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## Minnesota Humanities Center Receives National Endowment for the Humanities Grant for “Dialogues on the Experience of War”

**March 31, 2016—ST. PAUL, Minn.**—The Minnesota Humanities Center is pleased to announce it has received a \$100,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for its ***Echoes of War*** project. This grant is part of \$1.5 million awarded nationally to the Humanities Center and 16 other discussion-based programs for a new “Dialogues on the Experience of War” grant, which bring a humanities perspective to the war experience through conversation-based Veterans programming. As a part of the Humanities Center’s *Veterans’ Voices* program, ***Echoes of War*** will engage Minnesota Veterans and civilians in an exploration of how war is memorialized versus how war is experienced through an investigation into war memorials and war literature.

Dr. Susannah Ottaway, ***Echoes of War*** co-project director and professor of history at Carleton College, notes: “The public’s perception of war and military service is fundamentally shaped by the stories of honor, duty, heroism and sacrifice that are told in war memorials. But there is a competing narrative revealed in the intensely personal stories of the experiences of Veterans. Through readings and conversations that bring these two narratives together, this project reshapes how war is remembered and reflects on the larger meanings of war and service.”

***Echoes of War*** features a five-day, immersive, residential training program for 10 selected NEH Discussion Leaders that will be co-led by Dr. Ottaway and Trista Matascastillo, the Humanities Center’s ***Veterans’ Voices*** Program Officer and herself a Veteran. Participants will engage with both war literature and war memorials at the Minnesota State Capitol mall. Leading scholars and voices from Minnesota’s Veteran communities will work with the Humanities Center’s ***Echoes of War*** project to train 10 NEH Discussion Leaders and use “Standing Down: From Warrior to Civilian,” an anthology published by *Great Books Foundation*, as the core literary resource. A public call for NEH Discussion Leaders candidates is forthcoming.

According to Dr. David O’Fallon, President of the Minnesota Humanities Center, “By examining Minnesota’s war memorials, engaging in literature about war, and learning from the Veteran community, the new ***Echoes of War*** project will weave the humanities into how the public thinks about memorializing war.”

After their training, Discussion Leaders will lead a series of public conversations about history, collective memory and war memorials, and explore how these themes relate to Veterans’ experiences of war. These ***Echoes of War*** public discussions will be held in St. Paul at the Humanities Center and in Northfield at Carleton College beginning in fall 2016 to coincide with ***Veterans’ Voices Month*** in October.

“Because Veterans account for only 7 percent of our country’s population, there is a pressing need for community programs that bring Veterans and non-Veterans together in conversation,” said [NEH Chairman William D. Adams](#). “Minnesota Humanities Center’s *Echoes of War*, a recipient of NEH’s “Dialogues on the Experience of War” grant, will allow Veterans and community members to explore together the experiences of war using humanities texts as the means of deeper understanding.”

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**About the Minnesota Humanities Center and Veterans’ Voices:**

Founded in 1971, the Minnesota Humanities Center is a nonprofit organization collaborating with organizations and individuals to develop programs that facilitate and frame community conversations and deep connections, and, bring into public life the authentic voices of all people, especially those that have often been left out or marginalized. The Humanities Center is a resource of the state of Minnesota and affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Humanities Center works to build a thoughtful, literate, and engaged society through education, partnership, and public programs. *Veteran’ Voices* is a program of the Humanities Center that draws on the power of the humanities to call attention to the stories and contributions of Veterans. This initiative amplifies, honors, and recognizes the stories and contributions of Minnesota Veterans in their own voice through plays, art, discussion groups, and the *Veterans’ Voices Award*. More information about the Humanities Center and the *Veterans’ Voices* program is available at: [mnhum.org](http://mnhum.org)

**About the National Endowment for the Humanities:**

Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities supports research and learning in history, literature, philosophy, and other areas of the humanities by funding selected, peer-reviewed proposals from around the nation. Additional information about the National Endowment for the Humanities and its grant programs is available at: [www.neh.gov](http://www.neh.gov).

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