



PRESS RELEASE

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The History Center in Tompkins County Announces New Exhibit:

reCOUNT: Facing Our Census

ITHACA NY – *The History Center in Tompkins County announces their next major exhibit, reCOUNT: Facing Our Census*, to open on April 1st, 2022. The U.S. Census impacts everything from political representation to school funding. Tompkins County, and every other community across the nation, has been fundamentally shaped by the regular count of Americans. The census is also a valuable historical resource. Since 1790, the census has provided a broad snapshot of the nation and its communities. A critical examination of these records reveals biases and shortcomings baked into this American system. **reCOUNT** uses the census as a lens to explore the history of Tompkins County and its people, recognizing the value of the census, as well as its limitations.

reCOUNT draws on the extensive work done by The History Center's HistoryForge (historyforge.net) project and its many volunteers. Over the last six years, The History Center has developed an open-source digital web environment, HistoryForge, that integrates historic maps, building records, and local census data. The platform has been implemented in Ithaca and Tompkins County, with partner sites in Auburn (NY), Elmira (NY), and Oberlin (OH). HistoryForge allows users to connect more deeply to their neighborhoods, and understand the historical legacies present in our everyday lives.

Using themes such as education, family origins, employment, race, and census taking, **reCOUNT** expands Tompkins County history through six interactive exhibits. Beginning with the first U.S. Census in 1790, the exhibits will trace the development of the county and the census across 23 decades. **reCOUNT** will inform our understanding of Tompkins County, and position audiences to think critically about local history's impact on our lives. Additional information about the exhibit will be available at thehistorycenter.net/reCOUNT in February 2022.

reCOUNT is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature. The development of *HistoryForge* was supported through funding provided by the National Historical Publications & Records Commission.

About The History Center in Tompkins County:

The History Center in Tompkins County is a generation-to-generation education and research center focused on engaging the public with the history of Tompkins County (located in the ancestral and contemporary lands of the Gayogohó:nq' Nation) and the Finger Lakes region. The History Center helps people use the tools of history to understand the past, gain perspective on the present, and play an informed role in shaping the future. The History Center is located within the Tompkins Center for History & Culture, a collaborative visitor center and event space on the Ithaca Commons. Learn more at thehistorycenter.net and follow @TompkinsHistory on any platform.