

The Boston Americanist

American & New England Studies Program Boston University

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Save the Date!
Annual Donor List

Dear friends and colleagues;

My Director's Message is short and sweet this year. I am pleased to share two big pieces of news! First, an anonymous donor has endowed a new post-doctoral fellowship in American material culture named in honor of Abbott Lowell Cummings. See the story on page two for details. Secondly, the AMNESP Program Committee has chosen Saturday, October 10, 2020 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the program. Please save the date and plan to join us! Watch for details!

Best wishes,

William D. Moore
Director, American & New
England Studies Program



Follow us on Facebook for future events, announcements, and more!
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/337971476799>

"\$1.7-Million Endowment Boosts American & New England Studies"

Below is a piece from [CAS News](#) about a very exciting gift made to AMNESP.

"The American & New England Studies Program (AMNESP) recently received an anonymous \$1.7-million endowment, which will support a postdoctoral fellowship in American material culture. This gift is a boon to both the College of Arts & Sciences and the broader study of American material culture and the humanities. It both signifies the influential role the College plays in the study of American material culture and also helps further that influence. With this generous gift, the program can bring a recent American studies doctoral graduate with a specialty in material culture to campus to teach an undergraduate course and an upper-level class each year.

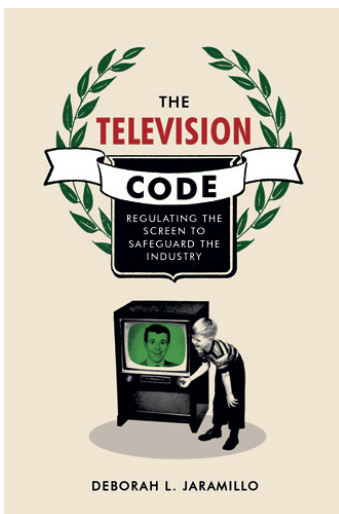
Material culture is about using objects as evidence for humanistic arguments, in part because written records are limited to the literate part of society. "Using objects as sources lets scholars address a broader range of questions for a broader segment of the population," says William Moore, the Director of AMNESP. "There are ideas embedded in the objects we use, the things we make, the things we buy, that aren't expressed in written form."

Moore will start recruiting for the first fellow to begin a two-year term in fall 2020. This fellowship will allow a scholar to gain teaching experience while turning his or her dissertation into a book manuscript. "This fellowship is meant to strengthen our program and the field more broadly," Moore says. It will be a career-building opportunity for a young, cutting-edge scholar.

Next year AMNESP will celebrate its 50th anniversary, and the endowment pays homage to the program's history; it is named for one of the program's founders, Abbott Lowell Cummings. Cummings helped bring material culture studies to the forefront of AMNESP's research and teaching, which then helped the program become a national leader in this subdiscipline. This gift recognizes the strength of the program and builds upon it."

Mary Battenfeld (AMNESP) wrote an op-ed for [Bay State Banner.com](#) on the history of Boston's appointed school committee-and why we should return to an elected board.

Faculty Accomplishments

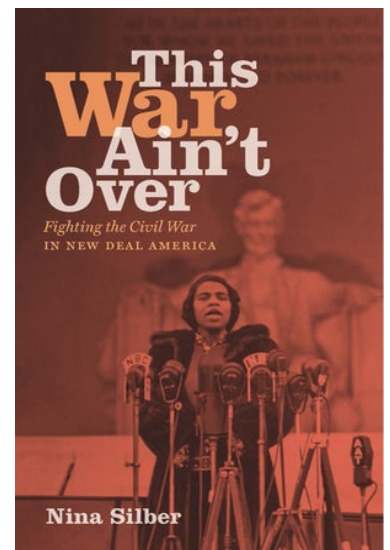


Cheryl Boots (PhD 1999; CGS Humanities) lead a webinar sponsored by BU Alumni entitled "'Been Down Into The South': Singing Civil Rights Freedom Songs," a preview of her upcoming book about the songs from the Southern Freedom Movement in the US.

Japonica Brown-Saracino (Sociology) was promoted to Full Professor in January 2019.

Deborah Jaramillo's (Film & Television Studies) book *The Television Code: Regulating the Screen to Safeguard the Industry* was released by University of Texas Press.

Nina Silber (History) had her latest book *This War Ain't Over: Fighting the Civil War in New Deal America* published by University of North Carolina Press. She also received the 2019 Gitner Award for Distinguished Teaching from BU's College of Arts and Sciences.



Merry White (Anthropology) was quoted on the front page of [The Boston Globe](#) talking about the symbolic reverberations of the Thanksgiving turkey.

2019 Graduates

PhD Dissertation Defenses

Jamie Devol: "William Henry Furness, Frank Furness, and Louis Sullivan: From Transcendentalism to Architecture, 1802-1924"

Neal Knapp: "Making Machines of Animals: The International Livestock Exposition, 1900-1920"

Kristi Martin: "Creating 'Concord': Making a Literary Tourist Town, 1825-1910"

Samuel Shupe: "Pedaling Vacationland: Bicyclists, Genteel Recreation, and the Maine Landscape, 1878-1902"

C. Ian Stevenson: "'This Summer-Home of the Survivors': The Civil War Vacation in Architecture and Landscape, 1878-1918"

MA in Preservation Studies

Jessica Aither: Concentration in Museum Studies



Jessica Samuel was appointed by the State of Massachusetts' Commissioner of Education to serve as a board member on the Racial Imbalance Advisory Council (RIAC). She also received a 2019 Gilder Lehrman Scholarly Fellowship, and earned AMNESP's 2019 Outstanding Teaching Fellow Award.

Ian Stevenson earned the annual Keith N. Morgan Prize for the best doctoral dissertation defended in the 2018-19 academic year written under the direction of an HAA faculty member from Boston University Department of History of Art & Architecture.

Samantha Pickette's article "A Voice of Her Own: The New Young Jewish Woman in Gail Parent's *Sheila Levine is Dead and Living in New York* (1972), Louise Blecher Rose's *The Launching of Barbara Fabrikant* (1974), and Susan Lukas' *Fat Emily* (1974)" was accepted for publication in *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*.

Astrid Tvetenstrand received a Dewey Lee Curtis Scholarship by the Decorative Arts Trust and ran the 2019 Boston Marathon.

Frankie Vanaria was featured on a panel about villains and monsters at an event put together by WGBH.

Kate Viens received a BUCH Dissertation Fellowship, funding her research in Fall 2019.

Maddie Webster was chosen for a National Council for Preservation Education summer internship with the National Park Service's Heritage Documentation Programs to research the Statue of Liberty with the Historic American Buildings Survey.

Marina Wells has been awarded the William Barton Scholarship by the American Heraldry Association to fund a study of the iconography of eighteenth-century powder horns.

The following students passed their Oral Examinations: **Arthur Kamya, Rachel Kirby, Alyssa Kreikemeier, Thomas Nunan, Jessica Samuel, and Walter Suarez Becerra.**

Student Achievements

Academic Year
2018 – 2019

Student Activities

Aaron Ahlstrom received a Graduate Student Award from the BU Center for the Humanities.

Christine D'Auria participated in a student panel about applying to graduate school hosted by the BU Center for the Humanities.

Mariah Gruner's article "Materiality, Affect, and the Archive: The Possibility of Feminist Nostalgia in Contemporary Handkerchief Embroidery" was published in *Material Culture Review*. She also received a BUCH Student Award.

Rachel Kirby was awarded The Chase Family Award for Visiting Graduate Scholars, enabling her to conduct research in the P.K. Yonge Library at the University of Florida.

Catherine Martin has been appointed as a lecturer at Tufts University this coming academic year, teaching classes in Television Studies.

Sam Palfreyman accepted a job as a Historic Sites Curator within the History Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah. Additionally, his essay "The Jacob Hamblin Home: Remembering a Faithful Frontier Family in Santa Clara, Utah" was published on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints history webpage.

Conference Presentations

Aaron Ahlstrom

- o "Landscapes of Beauty and Profit: The Design and Development of Massachusetts State Forests and Parks, 1904-1929" – Vernacular Architecture Forum (VAF) Annual Conference in Philadelphia, PA

Gaëlle Bouaziz

- o "HBO and Netflix Sans Frontières: Streaming and the Transnationalization of Original Programming" – Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS) Annual Conference in Seattle, WA

PJ Carlinio

- o "Commercial Furniture and the Gendering of Office Work" – American Studies Association (ASA) Annual Meeting in Atlanta, GA
- o "Bleacher Bugs and Fifty-Centers: The Design of American Baseball Stadium Seating, 1880-1920" – VAF Conference

Julia Carroll

- o "Potential Health Benefits of Challenging the Canon: How a Trip to the Archive May Reveal – and Heal – Old Wounds" – Eastern International Regional Meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Montreal, QB, Canada

Mariah Gruner

- o "Practicing Sympathy: An Education in Fellow-Feeling, Free Labor, and (Trans)Formative Tears" – Capacious: Affect Inquiry/Making Space Conference in Lancaster, PA
- o "Representative Suffering: The Politics of Sympathy in Abolitionist Women's Needlework" – ASA Meeting
- o "The Liberating Stitch: The Politics of Sympathy in White Women's Abolitionist Needlework" – Emerging Scholars Colloquium of the Decorative Arts Trust/Classical American Homes Preservation Trust in New York, NY

Rachel Kirby

- o "Painting Away the Shackles of Slavery: Exploring Jonathan Green's Depictions of an 'Unenslaved' Lowcountry" – The Vesey Conspiracy at 200: Black Anti-Slavery in the Atlantic World in Charleston, SC
- o Panelist for "Documenting Sense of Place" – VAF Conference

Alyssa Kreikemeier

- o "From Settling to Smelting: Perceptions of Sky in the Intermountain West" – Agricultural History Society Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.
- o "A Wild Road: The History and Promotion of the Beartooth Highway" – VAF Conference

Megan LeBarron

- o "The American Cosmopolis in L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*" – ASA Meeting

Kristi Martin

- o "Emerson's Circle: Literary Community in Concord" – National Endowment for the Humanities Landmarks and American History and Culture Workshops for Teachers, Living and Writing Deliberately in Concord, MA.

Megan Hermida Lu

- o "The American Butterfly: Reflections of the Other and Self in Film Adaptations of 'Madame Butterfly'" – SCMS Conference
- o "The American Butterfly on Screen" – Rowan University's Stars and Screen: Film and Media Conference in Glassboro, NJ

Catherine Martin

- o "Eliminating 'Blood and Thunder' from Containment Culture: Postwar Radio Crime Dramas as Unwelcome Noise" – SCMS Conference

Alex Olkovsky

- o "Women in the Wild West: Immigration Recruitment and Gender on America's Frontier" – Cambridge University Department of History's "Migration and Gender" in Cambridge, UK
- o "Rhetoric and Recruitment in Immigration Guidebooks" – ASA Meeting

Samantha Pickette

- o "A Voice of Her Own: The New Young Jewish Woman in Gail Parent's *Sheila Levine is Dead and Living in New York* (1972)" – Southeastern American Studies Association (SASA) Conference in Atlanta, GA

Jessica Samuel

- o "Back Chatting into Existence: Black Students and their Attitudes" – SASA Conference
- o "Linguistic Resistance: Black Vernacular and the Specter of Freedom" – The Vesey Conspiracy at 200: Black Anti-Slavery in the Atlantic World

Ian Stevenson

- o "Enshrining the Civil War Vacation: Union Veterans, Familial Legacy, and the 103rd OVI Campus at Sheffield Lake, Ohio" – VAF Conference
- o "Surveilling the Civil War Vacation: Architecture of the New Hampshire Veterans Association Campus at Weirs Beach, 1878-1900" – Urban History Association Annual Meeting in Columbia, SC
- o Panelist for "Environmental Histories of non-Green Topics" – Organization of American Historians in Philadelphia, PA

Chris Stokum

- o "Physical Miseducation in the U.S. Seminary, 1800-1840" – Canadian Historical Association Annual Meeting in Vancouver BC, Canada

Walter Suarez

- o "'Illegalized' Humor: Undocumented Immigrant Comedy in the Trump Era" – ASA Meeting

Marina Wells

- o "Continuous Creatures: The Construction and Reduction of the Animal on Revolutionary-Era Powder Horns" – Syracuse University Department of History Graduate Conference in Syracuse, NY



Society for Cinema and Media Studies
Annual Conference
Seattle, WA

College of Charleston's Carolina
Lowcountry and Atlantic World
Program Conference
Charleston, SC



American Studies Association Annual Meeting
Atlanta, GA



Emerging Scholars Colloquium of
the Decorative Arts Trust
New York, NY



Vernacular Architecture Forum Annual Conference
Philadelphia, PA

Alumni News

Rebekah Beaulieu (PhD 2017) has been appointed an Accreditation Commissioner by the American Alliance of Museums, the nation's largest museum professional organization. She also coedited a book published this year by MuseumsEtc: *The State of Museums: Voices from the Field*.

Thomas Denenberg (PhD 2001), director of the Shelburne Museum in Vermont, was quoted in a [Washington Post piece](#) about the founding and importance of the museum.

John Stuart Gordon's (PhD 2013) book, *American Glass: The Collections at Yale*, was published this year about the collection he oversees as Associate Curator of Decorative Arts at the Yale University Art Gallery. Additionally, he had piece published by [Modern Magazine](#) about the design of the Chemex Coffeemaker.

Kerri Greenidge (PhD 2012) was featured in the [New York Times](#), [Smithsonian Magazine](#), and on [WBUR](#) about the [African American Trail Project](#), of which she is project co-director. Based out of Tufts University's Center for the Study of Race and Democracy, Greenidge and her team have curated a map of historic African-American sites across Massachusetts in an effort to "develop African American historical memory and intergenerational community." →

"I think the general public often has a view that enslavement is, you know, that photograph taken in the 1850s of people working on a cotton plantation somewhere in the distant south if you're from Boston."

— Historian Kerri Greenidge

Ruth Ann Murray (PhD 2012) started a new position as Director of Open Enrollment Programs at Tufts University.

Emma Newcombe's (PhD 2018) article "Writing Whiteness: Antebellum Guidebooks and the Codification of the Landscape in Catskill Tourism and Print" was published in the journal *Early American Literature*.

Casey Riley (PhD 2015) accepted the position of curator and head of the Department of Photography and New Media at the Minneapolis Institute of the Arts.



← **Jessica Roscio Ploetz** (PhD 2013) was featured in the [Boston Globe](#) for her work as curator of the Danforth Art Museum in Framingham during the successful move its new home.

Ian Stewart (Preservation Studies MA 2017) had an article entitled "Dutch Architecture in the New World: A proposal for a new typology of classification" published in *de Halve Maen: The Journal of the Holland Society of New York*.

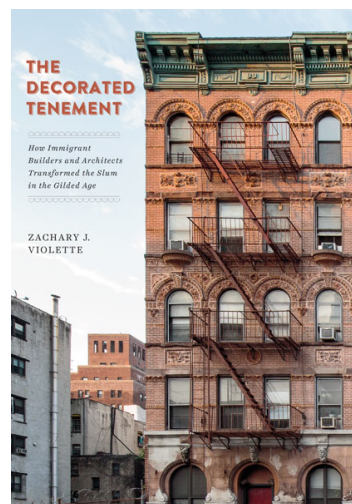
Maggie Stier (AMNESP MA 1985) was named Interim Director of the Canterbury Shaker Village in Canterbury, New Hampshire, after serving as the Village's director of Marketing & Development.

Charles Venable (PhD 1993) was featured in the [New York Times](#) story "Clean House to Survive? Museums Confront Their Crowded Basements," referencing the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields where he is director.

Zachary Violette's (PhD 2014) book *The Decorated Tenement: How Immigrant Builders and Architects Transformed the Slum in the Gilded Age* was released by the University of Minnesota Press. Additionally, the Society of Architectural Historians awarded Zachary a prestigious H. Allen Brooks Travelling Fellowship, allowing him to travel through Central Europe studying urban domestic housing to gain new insights into the development of multi-family residences in the US. →

Barbara McLean Ward (PhD 1982) celebrated 20 years as director of the Moffatt-Ladd House & Garden in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Gerald W.R. Ward (PhD 1983) curated an exhibited for the Portsmouth Historical Society entitled "New Hampshire Folk Art: By the People, For the People."



Incoming Students

We are excited to welcome the following students to our community this fall!

PhD in American Studies

Max Clee is joining us from Edinburgh, Scotland. His undergraduate work at University of Glasgow earned him a first-class joint honors degree in English Literature and History. He spent his junior year studying at University of Massachusetts, Amherst, which sparked his interest in the history and culture of the US. His MLitt in American Studies, also from Glasgow, focused on interdisciplinary Landscape History, capped with a dissertation entitled "Major League Baseball in the American Landscape and Cultural Imagination." As a PhD student, Max plans to investigate how "Americans' ideas about life and death have been shaped by and played out in the landscapes they inhabit," namely "American visions of the end of the world...from Puritan New Englanders...to the Kiowa People...to visions of nuclear and eco-apocalypse in the twentieth century." Max will be working with Professor William Moore, AMNESP Director and Associate Professor of Material Culture.

Perri Meldon graduated Cum Laude from Tufts University with a BA in History, and this spring completed her MA in History with a certificate in Public History from University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Her Master's thesis, "Interpreting Access: Disability History and the National Park Service Accessibility Program," is the cornerstone to her future work as a PhD students with AMNESP. As she continues with her graduate studies, Perri will address accessibility public space, and the following questions: "When we widen our definition of access, how have public lands (and the National Park Service specifically) both created and dismantled barriers not only for people with disabilities but other historically marginalized communities, as well?" and "How do the 'politics of belonging' impact notions of access today?" Perri will also be working under the direction of Professor Will Moore.

Ena Ozaki is coming to AMNESP all the way from Tokyo, Japan. She studied at Japan Women's University, earning both a BA and MA in English. Following this, she studied journalism and media studies at University of Tokyo, completing the Research Student Program of Interfaculty Initiative in Information Studies. While an undergraduate student, she trained as a curator at the Paper Museum in Tokyo, kindling an interest in "the materiality of print media" and guiding her future MA research into the influence of publishing companies in 1920s America. Using this framework, Ena's doctoral research will focus on the magazine as mass media in the early twentieth century, and the role it played in "modernization and cultural transformation in the United States." With her dissertation, Ena hopes to "shed light on how the stories of turn-of-the-century magazines and editors intersect with contemporary significant sociopolitical phenomena such as increasing numbers of immigrants and middle-class populations and the rise of the American Empire and imperialism." She will be working with Professor Anita Patterson in the Department of English.

Kayli Rideout earned her BA in Studio Art with a minor in Religion from Davidson College. She then went on to receive an MA in History of Design and Curatorial Studies from Parsons School of Design at The New School. Since completing her Masters, Kayli has been working at The Metropolitan Museum of Art as the Tiffany & Co. Foundation curatorial intern in American Decorative Arts. This experience at the Met, combined with her prior graduate work studying how "material objects have shaped Southern identity and social discourse," build the foundation for the work she will pursue with AMNESP. With her doctoral work, Kayli "intends to explore the nature of Tiffany silver and stained-glass commissions in Southern centers of wealth and influence during the Reconstruction Era and Gilded Age." Kayli will also be working under the guidance of Professor Will Moore.

MA in Preservation Studies

Mark McDonnell graduated from BU this May with a BA in History and a minor in Religion. While an undergraduate, Mark took our course "Internships in Public History" with Preservation Studies faculty member Jan Haenraets, during which he was a research intern with National Parks of Boston. He has additional internship experience with the Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center and the Morris County Park Commission in New Jersey, positions obtained due to a passion for public history. Mark intends to complete the Concentration in Planning, with hopes eventually work professionally "in a career of preserving natural and cultural sites of our heritage."

Laura Montesanti is well versed in the field of Preservation Studies, having the unique opportunity to earn a BA in Cultural and Historic Preservation from Salve Regina University. Her thesis, "P.T. Barnum's 'Park City': The Cultural and Industrial Landscape of Nineteenth Century Bridgeport, CT," was rooted in her experience working as an intern at the Barnum Museum in Bridgeport, CT. Attending school based out of historic Newport, RI, Laura has long been immersed in the world of cultural history, decorative arts, and public history. During her graduate studies, Laura hopes to expand upon this knowledge, using Boston's "wealth of period interior, museums, and vernacular neighborhoods" as a base on which to further explore cultural heritage management, digital humanities, urban planning, and museum studies.

Evan O'Connor earned his BA from Saint Joseph's University with a major in History and minors in Art History, Leadership Ethics and Organizational Sustainability, and American Studies. His courses mainly focused on colonial America, and he applied this interest to an internship working in a historic home from that era, The Cliveden of the National Trust in Philadelphia. Currently, he works as an interpreter at both The Paul Revere House here in Boston and The Old Manse in Concord. He hopes to become director of a museum of historic house, a role he is passionate about as "history is ultimately about the past, but explaining why it matters to the public is the only way to bring it to the present."

Alise Perault graduated Summa Cum Laude from University of Nebraska at Kearney with a BA in Art History. After graduating, she worked at the Molly Brown House Museum in Denver, CO, educating and engaging guests about the original residents of the home and bringing their stories to life. She was drawn to the field of Preservation Studies as it perfectly blends her "interest in research and community engagement," and BU specifically for its status in a city rich with history and museums. She plans to concentrate in Museum Studies, eventually "[emerging] into the professional world prepared to be a leader in the preservation field by furthering history's accessibility to all members of the community – no matter their gender, race, or socioeconomic status."

Akil Sokoli is coming to BU from his home country of Albania, where he earned his undergraduate degree in Architecture from Polytechnic University of Tirana. Following school, he worked in Tirana City Hall's Urban Planning Department where he was part of the team designing the New Regulatory Master Plan of Tirana. MSc in Architecture from Technical University of Darmstadt in Germany. Winner of an Erasmus Scholarship, he spent two years in Germany and Italy studying Urban and Economic Development and International Cooperation. Upon completing his MA in Preservation Studies, Akil plans to return to Tirana, implementing the skills he learned to "raise awareness about cultural issues and develop projects to restore all the hidden gems which are left unexplored and uncured."

Joseph van den Berg earned his BA in History with a minor in Philosophy from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. During and after school, he worked and volunteered tirelessly in the public sector, from the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum to the Avila Lighthouse to the national historic landmark, Hearst Castle. It is his time at Hearst Castle, observing the restoration and cleaning of the castle, where he was able "to learn more about what goes into the preservation of a living, breathing museum at a large scale." Pulling his numerous work experiences together, Joseph plans to pursue the Museum Studies concentration to turn his love for curating, preserving, and teaching into one specialized degree.

Graduate Student Conference:

Framing Narratives

This spring, a team of our talented PhD students organized and hosted a very well attended graduate student conference.

During the **Framing Narratives** conference, graduate students from around New England working in American Studies and related fields convened to think through the establishment, circulation, and contestation of the stories that “frame” American life. During the conference, scholars shared a wide variety of research that explored how narratives shape national, cultural, gender, and regional identity.

At the April 12th Public Humanities Roundtable, speakers included Eoin Cannon, Chief Speechwriter for Boston Mayor Martin Walsh; Jan Haenraets, Professor of Practice in BU's Preservation Studies Program; Laura Johnson, Curator of Material Culture at Historic New England; and Robert Shimp, Director of Research and Public Programming at the Paul Revere House. Together, they sparked a lively discussion of the humanities' role in educating the public outside of the academy.

On April 13th, Professor Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello of Salem State University opened the day's proceedings with a moving keynote address on the role of community and narrative in scholars' work. Over the course of the day, eleven speakers presented in paper sessions on Framing Place, Visual Narratives, Framing Boundaries, and Revisiting Narratives.



Dr. Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello's Keynote



Conference Chairs: Aaron Ahlstrom, Megan LeBarron, and Mariah Gruner

Save the Date!

AMNESP will celebrate its golden anniversary on **Saturday, October 10th, 2020**. Please make plans to join us on campus! Keep your eyes on your inbox - details are forthcoming!



Photos
from 25th
AMNESP
anniversary
in 1995



Donors to the AMNESP Gift Fund Fiscal Year 2018/2019

Thanks to all for your ongoing support!

Aaron Ahlstrom
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Cheryl Boots
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