

Biography for Ben Jones

I grew up in South Dakota and received my history degrees from public universities on the Great Plains. I've seen much of the world, including nations enduring decades of war and those that have suddenly erupted in violence. Over the years I became keenly interested in what has prompted non-combatants to take up arms. Much of the answer to that issue lies in how culture provides the framework for people's choices. So even though my publications deal with people as varied as the French, the Afghans, and the Lakota, they have all centered around how culture drives notions of what's worth fighting for. My second tour in Afghanistan included collaborating with senior Afghan officers to help determine their path to taking over responsibility for the war. In that light, I applied some of what I learned about how cultural differences set the tone and limitations for our work. In recent years I've worked to create stronger K-12 history education in my home state. To that end, as my state's Secretary of Education and now as a public historian I spent a large part of my efforts creating stronger social studies standards and productive professional development to better equip K-12 teachers. I now enjoy helping audiences understand their state's complicated history, designing our new state museum, and hosting a podcast, History 605, which focuses on how people explain the past. I look forward to bringing my skills and experience to the SMH Trustees.

Candidacy Statement of Ben Jones

We have all seen the erosion of trust in our institutions and lamented the clear crisis in America's historical understanding. Whatever your views on the state of our electoral politics or the political issues of the day, the primary job of a Trustee is to do everything possible to foster trust and confidence in the result of our professional labor. Whether it is K-12, college students, fellow scholars, or interested readers in the general public, we need to demonstrate our commitment to history done well. Having been mentored by Peter Maslowski, Ted Wilson, John Sweets, Dennis Showalter, and Roger Spiller, I know that caring for our profession begins with high-quality work. Such work is best fostered by an international society laser-focused on supporting the best research and teaching possible and then supporting its proliferation. Our annual conference should be a place where all are comfortable testing ideas and receiving feedback that improves results. We should expand our efforts to reach and support K-12 educators, as their impact on the future is profound. Furthermore, as the United States approaches its 250th year we should expect a growing interest in not only the Revolutionary War, but the role war has played in living out the Declaration of Independence here in the United States and its influence abroad warts and all. The public's curiosity will increase, and SMH should be ready to meet this rare opportunity. I'd be honored to serve as a Trustee in this work.

Benjamin F. Jones

Curriculum Vitae
15 November 2024

Dec 2020 – Present: State Historian and Director, SD State Historical Society, Pierre, SD
Adjunct Professor, South Dakota State University
Jan 2019 – Dec 2020: Secretary of Education, Department of Education, Pierre, SD
2013 – 2019: Dean and Associate Professor of History (tenured), College of Arts & Sciences,
Dakota State University, Madison, SD
2008 – 2013: Deputy for International History and Assistant Professor, Department of History, US
Air Force Academy, CO
1999 – 2002: Instructor, Department of History, US Air Force Academy, CO

EDUCATION

Ph.D., History, University of Kansas, 2008.
Dissertation Advisor: Professor Emeritus John F. Sweets
M.A., History, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1999.
B.A., History, Minor in French, South Dakota State University, 1989.

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Of Hope and Collision: A History of South Dakota (working title), Pierre: South Dakota Historical Society Press, is under contract and expected to be published in late 2026.

Eisenhower's Guerrillas: The Jedburghs, the Maquis and the Liberation of France, New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

BOOK CHAPTERS

“What Works? Jedburgh Team Operations Supporting Conventional Forces,” in *The Competitive Advantage: Special Operations Forces in Large-Scale Combat Operations*, edited by Robert M. Toguchi and Michael E Kirvdo, 32-42. Fort Leavenworth, KS: Army University Press, 2019.

“Leaving Afghanistan” in *Our Latest Longest War: Losing Hearts and Minds in Afghanistan*, edited by Aaron O’Connell, 113-130. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017.

REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES

“The Aim but Not the Means: Richard Nixon, the American Indian Movement, and Wounded Knee 1973.” *South Dakota History*, Vol 53, no. 3 (Fall 2023): 220–245.

“Looking for Bernard Knox: Warrior Ancient and Modern,” in *War, Literature, & the Arts*, Special Double Edition Essay, Volume 15, Numbers 1 & 2, 2003.

AWARDS AND HONORS

2017: Western Academic Leadership Forum, WICHE, Boulder, CO.
2010: Holocaust Education Summer Fellow, Holocaust Education Foundation, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.
2007: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Research Travel Grant, Franklin D. and Eleanor Roosevelt Presidential Library, Hyde Park, NY.
1998 and 2005: Air Force Institute of Technology/Civilian Institution Scholar
1985 - 89: Four-Year Air Force ROTC scholarship

GRANTS

“Rethinking K-12 Education,” US Department of Education Competitive Grant, \$6,883,481.
Awarded. 2020.

Principle Investigator, “Humanities Connections Implementation Grant,” National Endowment for the Humanities, \$99,500. Submitted. 2018.

Principle Investigator, “The Mount Rushmore Presidential and Congressional Academy for American History and Civics,” U.S. Department of Education, \$1,779,000 Submitted. 2016.

Co-Principle Investigator on STEM Institute Grant from Great Plains Foundation. \$17,000.
Awarded. 2015-18.

First In The World (FITW) “Jump Start” Grant, Campus Principle Investigator, U. S. Department of Education grant awarded to South Dakota’s public universities and Oglala Lakota College to support South Dakota’s American Indian and economically disadvantaged students. \$283,000 Campus Award. 2014-2019.

SCHOLARLY CONFERENCES

“Unpacking the South Dakota Standards Debacle: A Critical Examination of Content, Pedagogy, and Democratic Participation in History Education.” Comment provided, Northern Great Plains History Conference, Sioux Falls, SD, 27 September 2024.

“Making Regulars out of Guerrillas: Pierre Koenig and commanding the Free French”, Many Faces of War Conference IX, Sioux Falls, SD, 22 March 2024.

“Teaching African American History,” National Association of Scholars, Video Conference Panel, 24 Oct 2023.

“General Pierre Koenig,” Second World War Research Group Conference, Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS. October 2018.

“Leaving Afghanistan: Transition, Trust, and Definitions,” Society of Military History Annual Conference, Ottawa, Canada, April 2016.

“Looking for Bernard Knox: Warrior – Ancient & Modern,” Society of Military History Conference, Madison, WI, April 2002.

“The Moon is Down: The Jedburghs and the French Resistance,” Northern Great Plains History Conference, Mankato, MN, Sept 1999.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE: Courses Taught

At South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD, 2021 to present

Vietnam War	United States History I
Western Civilization I	United States History II
Western Civilization II	American Military History

At Dakota State University, Madison, SD, 2013 - 2018

Introduction to Cyber Leadership	Introduction to Grand Strategy
Western Civilization II - Honors	

At the United States Air Force Academy, CO, 1999-2002 and 2008 - 2013

Modern European History	The British Empire & Industrial Revolution
Honors World History	Limited War in the 20th Century: Korea & Vietnam
History of Christianity	Unconventional Warfare
“The Great Game”: Afghanistan	Introduction to Military History
The Meanings of Freedom	
Foundations of European History	

TRANSLATIONS

Le Blond, Guillaume. "Small War." The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert Collaborative Translation Project. Ann Arbor: Scholarly Publishing Office of the Univ of Michigan Library, 2010. <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.did2222.0000.943> Originally published in French as, "Petite-guerre," Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, 12:466 (Paris, 1765).

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

2023 to Present: Jack Miller Center Civics Advisory Council
2017 to Present: Heterodox Academy
2016 to Present: National Association of Scholars
1998 to Present: Society of Military History

CV gaps are due to service in the US Air Force from 1990 – 2013. Retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. In addition to two tours as a US Air Force Academy History Department member, I also served as a Logistics Plans and Strategic Plans officer in the United States, Guam, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Afghanistan. Recipient of the Bronze Star, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, and Air Force Achievement Medal with Valor.