Nancy Bristow Lecture on the 1918 Influenza Pandemic and COVID-19

Submitted by Alexandra Colley Dusablon on June 3, 2020 - 4:26pm

Professor Nancy Bristow, Chair of the Department of History at the University of Puget Sound, gave a lecture on June 2, 2020 titled “Pandemic Then (and Now): COVID-19 through the Lens of the 1918 Influenza Crisis.” In this lecture, Professor Bristow explored Americans’ differential experiences with the 1918 pandemic as well as the public health and popular reactions that emerged in response to the scourge, and will suggest some insights this history offers as we face the complex challenges and choices COVID-19 is presenting to our local, national, and global communities. She drew 7 parallels between the two pandemics including the failures of presidential leadership, the smorgasbord of public health responses, trauma as a defining experience, and the impact of social identity.


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