



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

DIVISION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

MEMORANDUM

DATE:

TO:

FROM:

SUBJECT:

The attached applications are for the mock panel portion of the application-writing sessions on Friday, September 27. To get the most out of the session, please read the applications in advance of the panel. Please keep in mind that these applications have been selected for a particular purpose: that is, to give workshop participants a chance to consider three approaches to crafting applications. They are not intended to serve as models, nor are they intended, by virtue of their subjects, to suggest a particular area of Endowment interest. Applications for NEH awards are as diverse, in both subject matter and methodology, as the applicants who submit them.

These proposals were submitted to NEH. For reasons of confidentiality, we have omitted cover sheets, résumés, and letters of recommendation for this exercise.

Attachments

NEH Fellowships

NEH Fellowships are competitive awards granted to individual scholars pursuing projects that embody exceptional research, rigorous analysis, and clear writing. Applications must clearly articulate a project's value to humanities scholars, general audiences, or both.

Fellowships provide recipients time to conduct research or to produce books, monographs, peer-reviewed articles, e-books, digital materials, translations with annotations or a critical apparatus, or critical editions resulting from previous research. Projects may be at any stage of development.

Fellowships support continuous full-time work for a period of six to twelve months.

Rating Scale:

E = Excellent

VG = Very Good

G = Good

SM = Some Merit

NC = Not Competitive

Sorry, NEH does not allow split ratings (e.g. VG/G or E/NC) or other types of shading (e.g. VG- or G++).

Criteria for Evaluation:

Evaluators are asked to apply the following five criteria when judging the quality of applications.

1. The intellectual significance of the proposed project, including its value to humanities scholars, general audiences, or both.
2. The quality or promise of quality of the applicant's work as an interpreter of the humanities.
3. The quality of the conception, definition, organization, and description of the project and the applicant's clarity of expression.
4. The feasibility and appropriateness of the proposed plan of work, including, when relevant, the soundness of the dissemination and access plans.
5. The likelihood that the applicant will complete the project (not necessarily during the period of performance).

I am writing a history of babies in the 20th-century United States. This will be the first book to analyze the dramatic transformations in the lives of babies resulting from ongoing changes in American life in the domains of medicine, the marketplace, politics, demography, family life and popular culture. Currently the history of babies is found in examinations of such things as baby-saving campaigns, the development of child welfare, the history of infant feeding, scientific motherhood, childbearing, and psychology and is largely focused on the opening decades of the 20th century. The literature on the post World War II era is dominated by analyses of fetal life, advice to pregnant women, and debates over abortion rather than on babies. Moreover, while much attention is given to the writings of doctors, mothers, psychologists and other authorities there has been little examination of what was done to and for babies and why, and how their treatment changed over time. My book, tentatively titled *Our Babies, My Baby: 20th-Century American Infants*, addresses several questions. First, has the claim about a transition from public concern about "our babies"--manifested in the broad-based movement to lower infant mortality rates in the late 19th and early 20th centuries--to concern for "my baby"--revealed in contemporary efforts by individual households to promote the future economic success of their infants through such things as educational toys and infant stimulation classes been overstated? How do we understand the fundamental paradox in that the more babies' life chances increased thanks to collective efforts the more infant lives became a private family matter? The collective interest in infant welfare, I argue, was steeped in racial, religious, regional and class divisions and has been overstated, while the ongoing investment in babies as future citizens in the mid- and late-20th century has been under analyzed. This leads to another question: what do the lives of infants reveal about the intersection of medical science, material culture, marketplace changes and the economic calculus of family life over the course of the last century?

In answering these questions I define babies as those under the age of one. This was the age at which infants were most physically vulnerable and least articulate, resulting in tremendous parental and social anxiety and attention. I focus my examination of infants' experiences not in terms of the production of identity or consciousness, as many historians use that term, but by exploring the highly mediated processes by which babies were understood individually and collectively. So, for example, I note how infants were perceived to need affection and punishment and how mothers provided it, sometimes following and sometimes eschewing, prescribed practices. The mother of a Nellie, born in 1922 described how she could "sit on the floor in my bathtub alone and wave bye-bye and play peek-a-boo, play patty-cake," and "pat herself on the chest when asked where she was" despite warnings in advice manuals and other baby books that "Excitement Harms" and "*Never* play with baby till over six months -- then seldom." The gap between what individual babies experienced and what experts prescribed suggests the need to understand infant lives from multiple perspectives.

My book draws from numerous unexplored primary sources, including over 800 baby books in which parents of all social classes detail the lives of their infants. Sources describing the daily lives of infants as seen by mothers are rare and scholars have traditionally relied on prescriptive materials; the baby books are an unexplored and significant source. I also analyze family papers, diaries, letters, transcribed oral histories, folklore accounts, and the representations of babies in print, on television and film and on websites. My exploration of these materials is grounded in the secondary literature in the history of medicine, childhood and consumer culture. I plan, however, to extend the literature in these fields. Historians of medicine have not considered the experiences of infants, except as refracted through discussions of scientific motherhood largely focused on the offspring of the well to do and poor infants cared for in institutions. The concept of medicalization--the expanding authority of medical science, institutions and practitioners--needs to be seen in the context of infant lives as tempered by religious explanations, economic constraints, and cultural practices as revealed in both private writings and folklore. Historians of childhood, despite their emerging, substantial contribution to the discipline of history, have also neglected infants because of a focus on children as agents. Historians of consumer culture attentive to the roles of children have done relatively little to analyze the production and marketing of goods for babies and the attempts by banks and insurance companies to shape parental and

public actions towards infants. My work will enhance our knowledge of 20th century business, marketing and consumption as a private activity mediated by medical developments and government programs.

My research thus far suggests that the collective and at times antagonistic efforts of religious organizations, manufacturers, banking and insurance companies, advertising, public health experts and medical practitioners led Americans, by the early 20th century, to view babies as "investments" and as "expenses." The private and public practices that resulted from this ideology transformed the daily lives of infants and reshaped American culture, from the operation of household economies to the distribution of public funds. This discussion of babies as investments and expenses provides the narrative arc of *Our Babies, My Babies*. My book is grounded in the existing literature and provides a comparative analysis of the primary materials in order to reveal the interacting forces of change and resistance central to the experiences of babies over the 20th century. However, this work will not be encyclopedic, but thematic and organized chronologically. Each chapter will begin with "baby biographies" drawn from primary sources and illustrating the key arguments that follow. I foreground individual infant lives in order to make the book accessible to general readers interested in the history of American babies as well as to scholars in medical history, childhood history and consumer history. A model for my book is David Oshinsky's *Polio: An American Story* because it successfully interweaves chapters on aspects of cultural, political and medical history that collectively explain how the polio crusade developed, operated, and changed American life. I shall similarly explain how developments in American life led to changes in the lives of infants and equally, how perceptions of infants--as investments, citizens, family members and at-risk collective dependents, shaped American medicine, business, politics, culture, and daily life.

In my introduction, "All the World Loves a Baby," I present the concept of infants as public and private investments, and I review religious beliefs about infant souls and emerging ideas about infant welfare. I also explore briefly the roles of families, charities, and the state in responding to the "demographic crisis" of infant mortality. Two "new" kinds of babies generated media attention in the late nineteenth century and introduce the continuum of investment in infant lives: incubator babies on display at World's Fairs and abandoned babies sent to foundling homes marked by appallingly high mortality rate. Ch. 1, "Keep a Kodak Baby Book," focuses on the opening decades of the 20th century and reviews the medical and popular literature, diaries and letters, advertisements, photographs and paintings that point to the emergence of a new idea about babies: they were fragile, but they might well survive. Medical experts and marketers collaborated to promote new ideas about how babies ought to be cared for and the products parents needed to buy. This chapter extends the existing literature by describing the pivotal role perceived infant needs played in extending consumer culture.

Ch. 2, "Babies of Every Creed and Color," analyzes folklore accounts, oral histories, institutional records, and baby books to reveal the varieties of American babyhood from World War I through World War II. Analyzing the regimens and cures given to babies offers a window into a key aspect of American babyhood: its diversity. Race and class proved to be significant variables, while the gender of the infant did not. In Ch. 3, "Citizen Baby," I examine the baby as citizen building on the secondary literature on the Children's Bureau, the White House Conferences on Children, local public health campaigns, and the efforts of eugenics promoters. This chapter compares private accounts of these public programs with those in the official literature, asking whether and how public health measures intended to transform infants' care were imported into private homes and how they operated in that domain. I challenge the periodization in the existing literature and extend and refine historical accounts of medicalization and scientific motherhood by grounding my analysis in variations by race, class and region.

Ch. 4, "Baby's First Bank Account," looks at babies, marketing, and money through the window of bank accounts opened for them and gifts of money, especially as recorded in the *Book of Baby Mine*, a baby book sent to new parents by local merchants and used by middle and working-class families. The banking and insurance industries, along with government agencies and popular literature, contributed to the discourse on the cultural meaning of babies and I analyze what this discourse meant for babies born in families of different social classes. I also explore the changing material culture of the nursery as one aspect of the "monetarization" of infancy. In Ch. 5, "The Secret Lives of Babies," I investigate the influence of ideas about emerging analyses of infant psychology including behaviorism to psychologists'

writings about nursery environments and about the risks of adopting infants as opposed to older children. Baby books and personal papers show how emerging theories were received and practiced within private families, such as how advice about whether or not to pick up crying babies was interpreted. I ask to what degree the discourses of infant development, with their emphasis on the individual baby, overlapped with or challenged accounts of infants as future citizens and public "investments."

Ch. 6, "The Baby on the Soapbox," turns to babies represented in popular films, from the silent to sound, and on television. Certain themes--men's simultaneous ineptitude in caring for and infatuation with babies and the fear of baby selling--persist and I assess how they resonated with the political and medical discourse about families, babies and risk. What do media presentations of adoption policies, baby brokers, and celebrity babies tell us about American thinking about infants? Ch.7, "Baby Boom Babies," treats the postwar years, and returns to issues raised in earlier chapters, particularly the diversity of infant lives in terms of race, social class and cultural background. I examine the folklore literature on infant care, focusing on regional differences and practices in immigrant groups as well as internal migrants from rural to urban areas. I also explore recent discussions about vaccines and autism to show how new ideas about babies as citizens have emerged in recent decades. Ch. 8, "Kissing and Dismissing Babies," continues to examine the postwar era, returning to the subject of infant psychology as deployed in discussions of day care and in the marketing of infant enrichment programs products. It analyzes the nexus of professional expertise, family practices, and marketing within the nursery and in public discourse. I ask about the impact on the lived experience of babies of economic and demographic transformations in the second half of the 20th century. I discuss the rise in adoptions of foreign-born infants. The conclusion mirrors the introduction in its analysis of two kinds of babies much discussed in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries: "snowflake babies" born from frozen embryos and American-born infants of illegal immigrants. In my conclusion to *Our Babies, My Baby's* I revisit arguments about and treatment of babies over the last century. I unpack debates over the supposed commodification of infants in light of new reproductive technologies and ask whether contemporary moral debates mirror earlier discussions of infants and money and the role of science in the nursery or whether they represent a shift in the culture that is reshaping how babies are understood and raised.

This book builds on my expertise in medical history and history of childhood, I began work on this project in 2006 and have presented some of my preliminary findings in academic settings. My ongoing research also informs my teaching in the history of medicine and history of childhood. I am currently completing an article, co-authored with Professor [*****], on baby books as historical sources. I have read baby books and mothers' diaries from numerous archives including the UCLA biomedical library, the Schlesinger Library, the New York Public Library, the Library of Virginia, the Minnesota Social Welfare History Archives, and other institutions, as well as materials held in private collections, thanks to several fellowships and support from the Rutgers Research Council. During the summer of 2009 I will conduct research in archives in Washington, D.C. and view the silent films and television episodes held by the Library of Congress. I will also read the popular magazine literature on babies. During the fall semester of 2009 I will view and analyze popular films and television shows about babies available on DVD as time permits. During spring semester 2010, I plan to begin drafting an article about babies in film, television and advertising that will serve as the basis for Ch. 6.

A fellowship would enable me to spend fifteen months writing this book, including the summers preceding and following the fellowship period. I plan to spend the summer of 2010 finishing the article on popular culture images of babies and conducting primary research in Chicago at several archives. My goal is to finish the first six chapters of the book during the fellowship period, from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011. (I will not write the introduction until I have completed the text.) I believe I can finish Ch. 7 in the summer of 2011, and Ch. 8, the introduction and conclusion in the academic year 2011-2012. While I have not yet sought a book contract, I have had discussions with several interested academic publishers and would consider a contract with a trade press. I am writing this book for an educated readership rather than strictly for an academic audience. As was the case with my previous books, I intend this work to contribute to the public's understanding of the historical issues underlying contemporary debates.

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National Endowment for the Humanities
Fellowship

NARRATIVE

***Islamic Literacy in Early America:
Muslim Sources of U.S. Authorship***

Synopsis

Uncovering Islam's formative impact on the nation's literature, *Islamic Literacy in Early America: Muslim Sources of U.S. Authorship* traces covert genealogies of Arabic and Persian influence, extending from Revolutionary beginnings to the Civil War. Complementing NEH's *Bridging Cultures* initiative, this monograph excavates the multi-lingual and cross-religious foundations of literary America, revising the received portraits of our most iconic authors, while also giving voice to unknown Muslim writings penned in the young republic.

Research and contribution

While Orientalism has long been recognized as vital to the nation's origins, *Islamic Literacy in Early America* redirects our attention inward, revealing the private investments which underlie U.S. public interests. Exposing manuscripts previously neglected, seminal figures from 1765-1865 – from Ezra Stiles to Ralph Waldo Emerson – are understood as cultivating a personal “Islamic literacy”, weaving Muslim discourse into the intimate fabric of their diaries, letters, memorials and marginalia. Amplifying the Arabic and Persian undertones hushed underneath U.S. literary life, I argue that Islamic traditions catalyze emergent American identities, serving as vehicles of liberation in artistry, religion and politics. Reaching to the Middle East to circumvent Britain, resisting European influence through Islamic reception, key American authors map new cultural alternatives in their informal writing, quietly mirroring the transatlantic struggles that define the country's first decades. In locating the Muslim Sacred *inside* New World experience, *Islamic Literacy in Early America* aims not only to re-orient our literary past, however, but to accent present-day echoes and ironies, discovering early Islamic receptions to have anticipated contemporary U.S. debates on foreign relations and domestic citizenry.

This new approach to literary Orientalism is made possible by marrying two distinct areas of expertise, drawing equally upon: i) extensive research at a range of American archives, and; ii) close familiarity with Islamic sources and languages. Never before synthesized, these scholarly efforts not only expose American passages and practices previously overlooked, but also pose unlikely American figures in fresh dialogue, bridging seminal intellectuals (Ezra Stiles); romantic fictionists (Washington Irving); and enslaved West Africans (‘Umar ibn Sayyid). Merging academic fields and literary figures, *Islamic Literacy in Early America* re-centers the Muslim margins of U.S. authorial origins, discovering the reading and rendering of Arabic and Persian sources at the literary heart of discrete American lives.

Methods and work plan

During the proposed award period – the calendar year, 2014 – my exclusive commitment to *Islamic Literacy in Early America* will result in the completion of archive research for the book,

as well as the writing of a polished typescript, to be submitted for University Press review and publication by December 31, 2014. Due to my extensive preparatory research (detailed below), I require only two additional months of targeted library visits in 2014; the remainder of the award period will be reserved for textual analysis, translation, and core writing.

Although still in the earliest stages of composition, my years of amassing manuscripts for *Islamic Literacy in Early America* has given rise to its concrete, five-chapter structure. Unfolding chronologically, from 1765 to 1865, each of the book's chapters illuminates a seminal American author, surveying specific archival witnesses to their Islamic literacy:

Chapter 1 – Ezra Stiles

Archives: Yale; Redwood Athenaeum

Diarist, patriot, and President of Yale, Ezra Stiles was a founder of U.S. intellectual life.

This public American profile, however, shields a private devotion to Arabic, Stiles struggling with the language of the Qur'ān, even while recording his nation's struggles for independence. Relying on marginalia and manuscripts never before published, Chapter 1 explores surprising parallels in Stiles' commitment to political union and religious unity, uncovering revolutions of both country and creed imbedded in his 1765-85 writings.

Chapter 2 – William Bentley

Archives: Am. Antiquarian Society; Boston Athenaeum

Salem minister, and successor to Stiles as national diarist, William Bentley produced voluminous records of U.S. daily life until his death in 1819. Bentley also succeeded Stiles, however, in personally appealing to Muslim sources, gesturing to Islamic precedents as he pioneered American Unitarianism. Chapter 2 not only reveals the Muslim echoes scattered through Bentley's domestic journals, but also uncovers his foreign correspondence with actual Muslim leaders. Translating a cache of Bentley's lost Arabic letters, first recovered during my 2012 research at the Boston Athenaeum, this chapter situates Bentley's transatlantic exchange with the Arab World as a forgotten early chapter in U.S. relations with the Middle East.

Chapter 3 – 'Umar ibn Sayyid

Archives: Davidson College; Spartanburg Co. Hist. Assoc.

Shifting from canonicity to captivity, Chapter 3 is dedicated to 'Umar ibn Sayyid – an African slave of Muslim descent, whose memoirs of antebellum life in North Carolina are authored entirely in Arabic. Although distinct in national origins and political status, Ibn Sayyid shares with his American contemporaries an interior life framed by Islamic literacy. Unearthed during my NEH-supported research in 2011, Chapter 3 will publish letters and marginalia neglected by previous scholarship, illuminating Ibn Sayyid's hybrid expressions of culture and religion. In addition to his correspondence merging biblical and Qur'ānic idioms, I highlight personal inscriptions in Ibn Sayyid's Arabic Bible – a gift intended to promote his Christian conversion, but whose margins instead become covert vehicles for Muslim observance.

Chapter 4 – Washington Irving

Archive: New York Public Library

Famed father of U.S. fiction, author of "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow", Washington Irving was also privately one of America's earliest translators of the Qur'ān – an argument I advanced initially in 2009 (*Journal of Qur'anic Studies*; 11:2). Chapter 4 develops this startling claim, establishing the extent of Irving's Islamic studies, reproducing and rendering ample selections from his *Arabic Notebook*. Held by the New York Public Library, this neglected resource not only testifies to Irving's re-definition of the American literary through Islamic language, but also his imaginative translation of the Muslim Sacred into a distinctly American idiom.

Chapter 5 – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Archive: Houghton, Harvard

Reaching up to the Civil War, Chapter 5 concludes with Ralph Waldo Emerson, mapping the wide expanse between his public image and private practice. Icon of American exceptionalism, Emerson was also America's most prolific translator of Islamic verse, rendering more than 2,000 lines of Persian poetry between 1846 and 1865 – an Orientalist campaign that resists European influence, even while promoting U.S. Abolitionism. Scribbled through diaries, letters, even on the backs of envelopes, Emerson's Islamic literacy is fully realized only by aligning his personal papers with Muslim sources, discovering his daily translation of Sufi verse to be a catalyst for poetic identity and political activism.

Competencies, skills and access

Completing a trajectory of research extending from my Cambridge doctorate (2001-2005) to my recent NEH Teaching Development Fellowship (2011), *Islamic Literacy in Early America* aims to realize a dozen years of preliminary work, including archive visits; internal and external grants; and the publication of monographs and articles that fuse Middle Eastern translation with U.S. Literature. Significant efforts and outcomes which anticipate, and inform, the book include:

a) the publication of my first monograph – *Nineteenth-Century U.S. Literature in Middle Eastern Languages* (Edinburgh UP, 2013) – a book that reads U.S. authors as they now appear in Arabic, Hebrew and Persian translation. Tracing the Middle Eastern afterlives of American classics, this 2013 book forms both a prequel and companion to *Islamic Literacy in Early America*, tracing reciprocal processes of literary transmission, passing from West to East, rather than East to West.

b) conducting grant-funded archive research at prominent U.S. institutions, including the Boston Athenaeum; Davidson; Duke; New York Public Library; Redwood Athenaeum; UNC Chapel Hill; and Yale. In addition to competitive support from my home institution, a 2011 NEH Teaching Development Fellowship advanced my research into U.S. Arabic Slave writings, serving now as the basis for the book's Chapter 3 (see also: www.niu.edu/arabicsslavewritings).

As professor of early American Literature, and specialist in Middle Eastern translation, it is my field knowledge and language facility that sustains the cross-cultural texture of *Islamic Literacy*, while also accounting for the book's uniqueness and originality in the critical record. Equally indispensable, however, are the relationships with archive libraries and librarians fostered through recent years of my research. Familiar now with respective procedures and policies of relevant institutions, I have not only gained personal access to restricted materials, but received permission to publish manuscripts from libraries such as the New York Public Library – successes which will ensure the book's fluid transition from composition to production.

Final product and dissemination

As the Fellowship's final product, *Islamic Literacy in Early America* will target its primary readers through publication and distribution by a prominent University Press, with a proposal first offered to Oxford – a press at which I have enjoyed significant prior success (see Resume, "Awards"), and which has recently invited a full proposal for review (April 2013). As a research project that also complements my ongoing pedagogic efforts, the book will reach additional audiences through online platforms, with NIU's Arabic Slave Writings website promoting this parallel venture. Perhaps most importantly, however, *Islamic Literacy in Early America* intersects urgent issues of contemporary debate and topical concern, holding the rare potential to attract not only scholarly interest, but also press coverage beyond academia, allowing this NEH-supported research and writing to impact broader arenas, public and civic.

National Endowment for the Humanities
Fellowship

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Unpublished manuscripts comprise the book's core primary sources. Relevant archives for Stiles, Bentley, Ibn Sayyid, Irving and Emerson are indexed in the Narrative's précis of chapters.

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Brought to You in Living Color: A Cultural History of American Color Television

Research and Contribution

In the June 30th, 1951 issue of *The Saturday Review*, Goodman Ace cynically addresses the arrival of color television. He, like other critics at the time, was not convinced of the need for the new technology so early in the medium's development and was instead suspicious of the motives behind the networks' moves toward color. With his characteristically droll style, Ace writes, "So color is the transfusion television needs to arouse it from its coma of monotony. Of course it is unfortunate so young a medium needs a shot in the arm so soon, but it's hereditary, following closely the pattern of its parent, the motion-picture industry, developing the same anemic symptoms and doctoring itself with the same miracle-drug, color."ⁱ Critics such as Saul Carson, John Crosby, Robert Lewis Shayon, and Jack Gould were also, at various times, of the opinion that color might be a cover up for poor programming, motivated by set sales or the desire of particular companies to gain control over certain aspects of the television industry. Furthermore, the public battle for Federal Communications Commission (FCC) approval of a color system standard had highlighted the industrial and commercial justifications for color and failed to fully address the potentialities color offered for specific aesthetic developments.ⁱⁱ As Neil Harris has argued, "So suspiciously was television viewed by many critics then, that color sets, the most complex consumer commodity that had ever been mass produced... seemed like a wooden victory, a source of shame, a measuring stick to berate all involved with the industry."ⁱⁱⁱ

In the midst of such criticism, RCA and NBC invested heavily in and expanded its promotion of color television technology, spending the majority of the 1950s working to brand itself in relation to color, while CBS and ABC (reluctant to funnel profits to RCA by promoting color themselves) did not start making the transition until closer to 1960. Despite NBC's efforts, *Time* magazine declared color television, "the most resounding industrial flop of 1956."^{iv} And as late as 1958, the magazine opened an article on the subject with, "hailed as a prodigy, color TV is still a retarded child."^v NBC's failed investment in color throughout this period reveals how a complex nexus of commercial aims, critical reception, and cultural discourses around color and vision inflected the larger industrial and popular responses to the idea of electronic color in the early stages of its dissemination.

The history of color television in the U.S is most often told—when it is told at all—as a long drawn out legal battle occurring in the post-war era in response to FCC management and restrictions and the competitive machinations of RCA/NBC and CBS. That story is certainly relevant and interesting, however, with few exceptions, it is also where the scholarship begins and ends on the subject. Few historians of television have asked how the introduction of color to the medium was utilized in terms of any number of historically located discourses around technology and vision/perception, video or electronic aesthetics, network branding, product design, program identification, spectatorship, or functions of genre. And, unlike some recent color film scholarship, we have not yet read industrial discourses around, and studies of, electronic color in relation to, broader philosophical and cultural conversations about the nature of color. For the most part, we have been satisfied with the story of color television being a rather straightforward, dry-as-toast narrative of the basics of industrial competition. And even though the study of color in design and media has become a key area of research as of late in other fields (see Blaszczyk, Coates, Kane, Misek, Peacock, Higgins, Yumibe and Brown, Simon, Street, and Watkins) surprisingly this fervor has not extended to research on television color specifically. There has been little scholarship produced on color television in recent years and there has never been a full history of American color television published.^{vi}

The most likely explanation for this oversight involves the placement of the battle for FCC approval as the sole focus of all color television history, as well as the reluctance of many contemporary U.S. television studies scholars to engage with questions of technology, vision, and aesthetics. Television is most commonly thought about, even by area specialists, in terms of the cultural narratives it creates and engages with, rather than as a highly complex technology of visual culture. Some media scholars have engaged with the question of aesthetics in relation to the culture or history of television production (most

notably John T. Caldwell) and some have engaged with television technology (Lisa Parks in her work on satellites, for example).^{vii} Few scholars, however, have considered the actual mechanics/physics of television broadcasting in relationship to the history of industry, culture, video aesthetics and theories of the seeing subject, and this is my project's ambition.

This book project, which is under contract with Duke University Press, examines over forty years of explorations in a unique form of vision that baffled and inspired television executives, engineers, designers, and critics and which revealed the limits of control over the technology itself and over the seeing subject and imagined consumer desire. The more than three decades between the early tests of mechanical color television in the late 1920s and full adoption of color by U.S. networks in the 1960s saw extended and compelling popular, scientific, and industrial conversations about the utility and meaning of electronic color. This occurred alongside and in between debates about technical standards, dueling technical systems, concerns over interference and bandwidth, color in product design, programming, perception and psychophysics, optics, fidelity, color harmony, colorimetry, and aesthetics. This project tells this story, culminating in the postwar decades, as color sets went on the market and NBC executives began to brand the network in relation to color technology. This was a period when industry insiders, audiences, engineers, regulators, critics, color specialists, consumer analysts, design experts, and psychologists all weighed in on the use and meaning of color and its effects on emotions, vision, and desire. Of course these discourses did not occur in isolation as they borrowed from and intersected with larger historical notions and beliefs about color, even as they worked to tease out the specific definitions, applications, and implications of color television technology.

In this project, I will investigate the commercial, scientific, and cultural discourses through which the technology and perception of electronic color took shape, and in doing so, position color television as central to the broader history of twentieth century visual culture. I will argue that the development of color television was the first deliberate attempt at negotiating an advanced aesthetics for television and that color technology was a site of great anxiety and tension for the industry—not just in terms of who would ultimately win the “color war,” but more essentially than that, over what television was supposed to do and to be. I will also analyze the way that color was used in advertising and programming, its relation to genre, form, as well as cultural beliefs about realism versus spectacle and fantasy. This project aims to intervene into a variety of scholarly disciplines as it brings to light previously overlooked or understudied historical connections central to twentieth-century constructions of visual culture.

Methods and Work Plan

The chapters contained in this work will be roughly in chronological order and address specific issues related to the industrial, technical, and cultural explorations and applications of electronic color. The table of contents will be as follows:

1. *Introduction*
2. *'Now Comes Color': Mechanical and Early Electronic Systems*
3. *'Natural Vision vs. Tele-Vision': Defining and Standardizing Color*
4. *'Chasing the Rainbow': Experiments in Network Color, 1950-1955*
5. *Color City: Expansion, Stabilization, and Promotion, 1956-1960*
6. *'Wonderful World of Color': Network Conversion, 1960-1970.*
7. *Conclusion*

During the academic year 2013-14, I have held an ACLS fellowship and been a fellow at the NYU Humanities Initiative, dedicating myself full-time to the research and writing of this intricate and complex history. As of April 2014, I have completed the majority of my archival work and have full drafts of chapters three and four and I am in the middle of writing a draft of chapter five. I have also submitted a pilot article for this project to *Screen*. I plan to complete the research for and write a draft of chapter six (perhaps the lengthiest chapter in the book) over this summer and during the 2014-15 academic year. In terms of the book project, my NEH fellowship/sabbatical period (which would begin in June 2015) would

be devoted to the full-time research and writing of chapter two (another lengthy chapter) as well as to drafting the introduction and conclusion. I will also use that time to do final revisions of the entire manuscript and to organize and acquire permissions for the large collection of color images that will be included in the book. In addition, I plan to research and write an additional journal article on an episode in color television that will be only briefly mentioned in my book, but which I believe presents a rich moment in the history of visual culture and the alternative uses of the technology: the collaboration between CBS, the University of Pennsylvania Medical school, and the pharmaceutical company Smith, Kline & French in the refinement of a color television system for medical training in the late 1940s.

Competencies, Skills and Access

The arguments and chronology of this monograph will be based on archival research from the AT&T archives, the NBC collection at the Wisconsin Historical Society, the Frank Stanton, Thomas T. Goldsmith, NBC, and Frederic E. and Herbert E. Ives collections at the Library of Congress, and the Inter-Society Color Council, David Sarnoff and RCA collections at the Hagley Museum and Library, together with other primary sources, such as press accounts, FCC and National Television System Committee documents, and color television guides, manuals, technical journal articles, and television textbooks from the 1940s-1960s. I have also viewed programs and industrial films from the Paley Center collection and the Prelinger archives. The secondary literature will be drawn from a range of fields including philosophy, design, art history, psychology, cinema studies, history of photography, history of science and technology, media studies/history, and American studies.

This work is, in many ways, an extension of the research I have been doing for the last fifteen years. My first single author book was also a historical work and focused on how the industry utilized performers to brand networks and define television in its transitional years, roughly from the mid 1940s until the mid 1950s. In the years since that book's publication, I have continued to publish extensively in journals and anthologies on the topic of television and its intersections with other cultural and aesthetic forms, while also expanding my scope to include other visual mediums, such as digital video and photography. In writing *Brought to You in Living Color*, I will be well served by my extensive knowledge of mid-twentieth century American history in general and television history in particular as well as my expertise in the areas of visual culture and media theory/studies.

Final Product and Dissemination

The monograph will be published by Duke University Press and the article on color medical television would be submitted to a journal such as *Technology and Culture*. With the help of those who do publicity for my department and Duke UP, I intend to reach the widest possible readership for this work—which would include both scholars of the humanities as well as a more general readership.

ⁱ Goodman Ace, "The Hue and the Cry" TV and Radio, *The Saturday Review*, June 10, 1951: 24.

ⁱⁱ See: Robert Lewis Shayon, "2,591 Years of 'Progress': Thales, Paley & Sarnoff," *Saturday Review of Literature*, 34 (July 28, 1951): 26; 83; Jack Gould, "The Hidden Costs of Color," *New York Times*, May 1, 1966, II: 13; Saul Carson, "On the Air: Color for What?" *The New Republic*, 121, October 31, 1949, 20-21.

ⁱⁱⁱ Neil Harris, "Color and Media: Some Comparisons and Speculations," *Prospects*, 11, 1986 (Cambridge University Press): 7-27.

^{iv} "Faded Rainbow," *Time*, October 22, 1956.

^v "Television: Chasing the Rainbow," *Time*, June 30, 1958.

^{vi} Exceptions include: Jonathan Sterne and Dylan Mulvin who have two forthcoming articles on compression, fidelity, psychophysics, and standardization in the NTSC tests and reports (1950-53) as well as Andreas Fickers on color TV in Europe and Britain and Oren Soffer on color TV in Israel.

^{vii} John T. Caldwell, *Production Culture* (Chapel Hill: Duke UP) 2008; Lisa Parks, *Cultures in Orbit: Satellites and the Televisual* (Chapel Hill: Duke UP) 2005.

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