House Divided Project

The House Divided Project at Dickinson College began in 2005 as a wide-ranging effort to create multimedia classroom resources that could deepen the way teachers and students commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War (2011-15) and Reconstruction (2015-27).

The project's YouTube channel now has nearly two million views, and more than five thousand K-12 educators from 48 states have participated in training sessions with Director Matthew Pinsker.



Pohanka Reading Room

On campus, the House Divided Project has been responsible for the Dickinson & Slavery initiative, the annual Wert Lecture, and the Knowledge for Freedom seminar, a free summer program focusing on American history and civics for high school students.

The House Divided studio at 61 N. West Street serves as the project's headquarters with museum-style exhibits on the first floor and now the Pohanka Reading Room on the second and third floors.

About Brian C. Pohanka

Brian C. Pohanka (1955-2005) graduated from Dickinson College in 1977 as a history major and became "a founding figure of the modern Civil War battlefield preservation movement," according to the American Battlefield Trust. Pohanka was the author or editor of more than twenty books, including the popular 27-volume series on the Civil War by Time-Life.



Pohanka also served as a consultant for numerous Civil War films and documentaries, including the PBS series on "The Civil War" (1990) by Ken Burns and the "Civil War Journal" (1993) from the History Channel, as well as the Hollywood feature films, "Glory" (1989), "Gettysburg" (1993), "Gods and Generals" (2003), and "Cold Mountain" (2003).

Brian was especially well known for his leadership as a Civil War "living historian." He served for years as a company captain in Duryee's Zouaves (5th New York) Civil War reenactment group and produced an excellent history of the regiment: *Vortex of Hell* with Patrick Schroeder (2012). Brian's wife, Cricket Bauer, donated his personal library to the House Divided Project in 2026.

Pohanka Reading Room

House Divided Project at Dickinson College

More than 2,000 rare Civil War and ninteenth-century US history books



61 N. West Street | Carlisle, PA 17013
Open by appointment
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Welcome to the Pohanka Reading Room

Visit & Discover

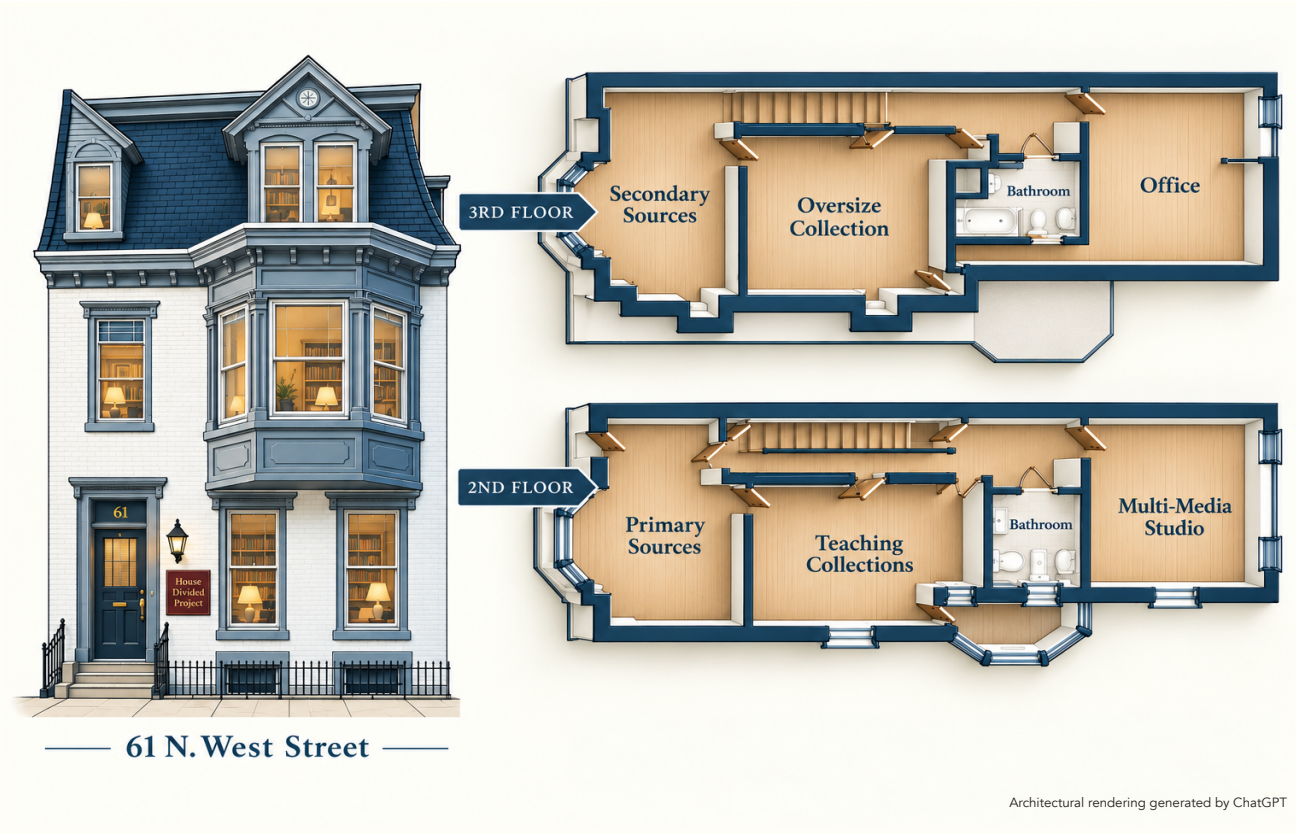
The Pohanka Reading Room at 61 N. West Street is a vital new addition to the House Divided Project at Dickinson College. This non-circulating library of more than two thousand rare Civil War and nineteenth-century US history volumes comes from a variety of sources but mainly from the legacy of noted historian Brian C. Pohanka, '77.

In 2026, Cricket Bauer donated Brian's extensive personal library to the House Divided Project and the Pohanka Family Foundation generously provided funding to help make the collection accessible to the campus and the general public.

The new reading "room" is really several rooms stretched over our two upper floors. Visitors will first encounter a periodical section and a dedicated production studio that our project will be using for extensive classroom-friendly multi-media efforts.

The studio also features a House Divided logo backdrop designed for visitor photos. Further along the second floor, there are two serene reading areas containing rare primary sources and "teaching collections" about the Civil War and various topics in nineteenth-century US history.

On the third floor, visitors will find an array of secondary sources heavily focused on the Civil War era. An adjacent conference room also holds a unique set of oversized volumes offering Civil War battle maps and photography.



Architectural rendering generated by ChatGPT



Multi-Media Studio

Browse Collection

Scan the QR code with your phone to browse the collection

CATALOG