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English Department Chair Gregg Hecimovich to Speak on N.C. Slave Narrative at Winthrop

Winthrop University

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English Department Chair Gregg Hecimovich to Speak on N.C. Slave Narrative at Winthrop

Quick Facts

- The origins of Gregg Hecimovich's book date back to 2001 when Henry Louis Gates Jr. of Harvard University purchased a 19th-century African-American manuscript at auction titled "The Bondwoman's Narrative."
- Hecimovich, who is chairman of Winthrop's Department of English, identifies that first, black female novelist and tells her life story in his upcoming book, to be released next year.
- At once a detective story, a literary chase, and a cultural history, "The Life and Times of Hannah Crafts" discovers a Dickensian tale of love, friendship and betrayal against the backdrop of America's slide into Civil War.



Gregg Hecimovich

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – Winthrop University **English Professor Gregg Hecimovich** will speak at the Oct. 3 annual dinner meeting of the **Friends of Dacus Library** on his upcoming book, "**The True Story of Hannah Crafts, America's First Black Female Novelist.**"

The 6 p.m. event is set for the Tuttle Dining Room in **McBryde Hall**.

The origins of Hecimovich's book date back to 2001 when **Henry Louis Gates Jr.** of Harvard University purchased a 19th-century African-American manuscript at auction titled "**The Bondwoman's Narrative.**" Gates authenticated it, and then published it in 2002 to great fanfare. The work became an instant **New York Times bestseller**. But while Gates identified the author's probable master, he did not locate the author.

Hecimovich, who is chairman of Winthrop's **Department of English**, took up the challenge. His book identifies that first, black female novelist and tells her life story. At once a detective story, a literary chase, and a cultural history, "**The Life and Times of Hannah Crafts**" discovers a Dickensian tale of love, friendship and betrayal against the backdrop of America's slide into Civil War.

Hecimovich is the recipient of numerous teaching awards including the **University of North Carolina Board of Governors Distinguished Professor for Teaching Award** and the **Max Ray Joyner Award** for innovative teaching with technology. His research interests focus on the 19th-century novel, slave narratives, technology and the humanities, and literary theory.

The author of four previous books, Hecimovich contributed to a new edition of Hannah Crafts' best-selling novel, "**The Bondwoman's Narrative,**" by co-writing a new introduction with the work's editor, Henry Louis Gates Jr. In 2015-16, Hecimovich spent a year-in-residence as a **Fellow at the National Humanities Center** working on "The Life and Times of Hannah Crafts: The True Story of The Bondwoman's Narrative," which is slated for publication by **Ecco/HarperCollins** in 2018.

Hecimovich is one of the inaugural recipients of a **Public Scholar Fellowship** from the **National Endowment for the Humanities**. In 2014-15, he served as a **Shelia Biddle Ford Fellow** at **The Hutchins Center for African and African American Research** at Harvard.

For more information about the Oct. 3 event, contact **Ronnie W. Faulkner** at faulknerr@winthrop.edu or by calling 803/323-2262 by Sept. 27. Tickets are \$18.

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