

The “All Roads Lead to Gettysburg Conference”: A Retrospective

On April 6, 2024, CENFAD hosted the “All Roads Lead to Gettysburg Conference” at the Temple University Center City Campus. The day was filled with exciting and varied perspectives on the Battle of Gettysburg, leading to a rich and vibrant conference for all in attendance. Below is a look back at that day, including the opening remarks offered by Dr. Gregory J.W. Urwin, a copy of the poster, a snapshot of the full program, testimonials from those in attendance, and pictures of the participants.

“Welcoming Remarks” by Dr. Greg Urwin

“More than a year ago, Dr. Alan McPherson, CENFAD’s director, generously offered me the funding to help him organize a conference on a theme of my choosing. My current research focuses on the American War of Independence, but Philadelphia, the birthplace of American independence, is full of institutions that offer plenty of public programs on that topic. Philadelphia also played an important role in the Civil War, which just happened to be the field in which I began my career. Two boyhood trips to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania – as much as anything else – fueled my ambition to become a military historian, and I felt irresistibly drawn – with my retirement just a few years in the future – to

return to Gettysburg in this intellectual setting.

Many consider Gettysburg the most popular topic in Civil War studies, and cynics might call it the most overworked. I, for one, would not contest either point. Nevertheless, Gettysburg continues to inspire keen-minded scholars who find ways to shed new light on America’s bloodiest battle and its place in history and memory. I am pleased and honored to find myself surrounded by such special people – both established practitioners of the historian’s art and the rising talent who will take their places among the giants. It is especially fitting that this assemblage includes Dr. Troy D. Harman, whose 2022 book, *All Roads Led to Gettysburg: A New Look at the Civil War’s Pivotal Campaign*, gave me the idea for our conference title.

With Troy and all the other folks listed in the conference program poised to illuminate us, you can be sure that this is going to be a memorable day. So, let’s get to it.”



View from the Conference Hall (Credit: Dr. Cristina Alvarez)



Conference Attendees (Credit: Dr. Gregory J.W. Urwin)



A full audience in the middle of the day (Credit: Dr. Alan McPherson)



Conference Organizers (left to right): Dr. Alan McPherson, Joseph Johnson, and Dr. Gregory J.W. Urwin (Credit: Dr. Gregory J.W. Urwin)

Testimonials

Our guests and panelists shared the following statements about the conference.

“I think the event was a wonderful success, especially given the local competition, and you did a wonderful job putting it together and balancing all sort of constituencies.” – Dr. Brooks D. Simpson, *Arizona State University*

“It was truly an honor to have been presenting alongside such an impressive group of scholars. I am so very grateful for the experience.” – Morgan Rowe, *London School of Economics*

“You organized such a wonderful conference and Saturday proved to be an invigorating and energizing day! The diversity of papers and speakers was a wonderful testament to the enduring power and appeal of the Battle of Gettysburg. I was thrilled to be part of the line-up.” – Dr. Jennifer M. Murray, *Oklahoma State University*

“It was an honor to speak at the conference... I do look forward to continuing the work, and hopefully turning the research into my dissertation. On another note, my co-presenters have agreed to join me for a summer symposium at Seminary Ridge in August, focusing on Gettysburg veterans’ reunions. So the three of us will take the stage again this year.” – Peter Miele, *Pennsylvania State University*

“I will admit, I was exceptionally nervous to get up in front of that room in front of so many names whose books and articles I have read for years, whose faces I’ve seen on CSPAN and PCN for so much of my life.... With that

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being said, once I stood up there and once I started speaking, I got into the rhythm of the moment, and the nerves melted away. And I was exceptionally and immensely glad that I had made the trip. Not only because I heard immensely fascinating talks from incredible historians I grew up reading and watching, but from talented fellow graduate students – one or two of whom I’ve started communicating with in hopes of collaborating on publishing projects in the near future. So I wouldn’t be too terribly surprised if you see Dr. Urwin and Dr. McPherson thanked for bringing together some co-authors on articles in the future.” – Hans G. Myers, *Case Western University*



Panelist Hans G. Myers (Credit: Dr. Cristina Alvarez)

“All Roads Lead to Gettysburg’ was an excellently organized and managed conference that brought together experts on a wide variety of topics from varied perspectives. Because it focused on newer scholarship, it was particularly valuable for participants seeking to expand their knowledge of the Gettysburg Campaign and related topics.” Dr. James S. Pula, *Purdue University Northwest*

“Speaking with attendees, I got the impression that everyone was excited about the event – certainly the large number of participants speaks to that

point.” – Dr. Alexandre Caillot, *Temple University Alum*

★★★★ Temple University College of Liberal Arts | Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy ★★★★★

ALL ROADS LEAD TO GETTYSBURG
A CENFAD CONFERENCE

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY CITY CENTER CAMPUS
SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 2024 7:30 AM - 5 PM
ROOMS: 418 & 421
FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

CO-SPONSORS:
Temple University College of Liberal Arts | Political Science | Temple University College of Liberal Arts | History

For more information visit: <https://liberalarts.temple.edu/research/labs-centers-and-institutes/center-study-force-and-diplomacy/lecture-series/2024-cenfad-conference-all-roads-lead-gettysburg>

ALRTG Poster (Credit: Joseph Johnson)



Participants during a Q&A session (Credit: Dr. Gregory J.W. Urwin)

Schedule

8 am – 8:35 am: Breakfast, Temple University Center City Campus (complimentary for all attendees), **room 418**

8:35 am – 8:40 am: Welcome by Dr. Alan McPherson and Dr. Gregory Urwin

8:40 am – 10 am: "The Brave Men... Who Struggled Here": Debating Issues of Significance and Recognition, **room 421**

Chair: Greg Urwin, Temple University

Brooks D. Simpson, Arizona State University, "Gettysburg: Turning Point? High Water Mark?: The Campaign and Battle in Retrospect"

Hans G. Myers, Case Western Reserve University, "The Orphic Duty of the Historian of Gettysburg: Reclaiming Truth from Mythology in the Case of Strong Vincent and Joshua Chamberlain"

Mauren Schindler, University of Alabama, "Brothers 'Redeemed' in Blood: The Impact of Gettysburg on the 'Harpers Ferry Cowards'"

10:10 am – 11:30 am: "A New Birth of Freedom": Gettysburg in Lincoln's Shadow

Chair: Peter Sicher, Temple University

Troy D. Harman, Gettysburg National Military Park, "Lincoln's Vision for a New Nation at Gettysburg"

Morgan Rowe, London School of Economics and Political Science, "The 'Great Emancipator' or 'A Dictator, Proclaimed'? Tracing Honest Abe's Reputation before and after the Battle of Gettysburg"

Tim McGrath, Independent Scholar, "Decisions, Decisions: Lincoln, Lee, and Meade at Gettysburg"

11:40 am – 1 pm: "Nor Long Remember": Gettysburg and the Vagaries of Memory

Chair: Grace Anne Parker: Temple University

Peter Miele, Seminary Ridge Museum and Education Center, "A Monument to Memory: Gettysburg's Eternal Light Peace Memorial"

Jill Oglene Titus, Gettysburg College, "Fighting Civil Rights & the Cold War through Confederate Monumentation on Seminary Ridge"

Jennifer M. Murray, Oklahoma State University, "On a Great Battlefield: Gettysburg since the Sesquicentennial, 2012-2023"

1 pm – 2 pm: Lunch, Temple University City Center Campus (complimentary for all attendees), **room 418**

2:10 pm – 3:30 pm: "Altogether Fitting and Proper": Gettysburg in a Broader Perspective

Chair: Anthony Guerrero, Temple University/U.S. Military Academy

John R. Valitutto, U.S. Military Academy, "The Battle of Gettysburg in Polish History"

Brendan M. Law and Matthew Clifford, U.S. Military Academy, "*Gardes de Lafayette*: The French Experience during the American Civil War"

Rachel Barbara Nicholas, West Virginia University, "Soft Spots for Slavery in an Ambiguous Borderland: Free People of Color, Confederate Soldiers, and 'Contrabands' during the Gettysburg Campaign"

3:40 pm – 5 pm: "What They Did Here": Command Decisions and Military Medicine

Chair: Alan McPherson, Temple University

Edward J. Hagerty, Air University, "Fighting Dick Anderson: The Gettysburg Controversy"

James S. Pula, Purdue University, "Overlooked and Underappreciated: Dan Butterfield"

Monroe J. Molesky, University of North Alabama, "Battling Bloodshed: Dr. Jonathan Letterman and Gettysburg as the Proving Ground of a Military Medical Advantage"

CENFAD would like to extend its appreciation to the following co-sponsors:

Temple University History Department, Temple Political Science Department, and the Society for Military History



History



Political Science



The full schedule from the conference (Credit: Joseph Johnson)

Thank you to all who attended! And a special thanks to our co-sponsors, The Temple University History Department, the Political Science Department, and the Society for Military History.