

David A Gerber

Distinguished Professor of History, Emeritus
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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Princeton University (1971), American History (Major Field)
B.A., Northwestern University (1966), Phi Beta Kappa; High Honors

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Current Appointments

Senior Fellow, Center for Disability Studies, University at Buffalo
Senior Fellow, SUNY at Buffalo Department of History

Previous Appointments

SUNY at Buffalo Department of History

Formally Retired May 2012; Rehired 2012–2014, Teaching in University Honors Program, 2014-2023,

- Director, Center for Disability Studies, University at Buffalo, 2009–2012
- Named University at Buffalo Distinguished Professor of History, May 2007

Visiting Professor, Organization of American Historians Program, Northeast Normal University, Changchun, China, June, 2013

Visiting Professor, Fulbright Program, Institute for the Study of Immigration and the Polish Diaspora, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland, 2004–2005

RECENT ACTIVITY

PUBLICATIONS

Articles

Refereed

- “A Wartime Encounter That Never Occurred: Moral Injury and Literary Healing,” *Close Encounters in Wartime*, anticipated 2025.
- “Prisoner of War Radiograms Radiograms: Electronic Letters via Shortwave and the Homefront Social Networks They Formed,” *Homefront*, anticipated 2025.
- “Stimulating Student Moral Engagement in the Service of Civic Education,” *Teaching History* 43 (Spring, 2018), 18-35.
- “Moving Backward and Moving On: Nostalgia, Significant Others, and Social Reintegration in Nineteenth Century British Immigrant Letters,” *The History of the Family* 21 (August 2016), 291–314.
- “‘Yankey’s Now?’: Joseph and Rebecca Hartley’s Circuitous Path to American Identity: A Case Study in the Use of Immigrant Letters as Social Documentation,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 28 (Spring 2009), 7–33.
- “Acts of Deceiving and Withholding in Immigrant Personal Correspondence,” *Journal of Social History* 39 (December 2005), 8–23. (A version appears in *Letters across Borders*:

The Epistolary Practices of International Migrants, Bruce Elliott, David Gerber, and Suzanne Sinke, eds. (New York: Palgrave/ St. Martins, 2006).

Non-Refereed

- “Job Market,” *Atheneum Review*, anticipated 2025.
- “Leonard Dinnerstein (1934-2019): The Historian and His Subject,” *American Jewish History* 105 (January/April, 2021), 235-246.
- “Rest in Peace, Charles Byrne, the Irish Giant: A Last Testament from the Eighteenth Century,” *Disability History Newsletter* (2017).
- “E Pluribus Unum? E Pluribus Plures?,” *Reviews in American History* (Fall, 2017). Review essay, *The Oxford Handbook of American Immigration History and The Oxford Handbook of Asian American History*.
- “Disability Scholars as World Disrupters and World Markers,” *Disability Studies Quarterly* 37, n.1 (Winter, 2017), <http://dx.doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v37i1.5441>.
- “Disabled Veterans and the Wounds of War,” *Oxford Handbook of Disability History*, Susan Burch, Kim Nielsen, and Michael Rembis, eds. (2017).
- “Pity Party,” *Reviews in American History* 44 (December 2016), 511–516, Review essay, Paul Longmore, *Telethons: Spectacle, Disability, and the Business of Charity*.
- “*The Uprooted* Would Never Have Been Written if Oscar Handlin Had Taken His Own, Latter-Day Advice,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 32 (Spring 2013), 68–78.
- “What Did Oscar Handlin Mean in the Opening Sentences of *The Uprooted*?” *Reviews in American History* 41 (March 2013), 1–11.
- “Introduction,” *Ethnic Historians and the Mainstream: Shaping America’s Immigration Story* (2013), 1–16.
- “Arguing Judaism, Negotiating Jewish Identity,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* (2011), Review essay.
- “Immigration History at the Crossroad,” *Reviews in American History* 39 (2011), 74–86. Review essay.
- With Michael Rembis, “Advancing Disability Studies in Hard Times: Creating the University at Buffalo Center for Disability History,” *Disability History Newsletter*, 6 (Fall 2010), www.dishist.org.
- “Disabled Veterans, the Government, and Group Identity,” *OAH Magazine of History* (July 2009), 25–27.
- “What’s Wrong with Immigration History?” *Reviews in American History* 36 (December 2008), 543–556.
- “Documenting Society and Documenting the Ties that Bind in Immigrant Personal Correspondence,” *Immigration History Newsletter* (May 2008), 1–3.
- “Ethnicity and the 2008 Elections: At This Moment, Mid-May 2008,” *Studia Migracyjne-Przegląd Polonijny* 35 (Spring 2009), 7–10.
- “Old Country/Alienation/Alien Nation,” *Tikkun, On-Line Exclusives* (March 2007), www.Tikkun.org/magazine.
- “Disabled Veterans: How Are They Different? What Difference Does It Make?” *Disability History Newsletter* 3 (March 2007), www.dha.osu.edu.
- “Thomas Spencer Niblock: A Dialogue of Respectability and Failure,” *Studia Migracyjne-Przegląd Polonijny [Polish Review]*, 31 (Spring 2006), 23–41, Invited.

Books

- Author, with Bruce Dierenfield, *Disability Rights and Religious Liberty: The Story behind Zobrest v. Catalina Foothills School District* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2020).

- Editor, with Alan Kraut, *Ethnic Historians and the Mainstream, Shaping America's Immigration Story* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2013).
- Editor, *Disabled Veterans in History* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000; revised and expanded second edition, 2012).
- Author, *American Immigration History: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). Second edition (English-language), anticipated 2021.
- Co-editor, with Bruce Elliott and Suzanne Sinke, *Letters across Borders: The Epistolary Practices of International Migrants* (New York: Palgrave/St. Martins, 2006).
- Author, *Authors of Their Lives: The Personal Correspondence of Nineteenth Century British Immigrants to North America* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), Awarded, Moroney Prize for Postal History (United States Postal Service), 2008.
- Editor, with Alan Kraut, *American Immigration and Ethnicity: A Reader* (New York and Basingstoke, Palgrave/St. Martin's, 2005).
- Editor, with William Fischer, Jorge Guitart and Maxine Seller, *Identity, Community and Pluralism in American Life: A Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- Co-editor, (with Scott Eberle), Roger Whitman, *The Rise and Fall of a Frontier Entrepreneur: Benjamin Rathbun, "Master Builder and Architect"* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996). Awarded the Owen Augsberger Prize for contributions to local history, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, 1997.
- Author, *The Making of An American Pluralism: Buffalo, New York, 1828-1860* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), in the Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island Centennial Series, Roger Daniels, editor. Awarded the Herbert Gutman Award for Outstanding Books in Social History, 1990.
- Editor, *Anti-Semitism in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), Alternate selection, June 1986, B'nai B'rith Jewish Book Club; Honorable Mention Award from the Gustavus Myers Center for Human Rights, 1987.
- Author, *Black Ohio and the Color Line, 1860–1915*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976).

Book Chapters

- “Rest in Peace, Charles Byrne? :The Last Testament and Enduring Legacy of the Eighteenth Century ‘Irish Giant,’” in Rosemarie Garland Thomson, Michael Mark Chemers, and Analola Santana, eds., *Freak Inheritance: Eugenics and Extraordinary Bodies in Performance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2024), pp. 101-119.
- with Carolyn W. Korsmeyer, “When Memory Fades and Resources Run Dry: Three Cases of Neglect and Loss,” in Zoltan Somhegyi and Lisa Giombini, eds., *The Routledge Companion to the Philosophy of Architectural Reconstruction* (London and New York, 2024), pp. 345-359.
- “Music and Affective Signaling in an Immigrant Letter from 1844, in Martyn Lyons, ed., *The Common Writer in Modern History* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2023), pp.103-120.
- “The Continuing Relevance of Disabled Veterans,” *Preface*, 2nd edition, Author, ed., *Disabled Veterans in History* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012).
- “Post-Modern American Heroism: Anti-War War Heroes, Survivor Heroes, and the Eclipse of Traditional Warrior Values,” Author, ed., *Disabled Veterans in History* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012).
- “Transnationalization and Internationalization in American Immigration Historiography,” in Reed Ueda, ed., *Blackwell's Companion to American Immigration History* (New York and Oxford: Blackwell's Publishers, January, 2006).

- “Preface,” Jean Richardson, *The Buffalo Hospital of the Sisters of Charity* (Lockport, NY: Mellen Press, 2006), pp. ii–vii.
- “A Network of Two: Personal Friendship and Scottish Identification in the Correspondence of Mary Ann Archbald and Margaret Wodrow, 1807–1840,” Angela McCarthy, ed., *A Global Clan: Scottish Identity and Networks Since the Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh: I.B. Taurus, 2006), 95–126.
- With Bruce Elliot and Suzanne Sinke, “Introduction,” *Letters across Borders: The Epistolary Practices of International Migrants* (New York: Palgrave, 2006) 3–35.

Book Reviews

- “Will Laughing at and with One Another Save Us?: A Review of Jeffrey Israel: Living with Hate in American Politics and Religion, *Atheneum Review*. 5 (Winter, 2021), 156-163.
- Review of Kirsten Fermaglich, *A Rosenberg by Any Other Name: A History of Jewish Name Changing in America*, *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 40 (Fall, 2020), 95-97.
- “The Conscience of an Immigrant Conservative,” Reihan Slam, Melting Pot or Civil War: A Son of Immigrants Makes the Case Against Open Borders.” *Atheneum Review*, 2 (Spring/Summer, 2019). 20-29.
- Jeanne D. Petit, *The Men and Women We Want: Gender, Race, and the Progressive Era Literacy Test Debate*, in *Journal of American Ethnic History* (2016).
- Susan M. Schweik, *The Ugly Laws* 44, in *Journal of Social History* (Fall 2010), 273–75.
- Konstantine Dierks, *In My Power: Letter Writing and Communication in Early America*, in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 41 (Autumn 2010), 302–03.
- (Video) Patricia Foulkrod, *The Ground Truth*, in *Peace and Change* 34 (July 2009), 403–06.
- David Henkin, *The Postal Age*, in *Enterprise and Society* 8 (May 2007), 749–51.

TEACHING

Courses

- Honors College 214 (SUNY at Buffalo University Honors College) alternately, Freedom of Speech and Expression under the First Amendment, and The Religion Clauses of the First Amendment, seminar
- History 577, United States History Core Course, graduate seminar
- History 565, American Social History, graduate seminar
- History 511, The Literature of American Immigration History, graduate seminar
- History 507, The Literature of American Immigration History, graduate seminar
- History 454, Church and State in American Life (undergraduate seminar; honor’s seminar in the SUNY at Buffalo Honors College)
- History 416, American Immigration History, seminar
- History 411, Church-State Separation Issues in American History, seminar
- History 349 American Dissenters: Conformity and Nonconformity in American History, lecture
- History 234, United States in the Twentieth Century, lecture
- History 162, United States History Survey II, lectures and seminar

Research Supervision

Doctorate

- 20 Ph.D. Committee Chair
- 30 Ph.D. Committee member
- 31 Ph.D. Committee Member
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- **Awards**

University at Buffalo Distinguished Professor of History (May 2007)

Chancellor of the State University of New York, Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching (1990)

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

SUNY at Buffalo Department of History

- Department Chair (2006–2009)
- Search Committee Chair (2005)
- Undergraduate Program Chair (1999–2002)

University and Community Service

- Member, University at Buffalo Immigration and Refugee Research Center (2015–present)
- Interviewer/Reviewer, Presidential Scholarship Candidates, UB Honors College (2012–present)
- Chairman, Board of Directors, Museum of Disability History (2017-2019)
- Member, Advisory Committee, Buffalo Jewish Archives Project (2006–present)
- Founding Member and Participant, Charles Haynie Memorial Scholarship Award Committee (first annual prize granted May 2005) (2003–present)
- Fellow, Baldy Center for Law & Social (1993–present)
- Organizing Committee, American Presidents Symposium, Daemen College (October 1, 2016)
- Board of Directors, Association for a Buffalo Presidential Center (2010–2015)
- Director, Center for Disability Studies, University at Buffalo (2009–2012)
- Advisory Committee, University Archives, University at Buffalo, Mellon Foundation Grant Application (2010)
- Committee Member, Theorists and Jurists Speaker Series Committee, UB Baldy Center for Law & Social Policy (2009)
- Search Committee Member for Director and for Endowed Chair and Faculty Advisory Committee, University at Buffalo Institute for Jewish History and Thought (2009)
- Organizing Committee Head, College of Arts and Sciences and People, Inc., of University at Buffalo, Center for Disability Studies (2007–2009)
- Search Committee, for Director, Institute for Jewish Thought, History, and Culture (2006)
- Co-coordinator, Baldy Center for Law & Social Policy, Immigration and Diversity Program (2006–2009)
- Faculty Advisory Committee, Cultures and Texts Advisory Committee, UB 2020, Planning Process (2006–2009)
- Polish Studies Advisory Committee (2005–2006)
- Committee Member, Dalai Lama Reception Planning Committee (2005–2006)
- Polish Studies Advisory Committee (2005–2006)
- Baldy Center Advisory Council, Baldy Center for Law & Social Policy (2003–2006)

PRESENTATIONS

Commentaries, Interviews, Podcasts

- Interviewer (Podcast), Wooksoo Kim, "American Immigration and Refugee Policy," University at Buffalo School of Social Work, *in Social Work Series*, June 3, 2016. <http://insocialwork.org>.
- Interviewed, *Debt of Honor: Disabled Veterans in American History*, Steeplechase Films, featured on PBS, November 10, 2015.
- Interviewer (Podcast), Susan Saidenberg, "My Search for Joseph and Rebecca Hartley's English Ethnicity," Gilder-Lehrman Institute, New York City, December 13, 2010.
- Comment, Back to Caledonia Conference, Scottish Diaspora Studies Centre, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, 2010.
- Plenary Commentary, Assimilation: The Social Integration of Ethnic Migrants in Theory and Ideology Conference, University at Buffalo, 2010.
- Comment, Session on "Disabled Veterans," American Historical Association, New York City, 2009.
- Interviewer (Podcast), Professor Leo Lucassen, Dutch Historian of Immigration, "The Integration of Post-War and Contemporary Immigrants in Western Europe," University at Buffalo School of Law, *UBLAW20081023.mp3*, November 4, 2008.
- Comment, Session on "Disabled Veterans," Society for Disability Studies, New York City, 2008.
- Chair and Commentator, "Ethnicity and Nation Building," European Social Science History Conference, Lisbon, 2008.
- Organizer, Chair, and Commentator, "Exploring the Work of Jan Tomasz Gross," European Social Science History Conference, Lisbon, 2008.
- Chair and Commentator, Session on "Diversity and Social Work," Diversity Conference, School of Social Work, SUNY at Albany, 2007.
- Chair and Commentator, Session on "Love Letters," Social Science History Conference, Chicago, 2007.
- Comment, Session on "Migrations in and from the Hapsburg Empire," European Social Science History Association, Amsterdam, Netherlands, Biennial Meeting, 2006.

Lectures and Presentations

- Lecture, "Thinking about Immigrant Letters," Center for History Education, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, 2009.
- Co-presenter, *The Life and Times of Benjamin Rathbun*, Local Authors Forum, Buffalo Public Library, 2009.
- Introduction and Talk, *The Best Years of Our Lives*, Monday Film Series, Daemen College, Amherst, NY, 2008.
- Presentation, "Barack Obama: Ethnicity and Race in the 2008 American Presidential Campaign," American Ethnicity: Rethinking Old Issues, Asking New Questions Conference, Krakow, Poland, 2008.
- Presentation, "Disabled Veterans, Past and Present," at performance of Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, Daemen College, Amherst, NY, Veterans' Day, 2008.
- Presenter and Discussion Leader, "Poland as a Homeland for American Jews," Congregation Havurah of Buffalo, 2007.

Papers

- “Prisoner of War Radiograms: Electronic Letters via Shortwave,” The Epistolary Research Network annual meeting, via ZOOM, October 5, 2024.
- “Postal Time and Prisoner of War Time: The Problem of Personal Correspondence for American Prisoners of War in the Pacific during World War II,” The Epistolary Research Network annual meeting, via ZOOM, October 6, 2023.
- “Dominic Pacyga’s *American Warsaw* as A Contribution to Transnational History,” Author Meets Critic Session for *American Warsaw*, American Historical Association, New York City, 2020.
- “Rethinking Agency: Rethinking the Assumptions of the New Social History of Immigration,” American Ethnicity: Old and New Immigration Flows, Old and New Challenges, Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences, Krakow, Poland, 2018.
- “*The Polish Hearst* as A Contribution to ‘Experiential History,’” Author Meets Critic Session for *The Polish Hearst* by Anna Jaroszynska-Kirchmann, American Historical Association, Denver, 2017.
- “‘Yankeys Now,’ Joseph and Rebecca Hartley’s Circuitous Path to American Identity: A Case Study of Immigrant Letters as Social Documentation,” American Ethnicity: Rethinking Old Issues, Asking New Questions, Jagiellonian University (Poland), 2008.
- “Exploring the Depths and Surfaces of Immigrant Letters, or What Did Kate Bond Want to Say?” Rural History Group Colloquium, University of Guelph (Canada), 2007; The Uses of the Immigrant Letter, German Historical Institute, Washington, DC, 2007; Centre for Narrative and Autobiographical Studies, University of Edinburgh (Scotland), 2010.
- “Disabled Veterans: Their Past and Future,” Representing Disability, Haverford College, 2006.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Manuscript Referee

Books

- Houghton Mifflin (2008)
- Chatto and Pickering, UK (2007)
- Oxford University Press (2014; 2016)

Journals

- *American Jewish History* (2020; 2019)
- *Journal of Policy History* (2017)
- *Social History* (UK) (2017)
- *Journal of American Ethnic History* (2007;2008; 2009; 2011; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016)
- *American Studies* (2009; 2011)
- *Journal of the Early American Republic* (2008)
- *Oral History Review* (2008)
- *Journal of Social History* (2008)
- *Journal of American History* (2007)