Jesse Ritner, Ph.D. • Assistant Professor of History
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EDUCATION

The University of Texas at Austin: Austin, TX

Ph.D. in History, May 2024.

Dissertation Title: "Making Snow: Climate and Technology in the U.S. Ski Industry, 1934-present."

Advisor: Dr. Erika Bsumek

M.A. in History, May 2019

Master Report: "A More Perfect Nature: The Making of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, 15,000 BCE-present"

Skidmore College: Saratoga Springs, NY

B.A. in History and Government, May 2015

Honors Thesis: "The Maximization of Liberty or the Pursuit of Happiness?"

Advisor: F. Flagg Taylor

EMPLOYMENT

Academic Positions

Assistant Professor of U.S. History, Georgia College and State University, 2025-present

Postdoctoral Fellowship, The Institute for Historical Study, University of Texas at Austin, 2024-2025.

Adjunct Professor, Department of History, Southwestern University, Fall 2022

Public History Positions

Lead Researcher, Outdoor Recreation Workers Oral History Project (ORW), Charles Redd Center for Western Studies at Brigham Young University, 2026-present.

Editorial Team Member, *Network in Canadian History & Environment*, January 2025-present.

Historical Consultant for the Civil Conversation Project, Denver, CO, 2021-2025.

Radical Hope Project, Social Media Director & Assistant Editor, University of Texas at Austin, 2021-2023.

Assistant Editor, *Not Even Past*, University of Texas at Austin, 2018-2019.

Historic Preservationist, Historic Preservation Training Center, National Park Service, 2016 - 2017.

PUBLICATIONS

Monograph

Ritner, Jesse H. "Snowguns: How Snowmaking, Carbon Emissions, and Cheap Labor Built the U.S. Ski Industry." (In progress.)

Refereed and Peer Reviewed

Ritner, Jesse H. "Climate Adaptation Technology & the Problem of Growth in the U.S. Ski Industry," *Oxford Intersections*. (Invited special forum.)

Ritner, Jesse H. "'What Part of Sacred Don't You Understand?': Geopiety-Sovereignty and Indigenous Environmental Justice on the San Francisco Peaks." *Western Historical Quarterly.* (Revised & resubmitted.)

Ritner, Jesse H. "Avalanche!: Reimagining Skier Snow Relationships." *Utah Historical Quarterly*, Winter 2026.

Ritner, Jesse H. "White Gold: Snowmaking, Resort Growth, and Skier Experience in the U.S. East, 1945–1971." *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, September 14, 2021, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2021.1928082.

**2023 Joel Tarr Envirotech Article Prize Winner, Society for the History of Technology.*

In Progress

Ritner, Jesse H. "'A Few Bad Days': The Eventful Nature of Snow Management in the U.S. Ski Industry."

Ritner, Jesse H. "Settler Skiing: Native Americans & the Magical West."

Ritner, Jesse H. "Sex in the Snow: Selling Icy Kinks to Skiers."

Oral History Projects

Outdoor Recreation Workers Oral History Project, in Conjunction with the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies at Brigham Young University, ongoing.

Peer-Reviews

Article for *Environmental Humanities*

Article for *Response: A Journal of American Culture.*

Book Reviews

Snö: A History by Sverker Sörlin, NiCHE (forthcoming).

Disneyland and the Rise of Automation: How Technology Created the Happiest Place on Earth by Roland Betancourt, *H-Sci-Med-Tech*, (forthcoming).

Recreational Colonialism and the Rhetorical Landscapes of the Outdoors by Kyle Boggs, Western Historical Quarterly. (forthcoming).

Disneyland on the Mountain: Walt, The Environmentalists, and the Ski Resort that Never Was by Greg Glasgow and Kathryn Mayer (H-Environment, *H-Review*, December 2025).

Surf and Rescue: George Freeth and the Birth of California Beach Culture by Patrick Moser (H-Environment, H-Review, April 2023).

Skiing Into Modernity: A Cultural and Environmental History by Andrew Dunning, *H-Environment: reviews*, June 24, 2020.

Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States by Audra Simpson. *E3W Review of Books*, vol. 20, 2019.

Op-Eds, Online Articles, Series

"What are our editors listening to on Earth Day?," *NiCHE,* April 22, 2026.

"Stunning Scenery, Climate Consequences, and the Winter Games," *NiCHE,* February 18, 2026.

"Winter Olympics & Their Environment," series editor, *NiCHE,* February 2026.

"Playing Inside: Board Games, Video Games, and the Indoors," series editor, *NiCHE*, fall 2025-present.

"The History of Climate Science & Politics," *Protect Our Winters*, Climate 101, Summer 2025.

"An Ode to Artificial Snow," *Hardpack Magazine,* spring 2024. (Print only)

"Spirit of the Peaks is a Radical Act," *NiCHE*, February 15, 2022.

"The Beijing Olympics' Snow Problem is Worse than you Think," *Washington Post*, February 8, 2022.

"In a new twist on an old tactic, ski resorts are using snow machines to fight fires," *The Washington Post,* September 9, 2021.

"Bears Ears National Monument," *Not Even Past*, July 8, 2021.

"When Ghost Towns Lack Ghosts," *Not Even Past,* March 5, 2021.

"Chilling the Industry," *Technology Stories*, January 5, 2021.

"This Land is 'Our Land': Nationalism & Exclusion in Outdoor Recreation," *Edge Effects*, December 8, 2020.

"The Anthropocene and Environmental History," *Not Even Past*, March 18, 2019.

"Letter to the Editor: Response to remarks on 'Paying for Peace: Reflections on the Lasting Peace Monument,'" *Not Even Past*, November 13, 2018.

"Austin Historical Atlas: Development During World War I," *Not Even Past*.

"Austin Historical Atlas: Mapping Austin's Historical Markers," *Not Even Past*, November 12, 2018.

"Death, Danger, and Identity at 12,000 Feet," *Not Even Past*, April 16, 2018.

"What Makes a Good History Blog," *Not Even Past*, April 2, 2018.

"Paying for Peace: Reflections on the Lasting Peace Monument," *Not Even Past*, March 5, 2018.

"The Curious History of Lincoln's Birth Cabin," *Not Even Past*, October 30, 2017.

The Lift Line

"It's time for some context, Black skiing & U.S. history," *The Lift Line,* February 28, 2023.

"How much is a life worth?," *The Lift Line,* September 21, 2022.

"Why do skiers find the cold so sexy?," *The Lift Line,* August 28, 2022.

"From Bombing to Shredding: The Development of metal skis may never have happened without the military-industrial complex," *The Lift Line,* June 6, 2022.

"Skiing Snodgrass," *The Lift Line,* January 19, 2022.

"A Mixed Blessing," *The Lift Line,* January 4, 2022.

"Making Artificial Snow Natural," *The Lift Line,* October 26, 2021.

"Hiking Up a Cyborg," *The Lift Line,* July 19, 2021.

"Bringing the Arctic to Sun Valley," *The Lift Line,* June 25, 2021.

"Indigenizing Ski Resorts," *The Lift Line,* June 20, 2021.

"An Incomplete History of Black Skiers," *The Lift Line,* May 10, 2021.

"Architectural Meaning at Arizona Snowbowl," *The Lift Line,* May 3, 2021.

"Summer Sun and Winter Fun," *The Lift Line,* April 14, 2021.

"Skiing in Moccasins," *The Lift Line,* April 8, 2021.

Interviews

Susan Shain, "Snowmaking Could be the Future of Skiing. But at what cost?" *High Country News*, February 24, 2026.

Miranda Weise, *Book Forthcoming* (title unknown), September 2026.

Ian Greenwood, "Where's Our Ski Train," *Powder Magazine*, Summer, 2024.

Andrew Steven, *Trail Weight* (podcast), Fall 2022, season 2, episodes 1 & 8. https://trailweight.com/.

Zak Podmore, "'We meant business': Park City ski patrollers say strike authorization vote led to better contract with Vail." *The Salt Lake Tribune,* January 20, 2022.

Lorea Zabaleta, *The Ski Journal*, 2021.

FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

Fellowships

Littlefield Summer Writing Fellowship, College of Liberal Arts, University of Texas at Austin, 2023.

Fellowship in Race & Caste, The Institute for Historical Study, University of Texas at Austin, 2021-2022.

American Meteorological Society Graduate Fellowship in the History of Science, 2020-2021.

History Department Recruitment Fellowship, Department of History, University of Texas at Austin, 2017-2018.

Grants and Awards

Course Development Funds, Georgia College & State University, 2026.

Joel Tarr Envirotech Article Prize, Society for the History of Technology, 2023. (Awarded for "White Gold.")

Research Fellowship at the Consortium for the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 2021.

Friends of J. Willard Marriott Library Grant, J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2021.

American Heritage Center Travel Grant, The American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming, 2020.

Bordin-Gillette Researcher Travel Fellowship, The Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2020.

The Hart Center Travel Grant, Rubenstein Library, Duke University, 2020.

History Department Research Fellowship, University of Texas at Austin, 2020.

Linda Hall Library Fellowship, Linda Hall Museum, Kansas City, Missouri, 2020.

Graduate Student Assembly Travel Award, University of Texas at Austin, 2020.

Professional Development Award, Department of History, University of Texas at Austin, 2019.

Best Historical Materials List, by the History Section's Historical Materials Committee of the American Library Association's (ALA) Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) for "The Public Archive" (in conjunction with other participants), 2018.

PRESENTATIONS

Invited Talks

"Got Oxygen: Global Warming and Snow's Increasing Precarity in the U.S. Ski Industry." University of North Carolina at Charlotte, April 3, 2026.

Roundtable, "Climate 101 Training," Protect Our Winters, Online, October 21, 2025.

Panelist, "Skiing, Climate, and Snowmaking in Historical Perspectives," Climate Change and Winter Sports, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, November 28, 2023.

Panelist, "Roundtable on Climate Research & the Outdoors," Protect Our Winters Summit, Reno, Nevada, September 15, 2022.

Panelist, "Roundtable: Archives and the Outdoor Industry," Outdoor Recreation Archive, Utah State University, September 15, 2021.

"Skiing in Variable Conditions: Climate Adaptation, Profitability, and Repercussions." Climate in Context at the Institute for Historical Study, The University of Texas at Austin, April 19, 2021.

"Neo-Materialist Archives: Approaching Historical Environments Through Agential Realism," The Radical Archives Project, New York University, New York City, January 3, 2020.

Academic Conference

October 23, 2026, "Shredding the Sacred: The Ski Industry, Indigenous Environmental Justice, and Federal Land Management," Portland, Oregon.

March 27, 2026, “The Cost of Climate Adaptation and Pathway Dependency in the U.S. Ski Industry,” Kansas City, Missouri.

April 11, 2025, “Critical Ski Studies Panel,” American Society for Environmental History, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (chair).

April 10, 2025, “Selling Sexy Snow: How the Ski Industry Sold Icy Kinks to Skiers,” American Society for Environmental History, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

November 11, 2024, “Mexican Migrants, Identity, and Ski Towns in the Mountain West,” Institute for Historical Studies, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

October 25, 2024, “Ski Towns, Violence, and the Transnational Mountain West,” Western History Association, Kansas City, Missouri.

October 22, 2024, “Avalanche!: Reimagining Skier Snow Relationships,” Smithsonian Institution (National Museum of American History), Washington, D.C.

April 7, 2024, “Climate Tradeoffs and Impossible Futures in the United States Ski Industry,” American Society for Environmental History, Denver, Colorado.

October 27, 2023, “‘What Part of Sacred Don’t You Understand?’: Diné and Hopi Activism as a Political Theory of Sovereignty,” Western History Association, Los Angeles, California.

March 24, 2023, “Technology, Capitalism, and Impossible Futures on the Western Slope,” American Society for Environmental History, Boston, Massachusetts.

November 11, 2022, “Roundtable: Playing With Technology,” Society for the History of Technology, New Orleans, Louisiana.

October 28, 2022, “‘A Few Bad Days’: The Eventful Nature of Snow Management in the U.S. Ski Industry, 1937- 1980,” The Hagley Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

October 14, 2022, “Speaking Spanish in Aspen: Race and Pollution in a White Winter Town,” Western History Association, San Antonio, Texas.

April 25, 2022, “Making Snow: Reflections on Research at the Linda Hall Library,” Consortium for the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine, Online.

April 18, 2022, “‘What Part of Sacred Don’t You Understand?’: Arizona Snowbowl, Geopiety, and Indigenous Environmental Justice,” Institute for Historical Study, Austin, Texas.

March 25, 2022, “Knowing Snow, Knowing Yourself,” American Society for Environmental History, Eugene, Oregon.

January 24, 2022, “Avalanche Forecasting: Skiers, the Ski Industry, and Predicting Colorado Snowpack,” American Meteorological Society, New Orleans, Louisiana.

October 20, 2021, “Rethinking Aspen: Winter Tourism, Immigration, and the Culture of Whiteness,” Western History Association, Portland, Oregon.

October 18, 2021, “Skiing on the Sacred: Rhetoric, Exclusion, and the U.S. Forest Service.” Institute for Historical Studies, Austin, Texas.

November 13, 2020, “Making Snow: The Ski Industry’s Solution to Drought in the Mountain West,” Western History Association.

November 10, 2020, “Nuking the Slopes: How the Ski Industry Used the Cold to Overcome the Weather,” Society for the History of Technology.

March 18, 2020, “The Metrics of Radness: Artificial Snow and the Rise of a New Ski Culture.” Jacob Barnes Foundation Graduate Conference, Temple University.

November 24, 2019, “Making Snow: Technological Innovation and the Production of a New Ski Culture,” Mediating Mountains, AAAS Konferenz, University of Innsbruck, Austria.

November 1, 2019, "Making Snow and Designing the X-Games: Technological Innovation and the Production of a New Ski Culture," Symposium for the History of Philosophy and Science, University of Texas at Austin.

August 16, 2019, "The Ethics of Algae," Museums and Environmental Humanities, University of Stavanger, Norway.

December 7, 2018, "Damning the Dam: Infrastructures of Conservation in the Delaware River Basin, 1962-2002," Currents of Atlantic History Across Four Centuries, University of Texas at Austin.

May 1, 2018, "Frederic Allen Williams: A Citizen Artist with a Magic Lantern," The Public Archive: Doing History in Public and Online, University of Texas at Austin.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Courses at Georgia College & State University

Gaming Nature (HIST-4950)

Science, Technology, and Environment in U.S. History (HIST-4950)

Historian's Craft: America (HIST-3003)

United States History, post 1877 (HIST-2112)

Courses at the University of Texas

Environmental History of North America (HIS-350R).

Thinking Like a Historian (HIS-320W).

United States History, 1492-1865 (HIS-315K).

Courses at Southwestern University

U.S. Environmental History (HIS-16).

Courses as Teaching Assistant at the University of Texas

Black Americans in the Age of Jim Crow (HIS-317L)

Building America: Engineering, Society, and Culture (HIS-317L)

United States History, 1865-present (HIS-315L). (Multiple Faculty).

United States History, 1492-1865 (HIS-315K). (Multiple Faculty).

Intro to Native American History (HIS-317L)

PUBLIC AND DIGITAL HISTORY

Jobs

Historical Consultant for the Civil Conversation Project, Denver, CO, 2021 – 2025

"Profiles in Diversity," College of Natural Science, University of Texas at Austin, 2022 – 2023.

Radical Hope Project, Social Media Director & Assistant Editor, Austin, TX, 2021 – 2023.

ClioVis (Digital Timeline Software), Social Media Director and Trainer, Austin, TX, 2021 – 2023.

Assistant Editor, *Not Even Past*, University of Texas at Austin, 2018-2019.

National Park Service, Historic Preservation Training Center, 2016-2017.

Courses

"Master Class in Environmental History and Museums," University of Stavanger, Norway 2019.

"Public and Digital History," University of Texas, 2019.

Personal Projects

The Lift Line: A History Blog, Founder & Editor, 2020-2024

Digital Archive: "Frederic Allen Williams: A Citizen Artist with a Magic Lantern," 2018.

Public Humanities Fellowships

Handbook of Texas Women Summer Research Fellow, Texas State Historical Association, Austin, Texas, 2019.

Digital History Skills

Blog Editing

Website Design (WordPress).

Optical Character Recognition.

Social Media as Historical Storytelling (X/Bluesky, Instagram, Facebook).

Visualizing History (StoryMaps, ClioVis).

Digital Mapping (MyMaps, Carto, QGIS (learning))

SERVICE

Center for Teaching and Learning Committee, College of Arts and Sciences, Fall 2026-present.

Department of History & Geography History Club Advisor, Fall 2026-present.

Department of History & Geography First Year Experience Seminar, Fall 2026-present.

Department of History & Geography Media Committee, Fall 2026-present.

Department of History & Geography Library Committee, Fall 2025-present.

Science Alliance Member at Protect Our Winters, Denver, CO, 2021 – Present.

Founder and Coordinator of the Environmental History Reading Group, The Department of History, The University of Texas at Austin, 2018-2022.

Co-coordinator of the Symposium for the History of Women and Gender, The Department of History, The University of Texas at Austin, 2019-2020.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AI as Learning Partner: Using Generative AI to Deepen Student Understanding, GCSU, Milledgeville, Georgia, 2026.

Libkey Training, GCSU, Milledgeville, Georgia, 2026.

Teaching on Latin America and the Environment, RECSLAC, Zoom, 2025.

Academic Affairs Small Grants, GCSU, Milledgeville, Georgia, 2025.

Applied History Workshop, University of Colorado at Boulder, Boulder, Colorado, 2023.

Inclusive Classroom Seminar, University of Texas, Austin, 2023.

Oral History Workshop, American Society for Environmental History, Eugene, Oregon, 2022.

Advanced Teaching Preparation Certificate, Faculty Innovation Center, University of Texas, Austin, 2020.

Oral History Workshop, Texas State Historical Association, Austin, Texas, 2018.

SELECTED ORAL HISTORIES

2026, Jay “Jaybird” Edelmann, Former Ski Patroller, Aspen Highlands Ski Resort, El Jebel, CO. (ORW)

2026, Tom “Socko” Sokolowski, Ski Patroller, Telluride Ski Resort, Telluride, CO. (ORW)

2026, Annie Savath, Ski Instructor/Director, Telluride Ski Resort, Ridgway, CO. (ORW)

2026, Annie Black, Ski Instructor/Examiner, Aspen-Snowmass/Keystone Ski Resort, El Jebel, CO. (ORW)

2026, Gordon Briner, Former CEO of Taos Ski Valley, Tucson, AZ.

2025, Seth Masia, Former Journalist at *Ski* and *Skiing,* El Jebel, CO.

2024, Magdeleno Diaz, Cora Community Leader, Gunnison, CO.

2022, Shawn Mulford, Diné Elder & Activist, Flagstaff, AZ.

2022, Klee Benally, Diné Activist & Artist, Flagstaff, AZ.

2022, Andy Bessler, Former Sierra Club Project Leader & Activist, Flagstaff, AZ.

2022, Roxane George, Founder of Flagstaff Activist Network, Flagstaff, AZ.
2021, Robert Berlin, Ski/Climate Journalist, Krems, Austria.
2021, Al Kryger, CEO of Greek Peak Ski Area, Cortland, NY.
2021, Brian Tito Alex, CEO of Snowmaking Efficiency, LLC., Bozeman, MT.
2021, Joe Clark, Mountain Manager, Buttermilk Ski Resort, Basalt, CO.
2021, Beatriz Soto, Protéjete Director at Conservation Colorado & leader of Defiende Nuestra Tierra, Carbondale, CO.
2021, Samuel Bernal, Spanish Radio Host & Community Advocate, Glenwood Springs, CO.
2021, Lisa Robiano, Nurse Practitioner and Health Advocate, Basalt, CO.
2021, Rob Stein, Superintendent of Roaring Fork Public Schools, Basalt, CO.
2021, Billy Rankin, Avalanche Forecaster & Educator, Crested Butte, CO.
2021, Don Bachman, Avalanche Researcher & Educator, Bozeman, MT.
2021, Ted Beeler, Former President of Sno-Engineering, Seattle, WA.
2021, Rod Newcomb, Founder of American Avalanche Institute, Jackson, WY.
2021, Knox Williams, Founder of Colorado Avalanche Information Center, Cedaredge, CO.
2021, Betsy & Richard Armstrong, Avalanche Researchers and Educators, Fraser, CO.
2021, Robert Akland, Former CEO of Mad River Glenn Ski Area, Warren, VT.
2021, Joseph VanderKelen, President of Snow Machine International, Midland, MI.
2021, Ron Ratkin, President of Ratkin Industries, Rochester, NY.
2021, Brian Fairbanks, President of Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort, Hancock, MA.
2021, Karl Birkeland, Head of National Avalanche Information Center, Bozeman, MT.
2021, Wayne Hare, Skier/CEO of Civil Conversation Project, Grand Junction, CO.
2020, Ethan Green, Head of Colorado Avalanche Information Center, Leadville, CO.
2020, Peter Alford, President of Alford Design Group, Denver, CO.
2020, Travis Benson, Mountain Manager at Buttermilk Ski Area, Aspen, CO.
2020, Michael Krongel, Former CFO of American Ski Company, Newton, MA.
2020, Chris Diamond, Former CEO of Steamboat Springs Ski Resort, Steamboat Springs, CO.
2020, Michael Berry, Former President of National Ski Area Association, Boulder, CO.
2020, Cathy Rosen, Skier, Wynnewood, PA.
2019, Auden Schendler, Former Vice President of Sustainability, Aspen, CO.

Professional Organizations

American Society for Environmental History
Society for the History of Technology
Western History Association
North American Society for Sports History