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N E W S R E L E A S E

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Discussion to focus on Foner's Pulitzer Prize winner

A public discussion on Sept. 15 will focus on historian Eric Foner's 2011 Pulitzer Prize-winning book "The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery."

Sponsored by the Nebraska Humanities Council, the event will encourage Nebraskans to read and talk about the book before Foner delivers the 16th Annual Governor's Lecture in the Humanities on Oct. 5 at Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha.

The discussion begins at 7 p.m. at the Great Platte River Road Archway, just off Interstate 80 at exit 272 near Kearney. It will feature Vernon L. Volpe, professor of history at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Volpe, who has a Ph.D. in history from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, joined the UNK history department in 1987, after teaching in Lincoln and at Texas A & M University.

Volpe is the author of 1990's "Forlorn Hope of Freedom: The Liberty Party in the Old Northwest, 1838-1848." He is a specialist in 19th century American history, teaching both sections of the American history survey course, as well as upper-level courses in the National Period (1800-1850), the Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1877), the U.S. Constitution to 1865 and the U.S. Constitution after 1865. He also teaches graduate seminars in aspects of 19th century American history. He is a resident fellow of the Center for Great Plains Studies at UNL.

The book discussion is free and open to the public.

In awarding this year's history prize to Foner, the Pulitzer Prize committee cited the author for "a well orchestrated examination of Lincoln's changing views of slavery, bringing unforeseeable twists and a fresh sense of improbability to a familiar story." Earlier this year, the book received two other prestigious awards for history, the Lincoln Prize and the Bancroft Prize.

DeWitt Clinton professor of history at Columbia University and author of several highly acclaimed books on the Civil War period, Foner will speak on the subject of "The Fiery Trial" at the Oct. 5 lecture, which is presented by the Nebraska Humanities Council, with co-sponsors the University of Nebraska, Carol Gendler and Valmont.

A benefit reception and dinner will be held before the free lecture to support the NHC's statewide programming. For details, contact the Nebraska Humanities Council at (402) 474-2131 or visit www.nebraskahumanities.org.

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