

RYAN PATRICK SEMMES

EDUCATION

Doctorate in History

Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS, May 2020

Dissertation: *Exporting Reconstruction: Civilization, Citizenship, and Republicanism during the Grant Administration, 1869-1877*

Master of Public History-Archives

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, December 2002

Thesis: *With longing eyes: the life and career of Mendel Lafayette Smith, 1870-1934*

Master of Library and Information Science

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, May 2001

Bachelor of Arts in History

Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS, May 1998

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Director of Research

Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library

July 2022-present

Professor

Mississippi State University Libraries

- Developing, planning, and implementing a comprehensive humanities research program.
- Working with Executive Director to implement research fellowships, academic conferences, and public lectures.
- Fostering advanced research in the humanities, cultivating a vibrant and diverse community of international scholars, and providing a stimulating environment for humanistic inquiry and dialogue.
- Playing a leading role in applying for grants and other outside funding for exhibits and publications.
- Managing the arrangement and description of Library archival, artifactual, art, and monographic holdings.
- Working with donors and staff to acquire and accession new manuscripts, artifacts, and monographs.
- Developing exhibitions and content for physical and digital exhibits, including working with the Executive Director to enhance the USGPL's digital presence.

Coordinator**Congressional and Political Research Center**

July 2021-July 2022

Professor**Mississippi State University Libraries**

- Coordinator of the Congressional and Political Research Center collections. Work with Members of Congress and other political donors to acquire collections.
- Supervise a team of dedicated faculty and staff, including one faculty member and two staff members.
- Manage the processing, arrangement, and description of political collections, including the John C. Stennis, the Frank and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana, and Ulysses S. Grant collections utilizing ArchivesSpace.
- Manage student worker projects.
- Assist patrons in reference needs.
- Serve on Library Promotion and Tenure Committee, including Professor Subcommittee.
- Collaborate with the Departments of Political Science/Public Administration and History to develop and define collections and provide support for faculty research and student success.

Coordinator**Congressional and Political Research Center**

July 2014-July 2021

Associate Professor**Mississippi State University Libraries**

- Coordinator of the Congressional and Political Research Center collections. Work with Members of Congress and other political donors to acquire collections.
- Supervise a team of dedicated faculty and staff, including one faculty member and three staff members.
- Manage processing, arrangement, and description of political collections, including the John C. Stennis, the Frank and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana, and Ulysses S. Grant collections utilizing ArchivesSpace.
- Manage student worker projects.
- Assist patrons in reference needs.
- Serve on Library Promotion and Tenure Committee.
- Collaborate with the Departments of Political Science/Public Administration and History to develop and define collections and provide support for faculty research and student success.

Assistant Archivist/Interim Coordinator**Congressional and Political Research Center**

August 2007-June 2014

Assistant Professor**Mississippi State University Libraries**

- Supervise a team of dedicated faculty and staff, including two staff members.
- Manage the Congressional and Political Research Center in processing, arrangement, and description of political collections, including the John C. Stennis and Ulysses S. Grant collections utilizing Archivist Toolkit.
- Manage student worker projects.
- Assist patrons in reference needs.
- Collaborate with the Departments of Political Science/Public Administration and History to develop and define collections and provide support for faculty research and student success.

Community Archivist/Interim Division Chief

Washingtoniana Division

March 2006-July 2007

District of Columbia Public Library, Martin Luther King, Jr. Library

- Managed the District of Columbia Community Archives, including the creation of finding aids and guides.
- Accessioned and processed collections from the DC Community.
- Developed partnerships with community organizations including the local performing arts group, the Rainbow History Project LGBTQ+ archives, and DC Community governance representatives.
- Created schedules, signed off on employee leave requests for a staff of six dedicated library staff members.
- Assisted patrons with reference needs.

Archivist/Project Manager

History Associates Incorporated

January 2003-March 2006

- Managed federal contracts including Library of Congress map re-housing project in Geography and Maps Division.
- Assisted the National Park Service at the Gettysburg National Military Park by processing the Monuments, Markers, and Tablets collection.
- Managed a team of three to five archivists to assist members of the U. S. Senate with office closeouts.
- Worked with private industries to create business archives, records management plans, and develop retention schedules.
- Conducted historical litigation research on behalf of clients.

Assistant Archivist

McNeese State University Archives

August 2001-December 2002

- Processed collections.
- Created HTML finding aids.
- Managed student workers.
- Assisted patrons with reference needs.

PUBLICATIONS

Refereed-Books:

The Grant Doctrine: Civilization and Citizenship during Reconstruction (Manuscript submitted. University of South Carolina Press, forthcoming publication 2024).

Refereed-Articles:

“Counselor not Savior: Hamilton Fish and Foreign Policy Decision-Making during the Grant Administration,” *American Nineteenth Century History* vol. 23 no.3, pp. 1-17, 2023.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14664658.2022.2165282>

“Hiram R. Revels, Ulysses S. Grant, Party Politics, and the Annexation of Santo Domingo,” *Journal of Mississippi History* Vol. LXXX, no. 1-2, pp. 49-65, Spring/Summer 2018.

“From Pea Ridge to the Potomac: Lemon G. Hine and the 44th Illinois Regiment, 1861-1862,” *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, Vol. 104, no. 1-2, pp. 115-139, Spring-Summer 2011.

“Issues and Challenges of Maintaining *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant* Collection,” with John F. Marszalek. *Documentary Editing*, Vol. 32, pp. 44-56, 2011.

“How Historians Use Primary Sources: The Ulysses S. Grant Collection Provides a Lesson,” with John F. Marszalek, *Mississippi History Now*, August 2010.
<http://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/articles/347/how-historians-use-primary-sources-the-ulysses-s-grant-collection-provides-a-lesson>

“The ‘So-Called Civil Rights Movement:’ White Reactions to Civil Rights as Seen in the John C. Stennis Collection,” *Journal of Mississippi History*, Vol. LXXII, no. 1, pp. 47-69, Spring 2010.

Professional:

“William M. Robbins, William C. Oates, and Confederate Monuments at Gettysburg,” *Muster: The Blog of the Journal of the Civil War Era* September 1, 2020.
<https://www.journalofthecivilwarera.org/2020/09/william-m-robbins-william-c-oates-and-confederate-monuments-at-gettysburg/>

“War and Remembrance: Walter Place and Ulysses S. Grant,” with David S. Nolen, *The Primary Source*, Vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 2-9, Fall 2013. <https://aquila.usm.edu/theprimarysource/vol32/iss2/1/>

“Abraham Lincoln in the Collections,” with John F. Marszalek, *The Lincoln Forum Bulletin* Issue 28, pp. 10-11, Fall 2010.

Chapters-Edited Books:

“The United States on the World Stage: Foreign Policy during the Grant Administration,” in *Grant at 200: Reconsidering the Life and Legacy of Ulysses S. Grant*, eds. Chris Mackowski and Frank J. Scaturro (El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie, 2023).

“The Swing Around the Circle,” with Sarah Dauterive, in *Past or Portal?: Enhancing Undergraduate Learning through Special Collections and Archives*, eds. Eleanor Mitchell, et al (Chicago: Association of College Research Libraries, 2012).

Book Reviews:

The Mississippi Secession Convention: Delegates and Deliberation in Politics and War, 1861-1865, by Timothy B. Smith, *Mississippi Quarterly*, Vol. 69, no. 1, pp. 129-131, Winter 2016.

Bluejackets in the Blubber Room: A Biography of the William Badger, by Peter Kurtz, *H-War*, August 2014.

CREATIVE WORKS

“Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Museum Exhibition,” with John F. Marszalek, David S. Nolen, and Terrance Healy, Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library, Starkville, MS, Opened November 30, 2017.

“Frank and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana Exhibition,” with Frank J. Williams, Terrance Healy, and Katherine Salter Gregory, Starkville, MS, Opened November 30, 2017.

PRESENTATIONS

“‘A momentary excitement of popular sympathy:’ U. S. neutrality and the Cuban Rebellion,” Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, Annual Meeting New Orleans, LA, June 17, 2022.

“Reconstruction,” with David Nolen, Mississippi Governor’s School, Mississippi University for Women, June 9, 2022.

“Reckoning: A Series on U. S. Presidents and Racial Inequality,” with David Nolen and Eddie Rangel, Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Museum, March 10, 2022.
<https://www.presidentsandrace.org/ulysses-grant-grant-presidential-library>

“The Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library,” Library Faculty Meeting, University of Texas at San Antonio, February 16, 2022.

“Reasons why San Domingo should be annexed to the United States:’ Ulysses S. Grant’s Annexation Memo and the Development of a Doctrine of Reconstruction,” Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, Annual Meeting (online) June 18, 2021.

“Ulysses S. Grant’s Foreign Policy and Citizenship,” Ulysses S. Grant Association Annual Meeting, Virtual Meeting, May 1, 2021. <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/us-grant-association-meeting/2021/Saturday/1/>

“A Meddling Minister and the Spurning of the Grand Duke: American-Russian Relations during the Grant White House,” Managing Scandal in the White House: The Presidential History Network, Starkville, MS, October 25, 2019.

“Expanding Reconstruction: Citizenship and Ulysses S. Grant’s Annexation of Santo Domingo,” U. S. Capitol Historical Society Annual Symposium, Washington, DC, May 2, 2019.

“After the Storm: Revelatory Documentation of Mississippi’s Tumultuous Past Today,” Society of Mississippi Archivists Biennial Meeting, Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS, April 25, 2019.

“His nature is one of intrigue and duplicity:’ Russian Meddling and ‘Fake News’ during the Grant Administration,” Democracy and Disinformation in the Era of Trump Conference, University College, Dublin, Ireland, December 10-11, 2018.

“Designing Museum and Gallery Spaces in an Academic Library: An Archivist’s Experience,” Mississippi Library Association, Meridian, MS, October 18, 2018.

“How a Library Transforms into an Exhibit Experience,” Southeastern Museums Conference, Jackson, MS, October 8, 2018.

“Panel Discussion: Construction and Design of the Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library and Museum,” Ulysses S. Grant Association Annual Meeting, Starkville, MS, May 7, 2018.

“More for our country than for me:’ The Diplomatic Mission of Ulysses S. Grant’s World Tour,” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, Sacramento, CA, April 13, 2018.

“The Two Hiram: Hiram R. Revels, Ulysses S. Grant, and the Annexation of Santo Domingo,” John F. and Jeanne A. Marszalek Library Fund & Lecture Series, Mississippi State University Libraries, Starkville, MS, March 7, 2018.

“Teaching the Civil War and Reconstruction: Using Online Primary Sources,” Mississippi State University Mega Resources Workshop, Starkville, MS, February 16, 2018.

“The United States, Great Britain, and the *Alabama* Claims,” British American Nineteenth Century Historians Annual Meeting, University of Warwick, UK, October 5, 2017.

“Designing the Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library Museum,” Society of Mississippi Archivists Annual Meeting, Columbus, MS, April 27, 2017.

“Regional Archival Association Consortium,” Annual Meeting, Society of American Archivists, Atlanta, GA, August 2, 2016.

“Using Primary Sources in the Classroom,” with Jennifer McGillan, Mega Resources Workshop, Starkville, MS, February 5, 2016.

“From Pea Ridge to the Potomac: The Correspondence of Lemon G. Hine, 44th Illinois,” DC Historical Studies Conference, Washington, DC, November 13, 2015.

“Society of Mississippi Archivists and the Mississippi Historic Records Advisory Board of the Department of Archives and History: Collaboration in Archival Education,” Mississippi Library Association Annual Meeting, Natchez, MS, October 22, 2015.

“The Treaty of Washington: The British Press and the Arbitration of the Alabama Claims,” Empire, Power, Identity, and Conflict Conference, Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS, September 26, 2015.

“‘The ‘So-Called’ Civil Rights Movement:’ White Mississippians React to Social Change,” 15th Amendment Symposium, Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS, September 25, 2015.

“General Grant Slept Here: Historical memory and the Mike and Jorja Lynn Collection at Walter Place,” Society of Mississippi Archivists Annual Meeting, University of Southern Mississippi-Gulf Coast, Long Beach, MS, April 16, 2015.

“Teaching the Civil War to 21st Century Students: Using Online Primary Sources,” Mississippi State University Mega Resources Workshop, Starkville, MS, February 6, 2015.

“Teaching the Civil War to 21st Century Students: The Social Studies Teachers Institute at Mississippi State University,” Mississippi Library Association Annual Meeting, Vicksburg, MS, October 15, 2014.

“More for our country than for me:” The Diplomatic Mission of Ulysses S. Grant’s World Tour, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Annual Meeting Lexington, KY, June 21, 2014.

“Teaching the Civil War to 21st Century Students: Using Online Primary Sources,” Mississippi State University Language Arts Workshop, Starkville, MS, June 5, 2013.

“The President’s Aide-de-camp: Orville E. Babcock and the Annexation of Santo Domingo,” International Security/Internal Safety Conference, Montgomery, AL, March 21-23, 2013.

“The World Tour Continues: Ulysses S. Grant Visits the Gulf Coast,” Upcoming, Gulf South History and Humanities Conference, Pensacola, FL, October 18-20, 2012.

“Real World Processing: The Challenges of Academic Library Collections-The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant Collection,” Southern Archivists Conference, Jackson, MS, April 27, 2012.

“William M. Robbins: Confederate Commissioner at Gettysburg,” Golden Triangle Civil War Round Table, Starkville, MS, April 2012.

“Processing and Preservation: A Guide to Getting Started,” with Mona Vance, Mississippi Historical Records Advisory Board and Society of Mississippi Archivists, Columbus, MS, August 2010.

“Digital Primary Sources at Mississippi State University,” with Mona Vance, Mega Resources Workshop, Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS, February 2009.

“From Pea Ridge to the Potomac,” Golden Triangle Regional Civil War Round Table, Starkville, MS, November 2008.

“The Washington Area Performing Arts Video Archives,” Recorded Sound Roundtable, Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, August 2006.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

“Honest Description for Honest Abe: Applying CCO Standards to Improve Discovery and Access of the Frank and Virginia Williams Collection of Lincolniana,” Society of American Archivists Virtual Annual Meeting, August 2020.

“Issues and Challenges Maintaining the *Papers of Ulysses S. Grant* Collection: From Editors to Archivists,” Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, August 2010.

AWARDS

John and Jeanne Marszalek Graduate Student Award, March 2018.

Friend of National History Day in Mississippi Award, February 2013.

State Pride Award, Mississippi State University, October 2010.

Raymond W. Smock Fellowship of the Association of Centers for the Study of Congress, May 2010.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Memberships in Professional Organizations:

Association of College and Research Libraries, 2021-Present

Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, 2021-Present

American Library Association, 2021-Present

Society of Civil War Historians, 2018-Present

American Historical Association, 2017-Present

British American Nineteenth Century Historians, 2016-Present

Organization of American Historians, 2014-Present

Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations, 2013-Present
 Association of Documentary Editors, 2011-2016
 Ulysses S. Grant Association, 2009-Present
 Society of Mississippi Archivists, 2007-Present
 Mississippi Library Association, 2007-2016
 Southern Archives Conference, 2007-Present
 Association of Centers for the Study of Congress, 2007-Present
 Mississippi State Historical Society, 2007-2016
 Louisiana Archives and Manuscripts Association, 2001-2003
 South Carolina Archival Association, 1999-2002
 Society of American Archivists, 1999-2012

Mentor, National History Day in Mississippi, 2011-2016

National Service:

Social Media Committee/Communications Committee, Association of Centers for the Study of Congress, 2013-2022.
 Local Arrangement Committee, Chair, Association of Centers for the Study of Congress, 2020.
 [Canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic]

State Service:

Vice President. Society of Mississippi Archivists. 2014-2015.
 President. Society of Mississippi Archivists. 2015-2016.
 Immediate Past-President/Board Member. Society of Mississippi Archivists. 2016-2017.
 Local Arrangements Committee Chair, Annual Meeting. Society of Mississippi Archivists. April 2015.

University Service:

Mississippi State University Galleries and Museums Committee, 2014-2023.

Library Service:

Library Committees:
 Digital Projects Committee (2010-2018)
 Library Technologies Committee (2011-2017)
 Management of social media (2013-2016)
 Information & Digital Literacy (2014)
 Preservation & Disaster Preparedness (2014)
 Data Management (2014-2016)
 Library Graduate Student Services Committee (2014-2016, 2019)
 Library Expansion Exhibit Committee (2014-2017)
 Digital Projects Priority Committee (2014-Present)
 Library Research Committee (2014-Present), Co-Chair (2022-Present)
 Library Promotion and Tenure Committee (2014-Present)
 Library Promotion to Professor Committee, Chair (2022-Present)
 Library Faculty Mentorship Committee, Chair (2022-Present)
 Genealogy Committee (2015-2016)

Library Faculty and Staff Search Committees:

Faculty

History Research Librarian Assistant Professor Search Committee (2014)
Manuscripts Coordinator Assistant Professor Search Committee (Chair) (2013)
University Archives Assistant Professor Search Committee (2018)
Digital Archivist Assistant Professor Search Committee (2018-2019)
Political Papers Archivist Assistant Professor Search Committee (2019)
Manuscripts Librarian Assistant Professor Search Committee (2019)

Staff

Assistant Editor, Ulysses S. Grant Papers, Search Committee (2014)
Grant Association Administrative Assistant Search Committee (2018)
Lincolniana Collection Processor Search Committee (2019)
Grant Association Museum Clerk Search Committee (2021)
University Records Manager Search Committee (2022)