

News from the Director



By Alan McPherson

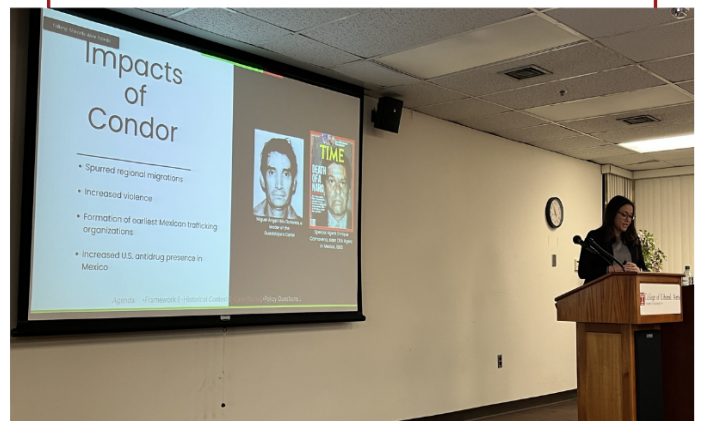
- **Spring 2026 Colloquium**
- **“Peace in the Age of Forever Wars”**
- **Spring 2026 Prizes**
- **CENFAD Emerging Scholar**
- **Thanks to the Davis Fellow**

As the financial fortunes of Temple University waver, CENFAD keeps promoting the good work of faculty, students, and outside scholars thanks to generous endowments. It is something to celebrate in these years of lean budgets. Faculty, students, and members of the community also keep showing up to CENFAD’s series of

talks, consistently one of the best attended events on campus. Please catch up on how the CENFAD community is doing [here](#).

Spring 2026 Colloquium

This spring, due to the “Peace in the Age of Forever Wars” symposium sponsored by CENFAD that hosted more than a dozen scholars to campus (see below and inside), our regular invited talks totaled five, one less than usual. Videos of all these talks can be seen on CENFAD’s [webpage](#).



Dr. Aileen Teague during her presentation

Our first speaker, on January 29, was Professor **Aileen Teague** from Texas A&M University. Teague [presented](#) her first book, *Policing on Drugs: The United States, Mexico, and the Origins of the Modern Drug War, 1969-2000*. It argues that counternarcotics, and

especially the collaboration between U.S. and Mexican authorities, goes back to the 1960s and was never without its problems. Strategic Visions also [interviewed](#) her.

On February 12, CENFAD hosted Pulitzer-Prize-winning Yale historian **Greg Grandin**, who [sat down with me](#) to discuss his new magnum opus, *America, América: A New History of the New World*, which highlights the centuries-long tradition of Latin American progressivism in social matters.



Dr. Alan McPherson and Dr. Greg Grandin

Jonathan House visited two weeks later on February 26. The emeritus professor at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in Kansas and at Gordon State College in Georgia [discussed](#) “War and Disorder since

1989,” pointing out that the United States lacked a coherent strategy for decades after 1989, ambling as it did from one intervention to another. House is the author most recently of *A Military History of the New World Disorder, 1898-2022*.



Dr. Jonathan House

One of CENFAD’s most original speakers in years came to Philadelphia on March 19: **Tore Olsson**, professor of history at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, [talked about](#) his most recent book, *Red Dead’s History: How a Video Game Can Help Us Understand America’s Violent Past*. Olsson recounted his discovery that the “Red Dead Redemption” video games, with their historically-informed and intricate plots, had much to teach undergraduates and other general students of history if put in proper context. Olsson delved into the game’s

representation of post-Civil War commemorations.



Dr. Tore Olsson

Finally, on April 16, **Sam Lebovic**, a historian at George Mason University, presented his 2023 book, *State of Silence: The Espionage Act and the Rise of America's Secrecy Regime*. He argued that the poorly written Espionage Act saw many opportunities to be rewritten or eliminated, but that every time U.S. lawmakers failed to take up the challenge, instead turning it into a tool of further repression.



Dr. Sam Lebovic

Peace in the Age of Forever Wars

CENFAD was a major sponsor of a [symposium](#) held on campus on April 3-4 and co-organized by the History Department's **Petra Goedde** and the Philosophy Department's **Lee-Ann Chae**. "Peace in the Age of Forever Wars" featured keynote speakers Mary Dudziak, Samuel Moyn, and Graham Parsons. *Strategic Visions* covers the event [here](#).

Spring 2026 prizes

In March, the following three graduate students won CENFAD research awards:

- **Grace Anne Parker** won the Richard Immerman Research Award of \$900 for research at the National Archives in the Washington, D.C., area.
- **Steps Kostas** won a Wachman Fellowship of \$2000 to pursue dissertation

research in Kentucky, Maryland, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania.

- **Marcella Aline Toledo** won a Wachman Fellowship of \$2,300 to pursue dissertation research in Brazil.

The following seven students received CENFAD funds to present their work at academic conferences:

- **Isabella “Cas” Casanova**, at a historical workshop in Erfurt, Germany.

- **Joseph Johnson**, at a Cold War conference in London and the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations conference in Ohio.

- **Zachary Kelly**, at the History in the Making conference in Montreal.

- **Lucas Martins**, at the Latin American Studies Association conference in Paris.

- **Grace Anne Parker**, at the Society for Military History conference in Arlington, Virginia.

- **Marcella Aline Toledo**, at the Latin American Studies Association conference in Paris.

- **Jake Wolff**, at the New Dean Order, Revisited conference at the Sorbonne in Paris.

Congratulations to all the winners!

Fifth CENFAD Emerging Scholar

For the fifth year in a row, thanks to the generosity of Temple History PhD Todd Davis, CENFAD helped in recruiting an incoming MA student with the Emerging Scholar Graduate Award. The award aims to support MA-level students interested in diplomatic and military history and to do so especially among underrepresented candidates, including women. The 2025-2026 incoming Emerging Scholar will be **Adar Shem Tov**, who is interested in U.S.-Latin American relations in the Cold War. Welcome to the CENFAD community, Adar!

Thanks to the Davis Fellow

Finally, I want to thank Davis Fellow **Marcella Aline Toledo**, who did an excellent job juggling all the responsibilities of running CENFAD day-to-day while finishing her coursework and preparing for comps and dissertation research. She was especially helpful in advertising and participating in the “Peace in the Age of Forever Wars” symposium. And thanks for suggesting Greg Grandin as a speaker. He accepted!

Next year’s Davis Fellow will be PhD student **Will Hafer**, whose interests center on U.S.-Soviet relations during the Cold War. Welcome to CENFAD, Will!