing democracies around the world.

May 18

Author Talk: Kitsi Watterson on " I Hear My People Singing: Voices of African American Princeton"

Attendance: 160

Author and professor Kathryn "Kitsi" Watterson enthralled the audience with stories of the Witherspoon-Jackson neighborhood and the book that resulted from her research there in the 1990s and early 2000s. Her book features the stories of African-American residents told in their own words through oral history interviews. This unique project and book shines a new light on the history of the African- American community in the area.

June 11

Radio Raconteur Casablanca

Attendance: 64

People of all ages came to hear Raconteur Radio's radio play version of Casablanca to mark the 75th anniversary of the film. After enjoying the radio play, old-timey commercials and singing, participants left steeped in nostalgia and, thanks to the post-event Q&A, greater understanding about how to create a radio play from such a well-known film.

Syrian Perspectives Series

COLLAB

This series was co-sponsored by American Documentary/POV.

Series attendance: 271

August 14

The War Show (56)

Radio host Obaidah Zytoon captures the fate of Syria through the intimate lens of a small circle of friends and journalists. Beginning with peaceful Arab Spring protests in 2011, the film provides a four-year, ground-level look at how the country spiraled into bloody civil war.

August 21 (67)

Dalya's Other Country

Displaced by the Syrian conflict to America, teenage Dalya goes to Catholic high school while her mother Rudayana enrolls in college as they both walk the line between their Muslim values and the new world they find themselves in.

August 28 (78)

Last Man in Aleppo

Through the eyes of volunteer rescue workers called the White Helmets, the daily life and death struggle in the streets of Aleppo after five years of war is shown.

September 14 (70)

"4.1 Miles" and "From Damascus to Chicago"

These two short films documented the harrowing crossing from north Africa to Greece, as well as a young girl's journey from living in Damascus to a new life in Chicago.

Poets at the Library

COLLAB

All programs presented in collaboration with US1 Poets'

Cooperative and Delaware Valley Poets

Total series attendance: 295

January 9 (32)

Steve Smith and Robert Rosenbloom

February 13 (27)

Bill Wunder and Mimi Danson

March 13 (15)

Gina Larkin and John Larkin

April 17 (15)

Cynthia Arrieu-King and Wanda S. Praisner

May 8 (30)

Anna Evans and Elane Gutterman

June 12 (22)

Jessica G. de Koninck and Jane Rawlings

September 11 (40)

Mahogany Browne and John Browning

October 16 (39)

Forgotten Women: A Tribute in Poetry

November 13 (42)

Cool Women

December 11 (33)

David Crews and Betty Lies

September 12**COLLAB****Author Talk: “Heretics!” with Steven Nadler and Ben Nadler****Attendance: 46**

Heretics! was penned by father and son duo, Steven and Ben Nadler. Steven Nadler is the William H. Hay II Professor of Philosophy and the Evjue-Bascom Professor in Humanities at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and his son Ben is a recent graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design. The two made excellent presentation partners, teaching the crowd about the scientists and philosophers who built the foundation of so much of our modern thought. This program was co-sponsored by Princeton University Press.

September 20**COLLAB OFFSITE****Historical Fiction Book Group: The Underground Railroad****Attendance: 15**

On September 20, PPL and the Historical Society of Princeton kicked off our co-sponsored Historical Fiction Book Group at Updike Farmstead with a discussion of Colson Whitehead’s “Underground Railroad.” Mekala Audain, professor of history at The College of New Jersey, provided some essential and interesting historical context related to the book’s content, and then engaged the audience in a deep discussion of the themes of the book.

Princeton & Slavery

Princeton Public Library was an [active partner](#) in the Princeton & Slavery project, a project designed to research and share with the public the history of Princeton University's ties to slavery.

Total Series attendance: 1,942

October 10

Book Discussion: "Einstein on Race and Racism" with Ruha Benjamin

Attendance: 30

30 community members joined Ruha Benjamin to discuss the book "Einstein on Race and Racism." The conversation ranged from the book itself to person stories like one Princeton resident who shared that her grandmother had been a slave and, when looking for her genealogy at the Trenton State Library, she was directed away from the genealogy resources to 'livestock'.

October 12

Book Discussion: "I Hear My People Singing: Voices of African American Princeton" with Nell Irvin Painter and Kitsi Watterson

Attendance: 65

The second book discussion was held with Kitsi Watterson and Nell Irvin Painter discussing Watterson's book "I Hear my People Singing: Voices of African American Princeton," which was attended by a large crowd eager to discuss the book and their own experiences.

October 24

Author Talk: Sharon Draper

COLLAB

Attendance: 285 at John Witherspoon Middle School and 57 at PPL

Acclaimed young adult author Sharon Draper visited John Witherspoon Middle School to speak with an assembly of students, followed by an evening talk at the library. Sharon is a professional educator and an accomplished writer. She has been honored as the National Teacher of the Year, is a five-time winner of the Coretta Scott King Literary Awards, and is a New York Times bestselling author. This program was co-sponsored by jaZams.

November 14

Screening: "I Am Not Your Negro" and discussion with Ruha Benjamin

Attendance: 80

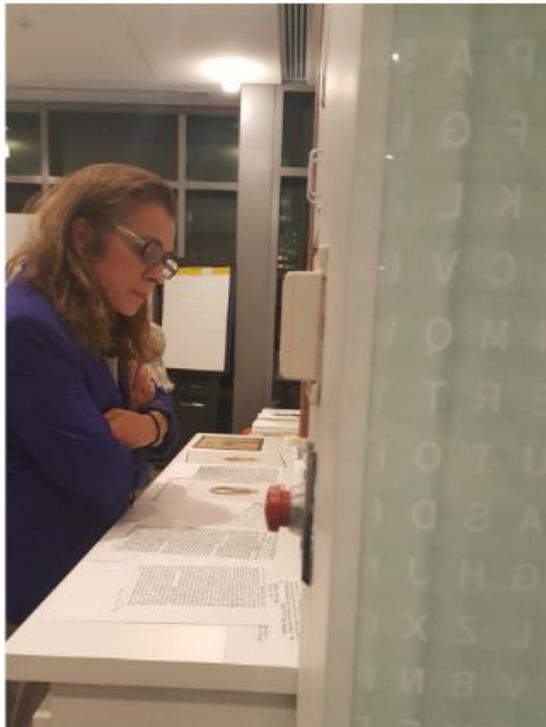
This film is based on the last book that James Baldwin began to write, "Remember This House," about the lives and assassinations of three of his friends: Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King. Dr. Ruha Benjamin led the audience in a post-screening Q&A to dissect the difficult questions posed in the film about race, history, and moving forward.

November 15

Workshop: Creating Art from Primary Historical Sources with Nathan Alan Davis

Attendance: 15

Nathan Alan Davis is one of the playwrights who was commissioned to write a short play based on primary documents and stories unearthed as part of the archival research for the project. (His play was a compelling, sometimes amusing-sometimes serious fictional



conversation between a young African-American Princeton freshman and the statue of John Witherspoon.) Davis was joined by Isabela Morales, a PhD student who worked on the project. During the workshop, he guided participants through the process of working with primary historical sources to create an artistic written piece.

Oct 30

COLLAB

Open Archives Event with Historical Society of Princeton and Princeton University Library

Attendance: 65

The Historical Society of Princeton and Princeton University Library provided a variety of original historical documents for display to the public in the Discovery Center at PPL. Dan Linke, university archivist, and Stephanie Schwartz, curator at HSP, were on hand to explain the documents and their significance to local history.



The weekend of November 17-19 was the **Princeton & Slavery symposium**, featuring a keynote address by [Toni Morrison introduced by Tracy K. Smith](#). Morrison's remarks and Smith's conversation centered around the necessity of a project like one being done at Princeton. When

asked what people could do to affect change in the future, Morrison replied that, "I have no idea. You should ask yourself. You have a brain and blood in your veins." PPL was a co-sponsor of the keynote address. (800)

PPL brought together a group of local high school students to attend the symposium with two history department graduate student "guides." The grad students guided the group throughout the symposium sessions and discussed the project over lunch. The feedback from the high school students was positive: they learned a lot about the university and town's history, and learned about how historical research is conducted.

November 17

COLLAB

Post-Show Discussion with Not In Our Town Princeton and McCarter Theatre Center

Attendance: 65

The library hosted a gathering to talk about the Princeton & Slavery plays that were shown the previous weekend. This gave everyone in attendance the opportunity to share their reactions to the plays and discuss the overall experience with other people.

November 28

Student Film Screening and Discussion

Attendance: 40

Four Princeton University students created short films based on primary source research in a class with Professor Sandweiss. The films featured vivid stories of Princeton students and alumni who were descended either from slaves or slaveholders. The students were thoughtful in their filmmaking and in the Q&A afterwards with the audience.

October 17-December 15

COLLAB

Princeton & Slavery Library Exhibit

Attendance: 350 (approx)

In partnership with the Historical Society of Princeton and Princeton University Library, the Princeton Room hosted a small historical exhibit on the research in the P&S project. Copies of several primary documents were displayed with historical context. The exhibit was well visited and hosting the exhibit was a new venture for the library.

November 29

COLLAB

OFFSITE

Challenging Slavery and Its Legacies in Princeton with Kitsi Watterson, Fred Jerome, and Rodger Taylor

Attendance: 90

Watterson, author of *I Hear My People Singing* and Jerome and Taylor, co-authors of *Einstein on Race and Racism* dived into the conversation about race in Princeton.

Attendees helped themselves to the soup dinner and gathered around tables to discuss the events that had occurred over the last few months. The event brought together a diverse

group of university professionals, students and townspeople. This program was presented in partnership with the Carl A. Fields Center for Diversity and Inclusion.

Gente y Cuentos

COLLAB

Fall series attendance: 97

September 5 (14), 11(15), 18 (18), 25 (16); October 2 (19), 9 (15)

October 2

Hallowed Ground: Putting the Civil War Dead to Rest with Martin Mosho

Attendance: 15

In this presentation, local history buff Martin Mosho shared information about burial practices during the Civil War.

Hispanic Heritage Month

Total attendance: 343

October 6

Incantations: Words and Music from the Land of the Jaguar

Attendance: 43

Musician John Burkhalter, reader Berthalia Harvey, and poet Carlos Hernandez Peña presented this unique and fascinating program that wove together verse, poetry, music and incantations of the ancient Maya. Burkhalter played the conch shell horn, turtle carapace, gourd rattles, and the only known Maya flute made of apple green jade.

October 8

COLLAB

OFFSITE

Festival Cultural Latino

Attendance: 300

The rich cultural life of Princeton's Latino community was celebrated with an afternoon of music, dance, food and crafts. The plaza was transformed into a mercado during the three-hour event with local artisans and restaurants on site along with family-friendly activities and free entertainment. This event was co-sponsored by the library, the Arts Council of Princeton, and Mi Pueblo Lindo

October 17

Author Talk: "The Sunken Gold: A Story of World War I Espionage and the Greatest Treasure Salvage in History" with Joseph Williams

Attendance: 16

Author and librarian Joseph Williams, a great storyteller, engaged the audience in a tale of World War I submarine warfare and sunken gold lost at the bottom of the ocean.

November 15

COLLAB

OFFSITE

Historical Fiction Book Group: "Burr" with Paul Clemens

Attendance: 16

For this installment of the book group, attendees were treated to a discussion about the local fictional and non-fictional elements of the book with Paul Clemens of Rutgers University.

November 29

COLLAB OFFSITE

Library Live at Labyrinth: “Democracy in Chains” with Nancy MacLean and Anastasia Mann

Attendance: 175

Anastasia Mann interviewed Nancy MacLean on her new book “Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right’s Stealth Plan for America.” This program was presented in partnership with Labyrinth Books.

December 4

Author Talk: David Price on “Rescuing the Revolution: Unsung Patriot Heroes and the Ten Crucial Days of America’s War for Independence”

Attendance: 50

The Newsroom was packed with Revolutionary War-era history buffs interested in learning more from David Price. His new book features vignettes about lesser-known figures in the Revolutionary War in the area of New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

December 6

COLLAB

Lecture: Rochambeau at Princeton with Dr. Bob Selig

Attendance: 90

Bob Selig regaled the audience with stories of Rochambeau’s movements throughout the area during the Revolutionary War. The audience was full of history buffs who asked many questions of the expert. Co-sponsored with the Princeton Battlefield Society, Morven Museum and Garden, and the Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail



December 3

Lloyd Gardner: Vietnam Redux: Ken Burns Takes on His Biggest Challenge

Attendance: 20

For this opening lecture, historian Lloyd Gardner spoke on the ambitious new PBS Vietnam War series, highlighting that it covered a wide large swath of history and interviewed people from both sides of the conflict. This unique series, as Ken Burns had noted, was an exercise in reconciliation.

The Vietnam War series screenings (to finish in 2018)

December 6 - Episode One: DeJa Vu (1858-1961)

Attendance: 26

December 13 - Episode Two: Riding the Tiger (1961-1963)

Attendance: 24

December 20 - Episode Three: “The River Styx” (January 1964–December 1965)

Attendance: 12

This series continued into 2018 and a [full events listing](#) is online.

Additional Updates

Award: American Library Association Public Programming Office

Princeton Public Library successfully applied for a competitive American Library Association award to be one of fifty libraries across the country to receive a free screener copy of the entire new “The Vietnam War” PBS documentary by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick. Receiving this award means that PPL will screen the entire 18-hour, 10-part series at the library and plan a number of associated programs in 2017-2018.

Democracy Fellows visit New Jersey Supreme Court

On March 29, the Democracy Fellowship student group from Princeton High School visited the New Jersey Supreme Court to hear arguments in the case of State vs. Habeeb Robinson. This group of students met to discuss various aspects of the criminal justice system from October 2016 to April 2017 and held their final presentation on April 24.



Alex Shalom (at left in picture) of the ACLU NJ argued for the defense; he has previously come to speak with the students about his work, particularly on bail reform in New Jersey. Part of the case centers around the recent reforms to the bail process in New Jersey, an issue that the students learned about and discussed in their final presentation. It was an exciting day for the students and an interesting look inside the criminal justice system.

Conference Presentation: National Council on Public History

Hannah Schmidl attended the annual meeting of the [National Council on Public History](#) in Indianapolis from April 19 to 22. On Saturday April 22nd she moderated a [panel](#) that examined the role of public historians in a variety of libraries, both academic and public. She presented on the Challenge Grant awarded to PPL that allows us to highlight the importance of the humanities in our community. Her talk covered everything from our museum pass service to community outreach as well as the many programs that are planned monthly with a humanities focus and how this improves the cultural and intellectual life of those that use the library.

[Voices of Princeton Oral History Project](#)

Voices of Princeton is a collaborative oral history project between the Princeton Public Library, the Historical Society of Princeton, and the Arts Council of Princeton. The goal of the project is to collect, share, and archive stories and memories of Princetonians. In 2017, the website was created and is now live, and dozen volunteer facilitators were trained. 2018 will see the start of interview and continued website development.

[Princeton Migrations Project](#)

This project examines the theme of migrations from a variety of angles: human migration, animal migration, migration of words and ideas, and more. The library created and hosts the website, and planned a number of programs to take place in spring 2018.

New Programming Collaboration: Historical Fiction Book Group with the Historical Society of Princeton

HSP approached the library with the idea of starting a historical fiction book group to attract people who are interested in history but might not be likely to read a non-fiction account of a time period. The solution: read a historical fiction novel and build the discussion around both the fictional and factual elements of that story. Hosted at HSP's Updike Farmstead (in the barn in warm weather), this is a successfully growing program.

Two New Museum Passes

Old Barracks Museum

Beginning July 1, the library added access for library cardholders and three of their guests to visit the [Old Barracks Museum](#) in Trenton. As a touchstone for Colonial and Revolutionary history in New Jersey, the Old Barracks Museum brings the world of Colonial America to life through interpretive programs, exhibits and preservation so that visitors can appreciate New Jersey's history, the diverse people who made it, and why it matters.

New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum

Beginning December 1, the library added access to the [New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum](#). The NJVVMF is a memorial to those New Jersey residents who lost their lives in the Vietnam War, and is the only Vietnam War memorial that also has a museum and educational center attached to it. The addition of this pass coincided with the beginning of

