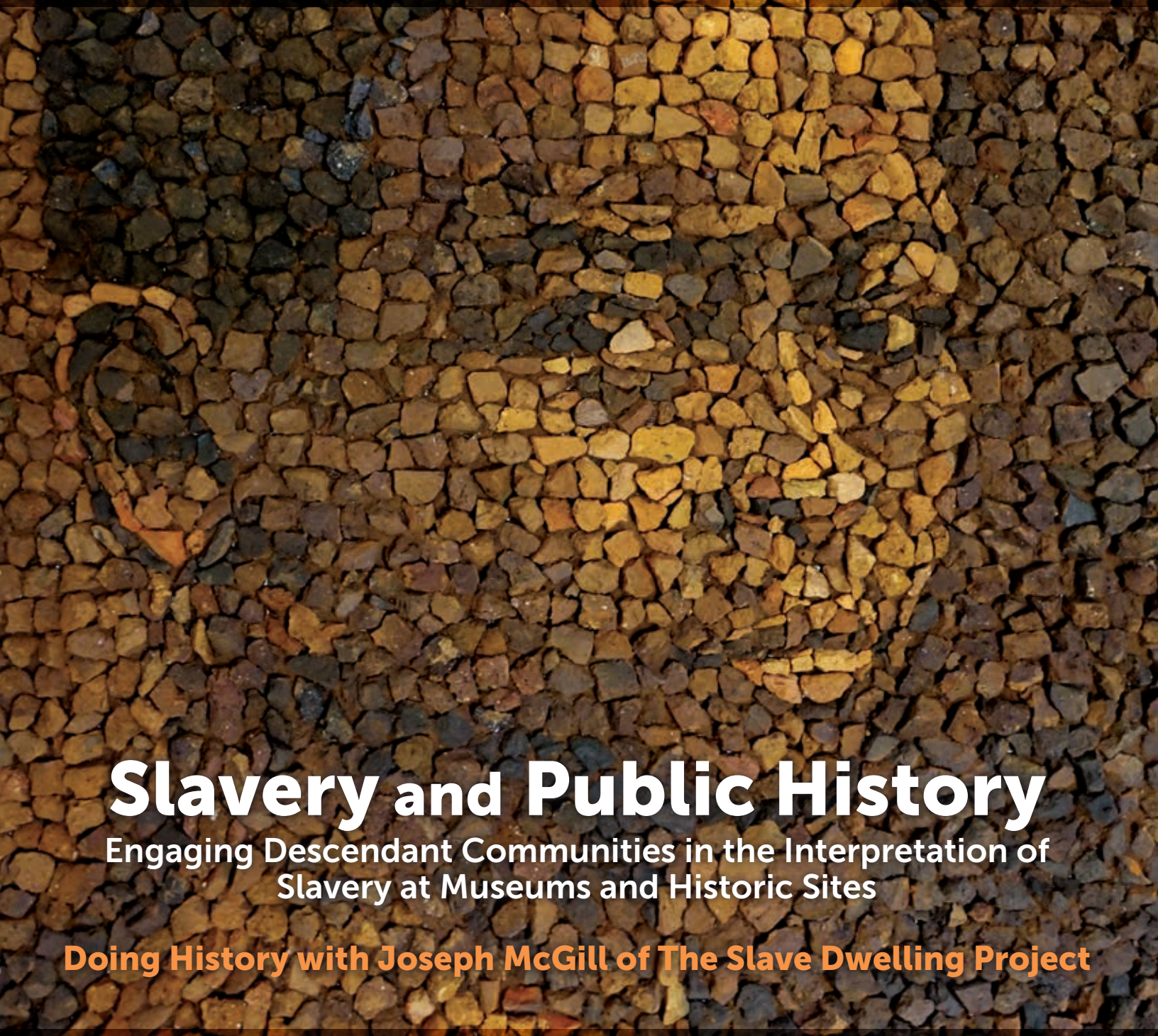
WINTER 2019 *Volume 74, #1*

History News

The MAGAZINE *of the* AMERICAN ASSOCIATION *for* STATE *and* LOCAL HISTORY



Slavery and Public History

Engaging Descendant Communities in the Interpretation of Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites

Doing History with Joseph McGill of The Slave Dwelling Project

Truth, Consequences, and History

Citizen Historians, U.S. Newspapers, and the History of the Holocaust

Uses of the Past in Walt Disney's Worlds

WITHOUT OUR HISTORY ACCESSIBLE ONLINE, PEOPLE IN THE FUTURE CAN MAKE UP WHAT THEY WISH TO BE TRUE ABOUT THE PAST.

DR. KRISTEN GWINN-BECKER
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From the President & CEO

History and Climate Change

Midwinter, a week after the icy polar vortex, a tree in my neighborhood lit with pink blossoms. That night there were tornado sirens, making climate change feel very real. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, 2018 was the fourth hottest year in recorded history; 2016 was the warmest, 2015 and 2017 the second and third warmest. This is a historical record taking shape around us, patterns of cause and effect that go back decades. Scientists, social scientists, and historians can show that rising temperatures are related to human activity.

More of us in the history community should take visible action on climate change. Just as historians and public history practitioners have wrestled with difficult histories having to do with racism and genocide and poverty, we must address how shifting climate will impact our lives and work and the future. Why?

First, it is the biggest issue we face—literally global in scope and measured in centuries. For historical organizations to engage on this is to make history relevant. We need to apply past stories of how our communities dealt with extreme climate events, major technological and economic shifts, and complicated policy debates. We have examples to share of how our ancestors harbored resources and adapted to change. Museums have collections pertaining to long past meteorological conditions, agricultural transformations, patterns of resource extraction, and societal responses to disasters.

Second, we must talk about climate change because history is a discipline built on reason. There's a battle going on between reason and falseness. Facts and evidence matter; historians rely on critical dialogue, practicing history with integrity, and establishing consensus until persuasive new evidence or interpretation of facts emerges. Legitimate scientific discourse long ago moved on from the question of whether climate actually was changing, and cohered around the well-supported theory that human industrial society is responsible. What's lingered in the media and in politics are the smudges of calculated denial campaigns that intentionally obfuscate, delay, and mislead. Historical thinking and scientific thinking are closely related, and they should reinforce each other.

Third, the very historical records, collections, buildings, and landscapes we in the historical profession are charged to protect are vulnerable to the ravages of climate change—floods, fires, tornadoes, hurricanes. Or as I learned in a news report this morning, if you place these in the order of most economically damaging, it's hurricanes first, then heat waves, floods, tornadoes/hail, and finally cold weather. February's polar vortex was a $3-billion blow to the economy. Hurricanes Katrina, Sandy, Harvey, and Maria each did between $70 and $125 billion in economic damage.

While there is an obvious threat to historic structures or museum collections poised close to an Atlantic or Gulf seashore, this is not only about coastal risk. Museums have been flooded hundreds of miles inland; forest fires, made into colossal maelstroms by drought, have struck in the mountains. Wherever a site is located, the stresses can build. Whether the damage is gradual or sudden, it is an existential threat for some historic sites. Through wind, fire, and water, material artifacts, paper records, and edifices will be lost forever. Gone. For good. Climate change also means a rising tide of expenses for all history organizations. Insurance costs. HVAC systems. Flood and fire mitigation. There's also the cost to us all when visitors or staff don't appear, due to weather emergencies. Where I live, these are more frequent each year.

Immersed in the historical record, no one knows better than we do what happens when societies don't adapt. When town leaders are in denial about looming changes to the economy, resource base, or workforce, when they miss chances to begin adjusting course, communities fail. If we keep acting as if each major storm is unique, neither learning from past societies' experiences nor putting the news into larger perspective and seeing patterns, then we spiral.

For the past two years, AASLH has had a Climate and Sustainability Task Force, and we signed onto the *We Are Still In* initiative in July 2018, a national effort to mobilize state and local organizations "to reduce emissions and stem the causes of climate change." We are updating our Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations (StEPs) to include environmental sustainability. Promoting relevance and sustainability are strategic imperatives for AASLH. Let's explore all that historic sites and institutions can do on this issue. Let's be sure that history organizations are at the table when conversations about climate take place. What are we waiting for?

Sincerely,

John R. Dichtl
President & CEO, AASLH

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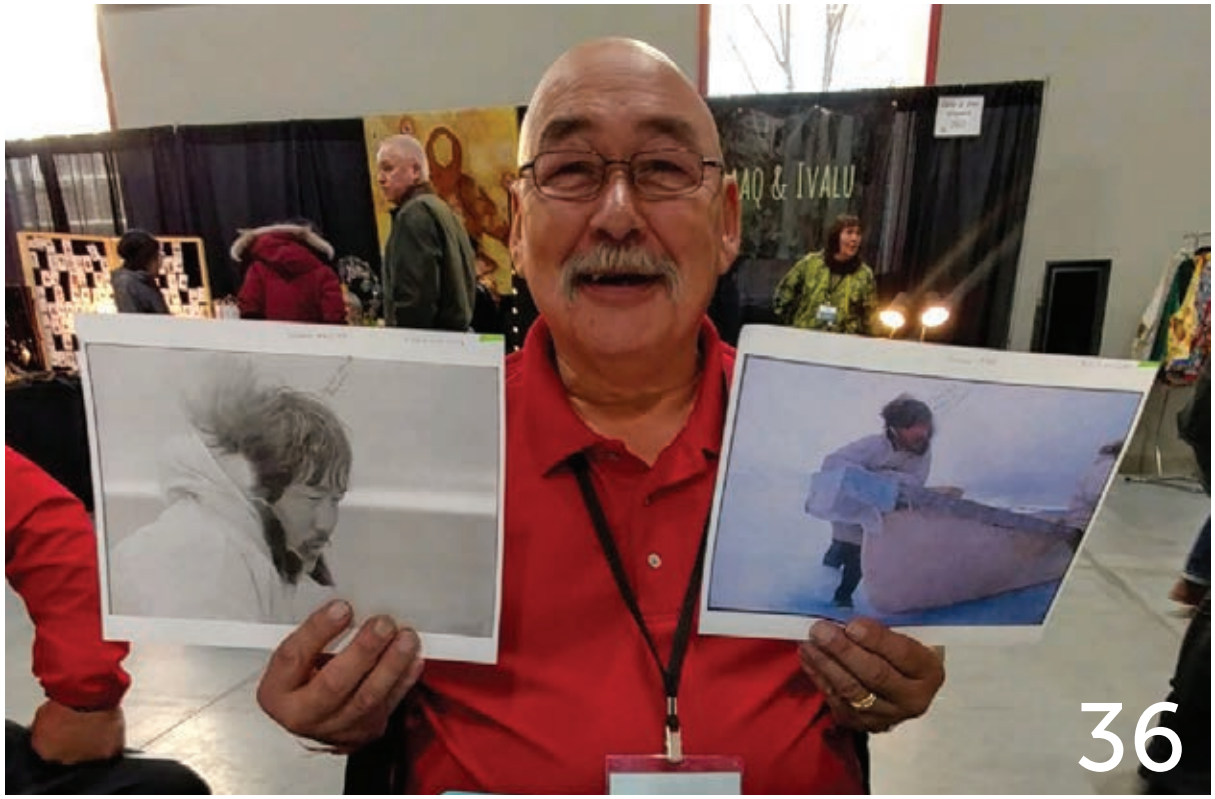


Features

In Every Issue

Technical Leaflet

On the Cover:
"E Pluribus Unum," by Rebecca Warde. Mosaic created from pieces of brick excavated at living quarters of enslaved men, women, and children across Montpelier.

On Local History

BY CAROL KAMMEN

A Multitude, Not a Monolith

To celebrate women is not to ignore men, but it is a way of putting another note on the human historical scale. We are not only soprano and bass but also alto and tenor, and the voices in between. We are a chorus of varied voices and we always have been.

Being a diverse nation has not always been easy and many have fought the idea of inclusion, wanting to preserve an idea of this nation not as it was intended—but as it suited them. Some wanted to create the idea of the nation in the guise of what gave them privilege. To their surprise, the people of the United States have risen as a multitude, as Walt Whitman observed, not a monolith.

Part of our diversity is the fact that one half of the population is female, though looking at the names of buildings and signs on the land, that fact is not reflected. Our history books, until recently, barely recognized the female half of the world.

Think of the women of the Grange, in unions, those in factories who struggled to gain a voice, insisting that they should have a say. Think, too, of women in prohibition societies, from ethnic enclaves who spoke out, women from Indian tribes, and from the African American experience. These were also women who understood the need to have a voice.

I am especially interested in the local leaders of Equal Rights Leagues during the 1890s and early decades of the twentieth century. They were women who saw the link between prohibition and suffrage. They were often rural women who sought the dignity of full participation in our civic life as they "pulled their weight" on the farm. They learned organizational skills in sanitary commissions and in the abolition and prohibition movements and applied them to suffrage. There were many women of that era who were taxed without any representation in the discussion.

It took men some time to understand that to shield women from politics, commerce, and education was to render woman as "morally, an irresponsible being." It took many years and changes in our laws for women to be able to participate equally with men in our democratic process. While most see the Nineteenth Amendment as the achievement of the goal of the suffragists, it was only part of the struggle. It took until the 1970s, when women's participation as jurors became federally mandated and not optional, for women and men to become civic equals.

The National Votes for Women Trail, active for the past few years, intends to place markers for these women and their struggle as part of the national landscape. Their goal is to identify those who spoke out, who organized, who collaborated with other organizations, who walked petitions up and down country roads and city streets. They seek to identify and mark these unrecalled women, to point out the places that matter, and to create marks on the landscape to celebrate their boldness. This effort provides a way to expand the established narrative beyond a few famous women to include the less heralded women who worked to bring our democracy in line with our nation's high ideals—that is, to win for women the vote. We need to remember that there were many who fought for the rights we now enjoy.

The Pomeroy Foundation (www.wgpfoundation.org) has offered to donate 250 purple suffragist signs, to be placed around the country. At first there will be five for each state, later more, as research provides evidence to support other names and places significant to the history of the struggle for the citizenship of all. There will also be an online database, alerting communities to those it might honor.

Tennessee Woman Suffrage Monument at Centennial Park, Nashville, Tennessee.

In my community, we discovered several significant suffrage leaders and their allies in the liberal clergy, among widows, teachers, and others who stepped out to lend their names to the protest for rights. These are people who still have claims in our local communities. This effort should happen in all our hometowns. Researching suffrage will allow us to honor the unsung, the unlooked for, the unexpected male or female suffragists. And we will locate those opposed, for they were in our communities also.

While 1919 is the date of the Nineteenth Amendment, women began working for equality many years before. The Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 is cited as the first organizing attempt, but even before that, women called for their rights. Remember Abigail Adams's plea to John: "Remember the Ladies." The Civil War derailed suffrage efforts, but by 1870, there were many women writing about the need for full partic-

GERRI WINCHELL FINDLEY

The lesson in all this is that we need to honor that work by remembering those who labored for change.

ipation in our government. In 1873, Susan B. Anthony voted—illegally, said the courts—but she and others led the way. In 1878, California Senator Aaron A. Sargent submitted the Susan B. Anthony Amendment to the U.S. Senate. While it failed that year, it was resubmitted for the next forty-one years until it finally gained its dramatic approval by Congress in 1919 and ratification in 1920.

As we all know, a date, for the most part, is a placeholder, representing work on the part of many people who had to explain, cajole, persuade, parade, and work for public understanding. The lesson in all this is that we need to honor that work by remembering those who labored for change. We need to see in their struggle the secret of our democracy—that for the arc of justice to bend, we all need to take part.

The struggle for suffrage, which the National Votes for Women Trail seeks to publicize and memorialize in roadside markers, is one way that the past can show us the way forward. The past also gives us hope that we can be a better people, but to become so, we need to keep that goal in mind and put our bodies and energy on the front line. Our democracy is always in need of protecting. Knowing the past and honoring it, we signal to the present and future that we all need to be involved, and that protection of that which is of value demands the effort of us all.

Protest for what is right is not a male or a female issue; it is not about one segment of society or of any political party. It is about all of us adding our voices to the human choir.

"On Local History" is intended to encourage dialogue on the essential issues of local history. Carol Kammen can be reached at ckk6@cornell.edu.

The Whole is Greater

BY LESLIE LORANCE

Let Your Partners Lead the Way

Prior to being appointed to the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites' ADA committee, I didn't think about visitor accessibility very much.

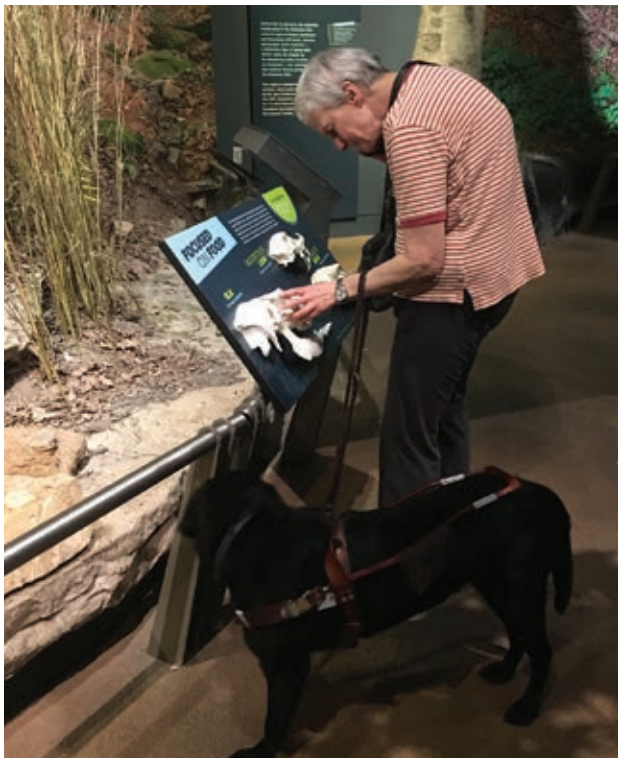
The extent of my involvement was to make sure all videos produced were captioned for the hearing impaired in order to fulfill ADA compliance. Then I was asked to be the project manager for a new tour app the museum wanted to develop. The goal of the app was to give visitors with impaired vision the ability to navigate the museum galleries independently.

Because of our lack of experience in this area, we knew it would be critical to work with community partners who could help us in creating an app that worked for the community we hoped to serve.

In order to ensure we were creating standards that were in alignment with our target audiences' needs, we worked with the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Bosma Enterprises, the National Center on Accessibility, and other individuals. We solicited their critical feedback during all phases of development, on everything from tactile elements to audio directions and app functionality.

One extra challenge was that while we were developing the app, we were also renovating the galleries. However, this challenge would prove to be the most important aspect for creating an integrated museum experience for all visitors.

As we started to work on the content and design for the new galleries, we made the decision to think beyond the standard accessibility guidelines to see how we could provide a more universal experience. This meant looking at the app as part of the overall experience rather than as an add-on. Decisions we made in the app's development forced us to examine how all visitors might interact within exhibit spaces. We found that it was important to create a cohesive storyline early in the process to ensure better integration for accessible design within the galleries. This allowed us to produce an app that pulled visitors into the space and engaged them, rather than them passively moving from stop to stop. We did that using multi-sensory elements such as touchable animal furs and skulls, 3-D maps, soundscapes, and interactive media kiosks incorporated into the exhibits that provided tangible points of interest for mobile app tour stops.



INDIANA STATE MUSEUM

A visitor explores a tactile exhibit panel at the Indiana State Museum.

However, after doing research, talking to organizations, and visiting the American Printing House for the Blind, it became clear there were no standard reference points for best practices to develop universal visitor accessibility within the museum environment, especially in conjunction with a tour app. There were no consistent guidelines for features, including wayfinding indicators like floor bumps, tactile labels and maps, directional audio descriptions, and app wireframe layouts. Even the conversation we had with the American Printing House for the Blind about the angle at which braille is placed on graphic panels was an "aha!" moment for us! A panel's angle can make all the difference in how easy it is to read with a hand, but there weren't any standards for the best angle. We realized we had to create our own standard guidelines and keep them consistent throughout the design process.

Throughout four focus group sessions, our partners were instrumental in providing insight into how we could best create a museum experience that serves people with visual impairments. We discussed how someone with a cane might navigate the galleries differently than someone with a guide dog. We tested stop directions, reviewed tactile map prototypes, identified wayfinding problems and designed app content that works with a device's built-in accessibility features.

Having never used a smartphone's accessibility features myself, I had no idea how they could work in conjunction with the app's button layout to provide better access to content. However, because our partners extensively rely on their devices' accessibility features, they were able to show us.

As an example, tour apps are generally designed to give tours using a narrator to deliver the content. But the students from the Indiana School for the Blind and

The challenges we faced were great learning opportunities for us to better understand how we can serve all our visitors and provide each of them a full museum experience.

Visually Impaired tended to prefer having the screen reader on their smartphones read content to them. This prompted us to add a text button in the app, making the narrator's content available in transcript form. With the text button activated, students could then go through the tour at their own pace, since the speed of the screen reader can be adjusted to individual preferences.

Another insight our partners provided was the need to establish specific directional starting points at the beginning of each gallery and at every stop. During the first test of the app, we noticed that focus group participants were most often facing the wrong way when they were ready to go to the next stop on the tour. This was because they were moving around while listening to the stop's content. We had to work out the best language to use for directional instruction, including where to begin, which way to turn, and how to measure stop distances. But this too presented another challenge, because each tester had their own preferences as to the best way to describe these navigational directions. Taking all of that into consideration, we worked with testers to create a standard that could be consistent throughout the tour and something our audience could easily adapt too.

When we made the decision to create an app primarily for helping people who have low vision or are blind, we knew we were creating it for a niche audience, but an important one. The challenges we faced were great learning opportunities for us to better understand how we can serve all our visitors and provide each of them a full museum experience. And although there weren't any guidelines to help us in creating this app, with the support and feedback from our community partners, we hope we have developed something that ultimately provides visually impaired visitors the ability to independently navigate the museum experience, while also helping the museum community further its conversation about accessibility integration and ADA standards.

One of my favorite moments of this project came when a student at the School for the Blind who tested the app said, "I hated going to museums. But this app makes me want to go to a museum." I take that as a great measure of success.

Leslie Lorance is a video producer, educator, and multimedia developer with over eighteen years of museum experience. She loves creating interactive exhibitions and documentary style videos, and has a passion for sharing ideas and connecting with others to help push the boundaries of accessibility for all visitors. Leslie can be reached at LeslieLorance@gmail.com.

TRUTH, CONSEQUENCES,

BY DAN SNOW

"I want to start with a story,

not about a place, not about a historical site, but about a person. A person I met while we were sitting on a dried-up lava flow in the northeast of Congo. Her name was May, and she was a survivor of the random genocide, the appalling civil war, and the constant violence that had gone on in the eastern Congo ever since the 1990s. She witnessed the genocide. She escaped from it. I think we all know what that means. She's unwilling to talk too much about her experiences, the way in which she was able to avoid the fate of the rest of her family.

She joined a huge group of refugees that marched through the Congo looking for safety. The fighting followed her. She witnessed incredible barbarity. She witnessed sickness, kids being abandoned. She witnessed everything that you can imagine. And she now lives in the eastern Congo and she has a job. She's carved out a role for herself working for Human Rights Watch as a local organizer. She runs a network of women who walk from village to village because there is no justice, no organized justice in the northeast Congo. There is violence, particularly violence towards women, and there is no recourse. There is no police force or system of courts. She does the only thing that she can do which is she takes a pen and a piece of paper and with this network of women they walk out to villages and they take witness statements from, usually, young women who have been subjected to war crimes. Because there's nothing else they can do. She said she just wants to just give them the dignity of writing down their experiences. Those are then gathered up and then she makes sure a copy is saved in-country and a copy is saved out. She actually sends it off to Europe. And talking to her I had this transformation. I had this very, incredibly poignant moment of just realizing what the heck history is for and what we're all doing here.

Dan Snow (right) delivered these remarks as a keynote address at the AASLH Annual Meeting in Kansas City, Missouri in September 2018. They have been edited for length and clarity.

AND HISTORY

DON SHEPARD,
DON SHEPARD PHOTOGRAPHY

TRUTH, CONSEQUENCES, AND HISTORY

The people that have committed those crimes are not going to be caught. They'll never be brought before justice in this life. But when historians come back and ask what happened in the eastern Congo, those women will not be anonymous. They will not be forgotten. They will not be statistics. Their words, their experiences will be remembered. They will be enshrined on those pieces of paper in those archives. So, when the questions are asked about what happened then, history will be able to learn. They will have an element of justice. Sadly, not in this life but many years down the road. And it just reminded me, she is the best historian I ever met.

History is, and what we're all doing is, you write down the stuff we've done, the bad stuff and the good stuff, and then future generations can read that and they can avoid the bad stuff and emulate the good stuff. It's about preserving the actions, things that have happened in the past so they may act both as a warning and as inspiration to future generations. We need history. I don't know about you, but I was a student in the 1990s. The '90s were a funny old time. With Francis Fukuyama, it was "the end of history," do you remember that? No one needed history anymore because we'd won! The western liberal [tradition] and everything was sorted. No more problems. And communism was gone. China was joining the WTO. Everything was just fine. Liberal democracy had triumphed, and everyone said, "Why do you do history?" Well, people don't ask me that any more.

In fact, history is back in a big way and we are living through historic times. And that's not necessarily a good thing. In June and July, the *Washington Post* calculated that [President Donald Trump] averaged sixteen false claims a day. Britain is not perfect. We voted for Brexit. And Brexit [featured] a gigantic bus with a provable, demonstrable falsehood that drove around the country and influenced people to vote for [it]. So, we are engulfed by fake news. We're engulfed by lies. And this is going on all over society.

That's where you guys come in. [A] 2018 poll showed that history museums and sites are more trusted than the Internet. 80 percent of people said that history museums are considered trustworthy. You are the places, you are the venue, you are where people can go and interact with those stories of our past, with what has happened. You therefore are the place where we go and talk, where we can interrogate our own memories. It encourages us. It motivates us. It encourages us, for example, to avoid a painful repeat of things that didn't go very well in the past, to seek and emulate the satisfying experiences of the past.

History is full of examples of fake news and how it's been overcome in the past and the consequences of that falsehood. In the 1640s…was the first giant explosion of fake news, which was the result of technology. The printing press. Literacy. Suddenly people had ability to produce material and there were no gate keepers any more. In 1641, the English government lifted the ban on newspapers effectively and within four years there were seven thousand newspapers in circulation. William Lilly's best-selling *A Prophesy of the White King* (1644) predicted the downfall and defeat of Charles I. [It] sold 1,800 copies in three days and it's completely deranged. It's gibberish. And an MP at this time said, "His writings have kept up the spirits of the soldiers and honest people of the realm and many of us parliament men." So, this idea of

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World War I troops departing New Bedford, Massachusetts.

fake news and propaganda sustaining people politically is very important.

King Charles eventually had to fight fire with fire. He allowed the establishment of newspapers. He even employed some of the previous fake news guys from the other side. In December 1643, one royalist newspaper said that a parliamentary prisoner had skipped going to church on a Sunday because he was having sex with a horse instead. Some of those newspapers got so popular they actually got counterfeited on the streets, partly by people hoping to make a buck by selling, saying, "This is a copy of your favorite newspaper." Forgery was important, and obscuring the truth was very important. And as a result, England was plunged into the bloodiest war in its history.

History is literally from the Greek word "to inquire."

[In] the twentieth century, the British government lied to its people during World War II. When the German supersonic rockets, the V2s, started landing in London, they said they were accidental explosions of gas mains. The British government organized a national savings drive. People could invest their money. They said it was going to munitions. It wasn't. It was just designed to keep inflation down. Not a penny of that was going toward buying munitions. The royal family, God bless them, said they spent every night with fellow Londoners sleeping in Buckingham Palace. That was not true. They were actually going to that palace a little bit farther out of town, in Windsor, where they would sleep. And sometimes those lies worked, but in the short term. This is why we'll talk about consequences. David Lloyd George, as you heard, is my great-great-grandfather. And he told the editor of one of Britain's great newspapers in 1917, "If the people really knew the truth the war would be stopped tomorrow. But of course they don't know and they can't know." In the same way, Churchill admitted in one of his great speeches in May 1940, that there had been falsehoods in them but "this is no time for truth, truth would come later." So people lie. Politicians lie. They lie to get themselves out of a fix. But there are consequences, and they give you a very, very serious long-term issue.

Take for example the U.S. government suppressing news of the first battle of Manassas when initial reports said that the U.S. government and the U.S. Army had been victorious and the government suppressed the subsequent report saying that they'd been defeated. Well, that might work to avoid a panic in the next hours and days following the battle, but you got a little issue there because you've destroyed your credibility when people, inevitably, find out that battle hadn't been won. The British government was just as bad. During the little skirmish at Lexington and Concord, the *London Gazette*, which was the official organ of the British government at the time said, "A report having been printed and published of a skirmish between some of the people of the province of Massachusetts Bay and it attacked some of His Majesty's troops it's proper to inform the public that no advices have yet been received of any such event." And during the first World War, at a very low point for journalists in the history of their trade, Britain organized very strict censorship. Again, the *Guardian* wrote, "On the first day of the battle of the Somme our casualties not very heavy. The first day of the offensive is very satisfactory, a slow, continuous, methodical push, sparing in lives." That, my friends, was the single bloodiest day in the history of Britain: sixty thousand people killed or wounded in one day, twenty thousand killed. And that stirred up huge problems because one journalist wrote in his diary that the common soldier was coming to have a greater detestation for the institution of war correspondent even than for his own generals. And that is saying something.

TRUTH, CONSEQUENCES, AND HISTORY

The *Daily Mail* asked their war correspondents to double down on German atrocities during the First World War. They asked them, if necessary, to make up stories to make the Germans look particularly bad. So, one journalist obliged. He said he'd seen a baby rescued out of a house Germans had set on fire. Thousands of readers wrote in asking to adopt the baby. The paper hastily announced the baby had suddenly and mysteriously died of a terribly contagious disease that meant it couldn't even be buried. Had to be destroyed. So they couldn't even go visit the grave.

And who can forget Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf, known in America as "Baghdad Bob," Saddam Hussein's information minister who thought he'd get himself out of trouble by saying there was no problem, the Iraqi armies were holding out against the allied advance, then obviously became a laughing stock and completely undercut whatever legitimacy or whatever belief the Iraqi had left in their leader. Look at the German battle fleet blockaded one hundred years ago today [September 27, 2018] by the American and British battleships in Wilhelmshaven in northern Germany. They'd been told they'd won the battle and they'd been told they defeated the mighty Royal Navy and yet then they wondered why they were just rotting away in port, obviously still blockaded and why their families were risking starvation in Germany. Well, that is an example of lies ending up as massively destabilizing because it was that group of sailors who led the revolution against Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany and helped to bring the war to a dramatic end. So in Iraq, in Imperial Germany, you can see how these lies undermined the legitimacy of a regime and actually could bring about its collapse.

Another example that I just had on my podcast the other day concerns—you're not going to believe this, guys—Moscow['s] deci[sion] to intervene in a U.S. presidential election. It thought one candidate would be more hostile to its interests than another and it was determined to intervene, trying to boost the chances of that other candidate. They injected propaganda, fake news, [and] forgery, into U.S. society. Front organizations, false articles in the press. Ladies and gentlemen, who can forget the presidential election of 1984? A concerted Soviet attempt to interfere with the U.S. election using so-called counter measures and it was a complete and utter failure. So, that's correct. *Nothing more to really talk about there.* There was a very sensible response to Russian counter measures: the public were told to inquire, to read more newspapers, to broaden their horizons. Imagine if there was a subject that you could teach kids which taught [them] to evaluate, to be cynical, not to just listen to the pronouncements of politicians or guys on TV, and opinion polls. Guys, you know, we have that subject, and it's called history. It's what you guys do every single day. History is literally from the Greek word "to inquire." And from the beginning, history has been the enemy of untruth. It's been the enemy of dogma.

As you can see, truth is foundational. Without it we can't build democracies. You can't build organizations or families or relationships. We cannot thrive as institutions unless we are armed with the truth. We cannot thrive as individuals. I can believe comforting lies about myself. In fact, I often am very tempted to do so but I'm only going to thrive if I face the pressing reality of my existence. And without truth there can be no trust, and there can be no collaboration.

One thing that I've seen as well is there also can be no healing. We can't make decisions about how to best organize our society, how to best divide up our resources, how to best manage competing interests, unless we are honest about how we got to where we are today. I've talked to Maori oral historians about their dispossession by the British. I've talked to Havasupai and Hopi communities in Arizona about their experience at the hands of settlers. I've met people on both sides of the divide in Israel/Palestine, South Africa, Holocaust survivors and perpetrators, Cambodia, and Northern Ireland, and what I've really noticed is that there is a huge unresolved anger and inability to move forward if their people are denied the truth. The process of healing and rebuilding after conflict can only take place—has to begin—with honesty, honesty about history. And that's where you guys come in.

The editor of the *Springfield Republican* newspaper in the 1860s wrote, "The brilliant mission of this newspaper is to be the high priest of history, the great enemy of tyrants, and the right arm of liberty." Another quote I like about history is that "History provides guidance in everyday lives." That's from Cicero. He was right. I prefer Cicero's quotes about history to Queen Elsa's from *Frozen* when she sings, "The past is in the past." What nonsense. The past is clearly not in the past. All you have to do is talk to the people who voted for Brexit because they believe the past is a vibrant place that they can return to. You could talk to the foot soldiers of the Islamic state who seek to recreate the caliphate that existed 1,500 years ago. History is what legitimizes our claims to other people's territory. History, I'm afraid, Elsa, is certainly not confined to the past. And it's hugely important. Mussolini once said, when a historian asked him for permission to enter the Italian archives in 1925, "This is a time for myths, not history."

I've worked with sites of conscience groups, many of them are here today. They told me the story about the Russian museum in the gulag that's been effectively shut down and suppressed because the truth of its tell-

ing power in Russia is too painful, it's too dangerous, for the Russian regime to let it continue. Tiananmen Square does still not appear on any of the Chinese search engines within China. So that's what we're up against. But that's what your sector represents: the central front in this battle for truth and this battle to create great citizens. And I've been learning a lot about the dynamism of the sector in the U.S. and I'm incredibly optimistic and excited by what I've learned already. What I've noticed is people are extremely engaged with history that gives them insights about the present, that talks about fascism, that talks about the rise of the far right in Europe, that talks about migration, that talks about economic collapse. That is what people are absolutely obsessed with learning about. Many of their institutions are sharing, demonstrating best practice in that area. They are the projects, they are the programs, they are the books that arm people with knowledge of what has gone before. And of course, as I've already mentioned, talking to sites of

History has been the enemy of untruth and dogma.

conscience and turning memory, turning that history into action and activism in the present.

Seneca, the Roman philosopher, said that "Time discovers truth," and it strikes me that you guys…That's what you guys do. You're discovering truth, preserving that truth and you're transmitting that truth. And it's without that truth we don't have any chance because without that truth people will believe anything. Without truth we lose that experience gained with such appalling hardship and bloodshed, sweat, and tears by our ancestors. And we also lose the complexity of our own story and the chance to learn lessons from it. Without that truth we forget what we're capable of. Going back to May in the Congo, what we're capable of both at our best and our worst. So I want to live in a society where we can face the truth about us and what we've done and then plot a way forward, not one in which we can wrap ourselves in a protective blanket of lies. I want to live in a society where institutions like yours are prominent, well-resourced, and strong. ●

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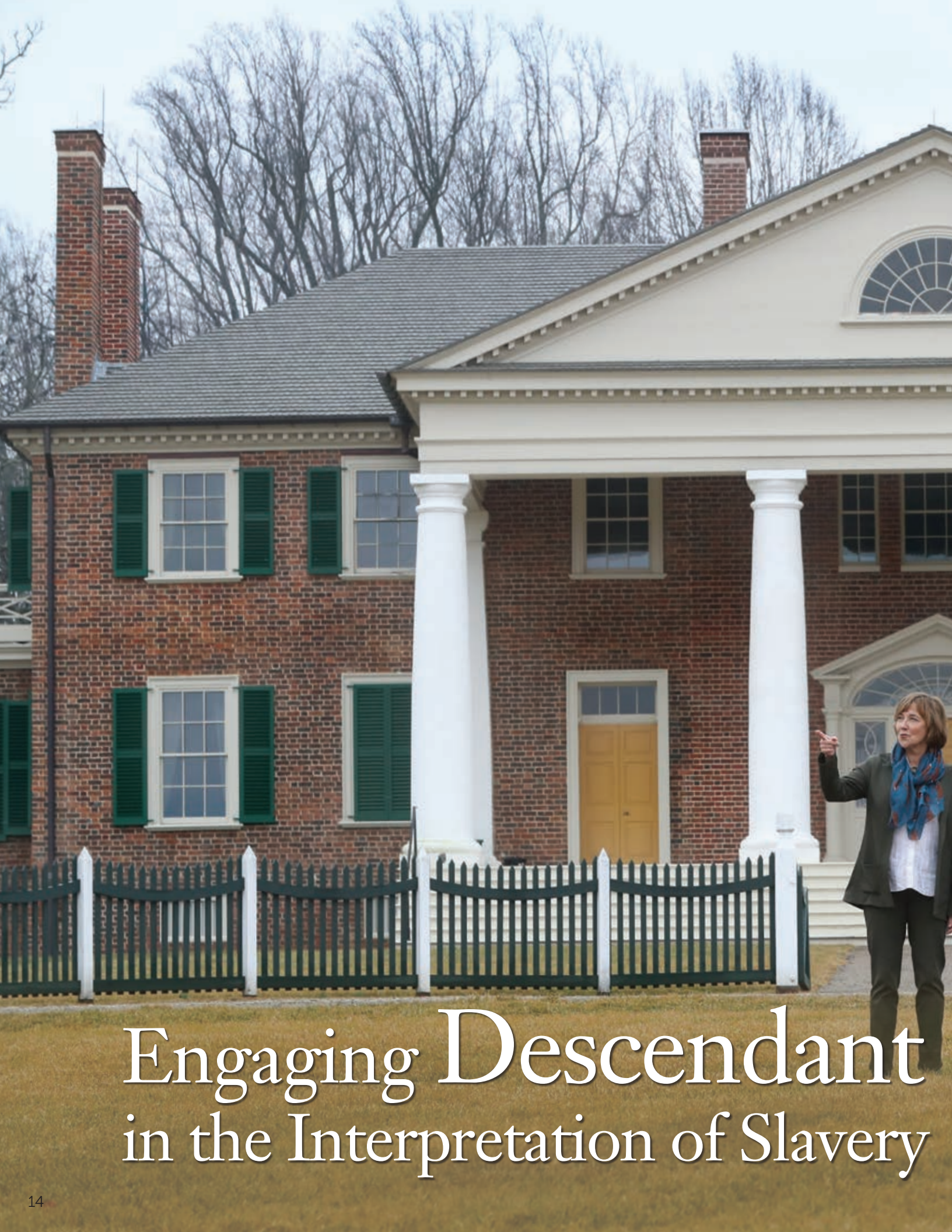


Engaging Descendant in the Interpretation of Slavery

Communities
at Museums and Historic Sites

By the National Summit on Teaching Slavery

Note: This article introduces and contextualizes the assessment rubric included as this issue's *Technical Leaflet*. To view the full report, visit https://digitaldoorway.montpelier.org/engaging-descendant-communities-in-the-interpretation-of-slavery.

In partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, James Madison's Montpelier convened the inaugural National Summit on Teaching Slavery in February 2018. Kat Imhoff, President and CEO of the Montpelier Foundation, stated that the summit represented "an important step towards creating a more honest and equitable version of history for future generations. … We are convening as an interdisciplinary workshop of peers with the concrete and important goal of creating a rubric for public historians to work with descendants." In that spirit, educators, curators, scholars, activists, museum and historic site practitioners, and descendants convened to deliberate on the best ideas and practices for teaching slavery in a more engaging and inclusive manner that incorporates the stories and experiences of enslaved people through the voices of their descendants.

In its most fundamental form, a "descendant community" is a group of people whose ancestors were enslaved at a particular site, but it can transcend that limited definition. A descendant community can include those whose ancestors were enslaved not only at a particular site, but also throughout the surrounding region, reflecting the fact that family ties often crossed plantation boundaries. A descendant community can also welcome those who feel connected to the work the institution is doing, whether or not they know of a genealogical connection.

Empowering descendant voices challenges the public to consider their points of view, which until very recently have been marginalized from the dominant historical narratives. Beyond simply gaining historical information, institutions working respectfully with descendants can forge connections critical to their work.

Recent events reaffirmed the sense of urgency and gravity of this work. While racist violence is a hallmark of American history, the tragedy that resulted from a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville (thirty miles from Montpelier) in August 2017 drew attention to the gaps in ethical education about the history and ongoing legacies of American chattel slavery, and the need for shared understanding of it. Numerous communities in the nation are wrestling with ways to address the presence of over 700 Confederate monuments, 551 of which were installed decades after the end of the Civil War as statements of white supremacy. A recent study by the Southern Poverty Law Center described the inadequate state of education in elementary and high schools regarding the teaching of American chattel slavery (and the authors of that study participated in the National Summit on Teaching Slavery). Yet, at the same time, several ongoing initiatives at historic sites like Montpelier, Monticello, Somerset Place, Stagville, and history museums like the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture suggest better ways to engage the public in the painful topic of slavery and its lingering injustices while also building community.

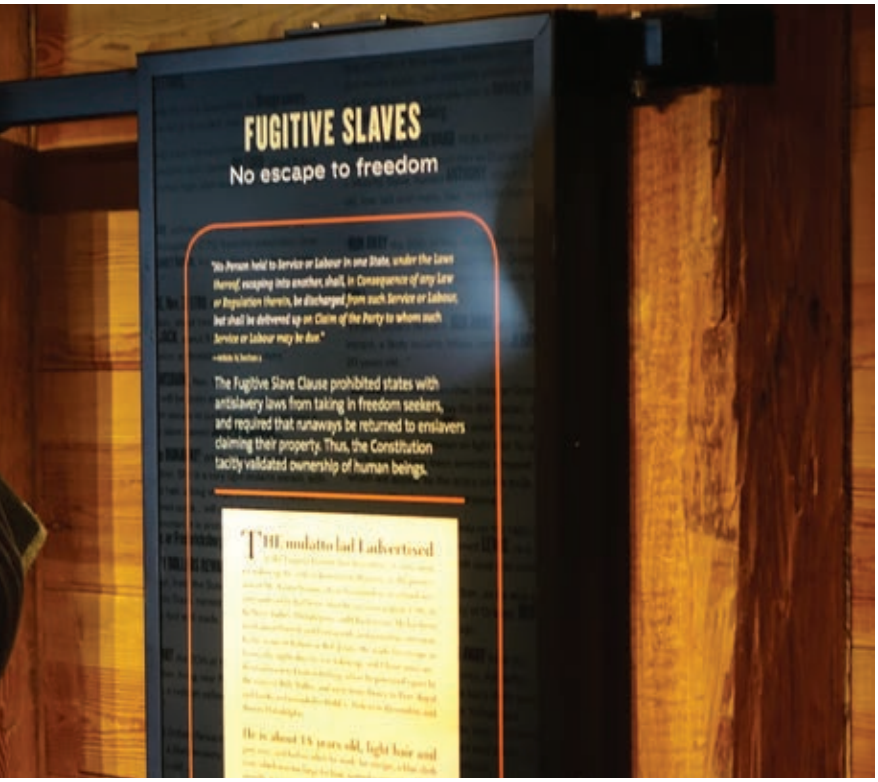
Previous page: Brent Leggs and Kat Imhoff outside James Madison's Montpelier.

ALL PHOTOS JAMES MADISON'S MONTPELIER

A Rubric of Best Practices

The rubric created by the National Summit on Teaching Slavery is an assessment and development tool that measures and builds an organization's capability and commitment to teach slavery. Motivated by a belief in the need for action, and confident that affirming truthful history can influence a larger public towards positive reconciliation, the Summit participants present this rubric to assist teachers, public historians, interpretation professionals, and descendant communities in addressing American history in a spirit of restorative justice and shared understanding. We hope that this rubric is viewed and utilized as a foundation upon which to construct richer, more diverse narratives that bring people to better understand the lived experience of slavery and its legacy, as well as to highlight examples of perseverance that carry descendants' legacies into the future. We hope it will continue to be revised as it is used and evaluated.

The rubric provides a methodology for openly addressing the central role slavery played in the development of the United States, as well as its lasting impact on American society today, in ways that highlight our shared humanity. Drawing from lessons learned at museums and historic sites, in classrooms, and relying on current scholarship, the rubric is comprised of three pillars upon which to build descendant engagement: historical research, relationship building, and interpretation.



Ahmad Ward considers a panel in *The Mere Distinction of Color* exhibit.

Failing to tell the truth about race and slavery results in widely-held fears of engaging with people who look, speak, act, or think differently than oneself.

Ashley Rogers captures content at the National Summit on Teaching Slavery.

We see the rubric's emphasis on these three pillars as equally essential for museums and historic sites if they wish to engage effectively and ethically in much-needed truth-telling about slavery's role in the shaping of the United States, the legacy it continues to have on race relations in America, and the lingering institutional disparities that prevent all Americans from realizing the ideals expressed in our founding documents. Failing to tell the truth about race and slavery results in widely-held fears of engaging with people who look, speak, act, or think differently than oneself. It is lived out in anger and despair in feeling marginalized, erased, and invisible due to demographics or identity. It is experienced in the harmful effects of racism on the public's physical, mental, and spiritual health. And it is experienced tragically, violently, and fatally in Ferguson, Charlottesville, Charleston, and places in between.

The rubric contains definitions of key terms and concrete steps to affirm authentic history, make connections, and strive for dialogue in ways that encourage responsible, rigorous, and relevant encounters with the history of slavery, including difficult themes and traumatic legacies. The three pillars provide a foundation for authentic, effective, and sustainable engagement with audiences in a much-needed conversation that reveals the truths about slavery and its legacy. This rubric will assist institutions as they engage not just the public, but also their own employees, leadership, boards, and donors, who may have never heard these truths, and find them threatening to the ideals upon which they believe this country was founded, and more personally, threatening to their perceptions of themselves.

Embarking on this work has inherent risks and discomforts, but by using the rubric, institutions can better identify and manage risks. This rubric can help them avoid reactionary practices, and prevent them from knowingly or unintentionally contributing to an interpretation of history that provides inauthentic accounts and meaning-making that serves to alienate and traumatize visitors of color. As teachers of history, we strive to ensure a more inclusive narrative. This is a first step to that end.

Evaluating an Institution

The rubric evaluates the success of the institution in meeting the criteria through a ranking of 0-4 (0 being unsatisfactory and 4 being exemplary). In devising the rubric, Summit participants wanted to bring an organization through a staged analysis of its ability to engage with the descendant community. The rubric assumes that participants are already engaged with a descendant community and want to improve the relationship. As such, institutions engaging this rubric start at their current level and build from there.

The performance levels are listed from exemplary to unsatisfactory. The ultimate goal is a full partnership

Panel in *The Mere Distinction of Color* featuring Hugh Alexander, descendant of Paul Jennings.

between the institution and the descendant community. By working backwards, we seek to lead the participants through a series of stages attainable by all parties (descendants, staff, leadership, and board) over time. It is essential that the rubric have entry points suited to a range of institutions with varying experiences and capacities. Museums and historic sites should use this rubric to assess their current state of performance and define aspirational goals as they relate to organizational research. This can be difficult, as it requires a fair amount of introspection and a willingness to confront hard truths known and unknown about the organization. However, there is no predetermined starting point. What is important is to strive toward more equitable practice.

Of particular note is that as historic sites and museums progress along the rubric, descendants are increasingly inside the organization instead of outside. It is helpful to think of this work as true collaboration that will result in the institutional perspective of the museum being de-centered in favor of a descendant perspective. Descendants of enslaved people have not only been largely excluded from interpretation in museums, but when they are included, they are compartmentalized, tokenized, and used only when convenient.

What does true collaborative practice look like? It may mean hiring descendants as researchers. It may mean asking first: "Do you want these stories told? What is important to you?" Open lines of communication are necessary to establish trust and collaboration. Without it, institutional perspective will dominate, and the opportunity for rightful inclusion of the descendant community is lost.

In all projects and in all departments, institutions must be humble and self-aware about their histories, their legacies, and their reputations. Working with descendant communities is about building trust and restoring justice. Working alongside descendants is critical to achieve innovative interpretation and field-advancing research.

Remember: descendants can be your greatest resource. Use this as a tremendous opportunity to learn.

Multi-disciplinary Research

The study of slavery is fundamental to any understanding of American history. To effectively understand and present a comprehensive understanding of slavery in America, museums must engage as many avenues of inquiry as possible, and do so collaboratively with the descendant community. This means not only engaging with historical documents, but also including archaeological excavations, oral history, architectural history, and other forms of material culture analysis. This multi-disciplinary and multi-vocal research approach forms the basis of historical interpretation. Libraries, archives, museums, historic sites, and other repositories maintain abundant source materials in all these disciplines relating to the institution of slavery and the lived experiences of African and African American people in colonial America and the United States between 1619 and 1865.

A perceived lack of primary documentary sources is sometimes used as a justification for minimal slavery interpretation at museums and historic sites, with the argument that "we simply don't know enough." But even in the absence of documents written by or about enslaved people at a particular site, a creative and expansive approach to primary source analysis can ensure that interpreters incorporate stories of the enslaved into the interpretive narrative. Although sources have to be used and interpreted with care, this information is not "hidden."

While significant information about the lives of enslaved people is available to researchers in libraries and archives, these materials can remain difficult for members of the public to access. The sources have the potential to create impactful and thought-provoking interpretation, yet institutions have allowed them to remain buried beneath the ground of the past, choosing to provide the public instead with partial truths. This is often the result of decisions made by institutions trying to protect the image of enslavers, or choosing to focus on elite culture and dominant narratives, rather than relating narratives that are more inclusive.

In addition to documentary research, other forms of research can deeply inform the interpretation of slavery, especially material culture studies such as archaeology and art and architectural history. These disciplines can provide

important detail that historical documents rarely reveal, ranging from cultural practices, consumer behavior, relationships of power, landscape change and orientation, and diet, that aid in understanding the types of objects and possessions enslaved laborers used. Material culture disciplines also provide data for the lives of the people on a specific site, providing tangible, physical evidence of the presence of enslaved laborers through their possessions and homes, and the conditions under which they lived and labored. Additionally, these disciplines provide active opportunities for descendant communities to engage in the process of discovery, analysis, and interpretation.

Furthermore, although those who were formerly enslaved are now ancestors long gone, their descendants still have much to contribute to the research process in the present day. The rubric promotes a changed practice in cultural institutions, enabling public historians to work alongside descendants to research the past and tell compelling stories about enslaved people, incorporating essential family oral histories, long dismissed as unreliable sources by many academic historians.

The accounts of what occurred, as recorded in letters, account books, plantation records, local newspapers, and other public records, all collectively create a body of information of historical significance. This data must be supplemented by the oral histories and other materials, such as genealogical records and family heirlooms that the descendant communities possess, to render whole a valuable and shared integral component of American history.

Descendant communities should be involved at all levels of interpretation and education. Their communities should be reflected in the institutional mission and value statements, with resources dedicated to sustaining such involvement. Descendants should also be included in aspirational conversations about future site or interpretive planning, and in active exhibition or program development. When possible, descendants should be represented on staff, or compensated as consultants for their time and efforts. Institutional narratives should be inclusive of all contributors to the historical record, and should treat various types of primary sources with equity. Those narratives should reflect agency and humanity, cultivate empathy in visitors for the people of the past, and emphasize the relevance of history today.

Not all museums or historic sites are created equal. Disparities in funding and institutional commitment, the progress of previous research, staff awareness of and familiarity (or lack thereof) with existing communities or individuals, and prior institutional successes or failures in engagement, will all affect an institution's ability to engage with descendant communities to offer public programs or exhibitions that are ethical, inclusive, and relevant. However, an institution that makes no effort at engagement fails to fulfill its public and professional responsibilities. ●

Niya Bates and colleagues discuss criteria for relationship building during the National Summit on Teaching Slavery.

Sharing Power and Voice with Descendants

by Michael Blakey, Ph.D.
National Endowment for the Humanities Professor of Anthropology, College of William and Mary; Montpelier Descendant Community

The rubric presented here represents a consensus of the thinking of a broad range of experienced professional site interpreters, scholars, and members of descendant communities, formalizing a methodology and evaluative criteria for true public engagement—an engagement with descendants that would allow accurate and equitable narratives of slavery and the enslaved. These solutions are the rational and ethical extension of ubiquitous conversations of the public at historic sites and museums.

In the more than two decades since the term "descendant community" was drawn from language of the National Historic Preservation Act and first applied as an empowering handle for African Americans who rallied to dignify the New York African Burial Ground, a struggle for the human right to memorialize and tell their own stories has continued to grow. In some quarters "civic engagement" seeks little more than to co-opt communities into researchers' and interpreters' own narratives. In others, it seeks to enable an authentic dialogue about the past in a plural democracy in which descendants have a specific right to be heard and to benefit equitably from sites of their history, long denied them. This rubric is for the latter.

Giles Morris and Evelyn Higginbotham explore interactive maps in *The Mere Distinction of Color.*

The fruits of conjoined interpretive and descendant communities are already apparent at some sites that have taken the long-view toward forging real, empathetic relationships and honest critical conversations over time. To try, face criticism, and invite it again represents commitment to an assumed shared humanity of self and other, without which no humane story of our collective ancestors can be told. The Summit reached out to incorporate representatives of many of the major United States' historic sites, with differing experiences along the continuum of public engagement.

This document demonstrates how our best ideas and intentions can be executed to construct new history. We need a new history at plantation sites and museums where many of the previously told stories are now shown to be a conceited gloss on the past, dishonestly uplifting for some, denigrating to others. If future generations are to descend from more than this we must do things differently than before. African diasporic scholars have been saying this for a long time. The new community of interpretation conjoined here represents listening. Although white Americans are divided, the Virginia General Assembly's *Remembering Slavery, Resistance, and Freedom Project* (2010-2015) showed that most want to know the truth. This rubric enables those who decide to tell it.

One hopes that given this clear road map, sites and the professionals who run them will proceed to the locations of shared power and voice with descendants. These are the locations of the democratization of knowledge, broad public interest, empathy, and growing markets. Thankfully, many organizations who participated in the Summit have arrived at the location where they can begin to utilize the criteria of the rubric for its guiding support. We hope and expect that other foundations and funders will follow because descendant engagement, and the discussions and truths it allows, is the right thing to do.

This methodology is built for climbing, not resting. The inclusion of community "voices" or "assessing community needs" is not intended as the researcher's or interpreter's evaluation of what is important, but his or her acceptance of what is important to others; not only their feelings but their articulate research questions to be pursued. The international and other contextualization of the complex lives of the enslaved also includes grounding their humanity in the ordinary civic life of the African cultures from which they came. It would include the abundant evidence of their definitively human resistance to enslavement, which humanizes them despite its telling critique of the brutality of the white enslavement they resisted. The virtue of white forefathers and mothers will not stand unblemished by the human story of blacks which the Summit urges you to tell. Whites will have to be interpreted as human, too.

Over a century ago, Haitian anthropologist Anténor Firmin wrote, "Man… achieves by making his own history." He was not describing false and fanciful narratives of the past. He, far more than the racist anthropologists to whom he was responding, believed in adherence to evidence. He meant we make history every day. That the future is in our hands. Perhaps our future best interpretations of the past will not come by the easiest process, but they will be our responsibility. ●

Brent Leggs, Niya Bates, and Kayleigh Bryant-Greenwell catching up at the National Summit on Teaching Slavery.

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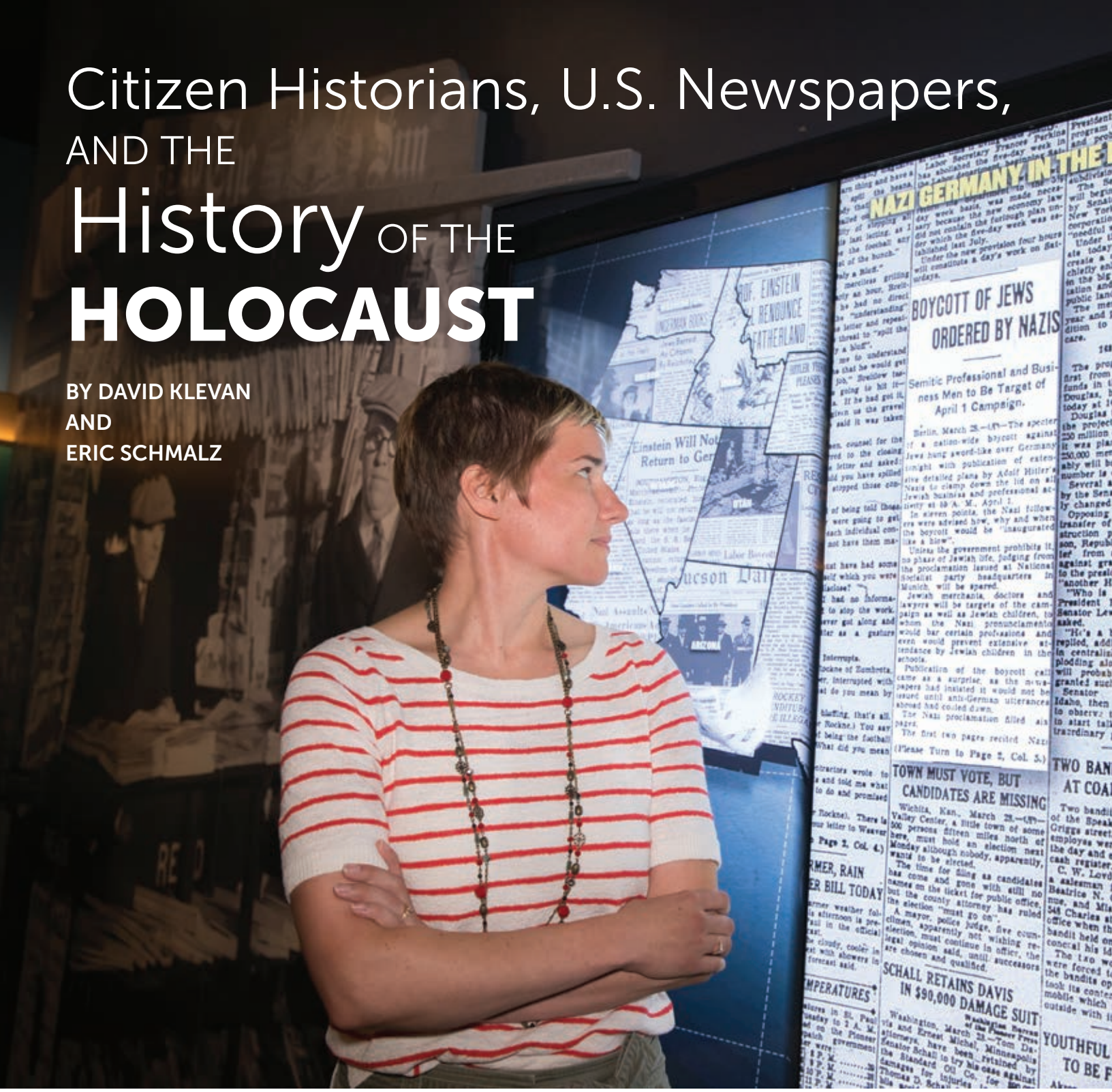
Citizen Historians, U.S. Newspapers, AND THE History OF THE HOLOCAUST

BY DAVID KLEVAN
AND
ERIC SCHMALZ



On the eve of America's entry into World War II, Fajwal "Fred" Hendeles appeared with a broad smile and a dozen roses at the Kaiser shipyards in Richmond, California, seeking employment. Hendeles, a Jewish refugee from German-occupied Poland, had escaped a German forced labor camp, fleeing to Shanghai via the Soviet Union and Japan. On September 28, 1941, he boarded the S.S. *President Pierce* as a stowaway bound for San Francisco. The ship manifest listed Hendeles as an "indigent" with no passport or visa. He entered the country with support from the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and the Kaiser shipyards provided Hendeles with employment as a steamfitter. Two months later, the United States was at war.

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Social studies teacher Katie Murr views an article she contributed to *History Unfolded* on display in the special exhibition, *Americans and the Holocaust.*

Hendeles's story—uncovered by volunteers working with the Richmond Museum of History in Richmond, California—is one of many that have emerged from the nationwide "citizen history" project, *History Unfolded: U.S. Newspapers and the Holocaust*. Publicly launched by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in early 2016, *History Unfolded* invites people across the country to research how their local newspapers reported on Holocaust-related events during the 1930s and 1940s. Project participants share their discoveries by uploading findings to a searchable online database. The museum has used this data to support exhibitions, educational resources and programs, and hopes it will be used to support future scholarship.

The idea for *History Unfolded* emerged in 2014, when staff gathered to discuss the Holocaust Museum's new initiative on Americans and the Holocaust. Like previous initiatives, *Americans* would include new scholarly research and a special exhibition, then scheduled to open in spring 2018. However, the small team gathered that day sought to inject something new. Rather than the museum performing research, mounting an exhibition, and then developing educational resources and programs, what if the museum asked schools and the public to perform research ahead of the exhibition launch—research that might help shape the exhibition and even future scholarship on the topic?

This approach was ambitious, but it made sense. An investigation of reporting by local newspapers in American communities had never before been pursued on this scale. It offered the museum a unique opportunity to investigate an otherwise distant and sometimes abstract "European" history of the Holocaust by making it American and *local* in a very concrete way. This would also allow the museum to engage learners in the discovery process, uncovering what information was available to members of their communities about the threat of Nazism and the Holocaust during the 1930s and 1940s. Thus, it could reinforce understanding that while the Holocaust took place in Europe, it was also an American story.

As a participatory "citizen history" project of national scope, *History Unfolded* offered additional opportunities for the museum. First, because the museum itself does not house the newspaper collections used for this research, it was necessary to do research in the field. Second, the broad research scope and wide dispersal of sources would have made it difficult to do this without a crowdsourcing element. Third, and most importantly, the project offers an excellent opportunity for students and the broader public to learn about history by learning how to do primary source research.

In 2014, the concept of "citizen history" was relatively new. Prior to using the phrase to describe one of their projects in 2005, Holocaust Museum staff had never seen it used elsewhere. For Holocaust Museum staff, citizen history is more than crowdsourced data collection.[1] Rather, it builds upon the existing research and collections of an institution, and at its best, encourages amateurs and enthusiasts to formulate authentic research questions and helps them learn the process for answering them. This engagement with citizen historians may also enhance the reputation and authority of local history institutions, promote access to their digital collections, and help to grow their communities of stakeholders, both virtual and in-person.[2]

Because participants in *History Unfolded* learn while contributing to a large national effort on behalf of a trusted institution, they tend to express high degrees of commitment and self-motivation and appreciate the opportunity to do meaningful work. Therefore, museum staff viewed citizen history

When tasked with specific research assignments, such citizen historians typically respond with zeal and take pride in the museum's reliance upon their participation.

as a win-win. Participants could learn about the Holocaust while developing authentic research skills, a love of history, and a strengthened affinity for the museum and its mission. In turn, the museum would compile large quantities of data to help shape an exhibition, programs, and resources. In the process, the museum also would develop a dedicated corps of institutional stakeholders around the country.

Risks, Challenges, and Results

The Holocaust Museum's decision to launch a large scale, multi-year citizen history project was not without risks and challenges. One key challenge was how best to help participants access widely dispersed collections, typically on microfilm and of varying quality. Unsurprisingly, a major determinant of the breadth and scope of newspaper articles submitted to *History Unfolded* from any particular state corresponds to whether the state's historical newspaper collections have been digitized and are easily accessible online. However, most local newspaper collections from the 1930s and 1940s are available only on microfilm or in hard copy, and some collections are incomplete. Typically, the collections are housed in local or state libraries, university libraries, or historical societies. Therefore, the active participation of organizations housing the collections is critical to the project's success.

A student uses her mobile phone to upload an article from microfilm in the Staunton Public Library.

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In addition, many citizen historians are not familiar with microfilm technology, and many young citizen historians are unfamiliar with print newspapers altogether. Therefore, the *History Unfolded* website provides participants with guidance on where to find print newspaper collections, how their information is organized, and how to use a microfilm reader. The project website also provides scaffolding for the research process itself, focusing the research of citizen historians. *History Unfolded* has identified more than thirty Holocaust-related events of specific interest to the museum for citizen historians to use as a guiding framework for research in their local newspapers. A short historical summary is provided for each event, as well as date ranges and keyword search suggestions. When citizen historians find an article, they are prompted to upload their finding, along with specific metadata such as page number, date, headline, and author. All submissions are reviewed by staff and volunteers, who frequently provide feedback to participants on their research.

Despite the challenges associated with access to collections and learning how to perform research with historical newspapers, *History Unfolded* has enjoyed significant success. This is due largely to the museum's willingness to dedicate staff and volunteers to engage project participants. The museum invested in a full-time community manager dedicated solely to the *History Unfolded* project. This fostered a regular flow of communication between citizen historians and the museum, enhanced participant engagement, and resulted in a high rate of retention. Educators whose students participate in the project tend to return with new classes year after year. History buffs, who contribute the bulk of submissions to the project, continue to participate months, or even years, later. When tasked with specific research assignments, such citizen historians typically respond with zeal and take pride in the museum's reliance upon their participation.

In three years, over ten thousand individuals, one-fifth of whom are educators, have created accounts on the *History Unfolded* website. Roughly 30 percent of registrants have submitted data to the project, and as of September 2018, almost fifteen thousand articles from newspapers in all fifty states (plus Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico) have been indexed in the project's online database. The Holocaust Museum has organized community events called "research sprints" to focus citizen historians on the investigation of reporting about specific Holocaust-related events or newspapers from specific communities. Research sprints are organized events during which groups of citizen historians gather—sometimes in person at a library, archive, or historical society, other times virtually—to research one or more *History Unfolded* events in a specific collection of newspapers. Previous research sprints have generated content, such as letters-to-the-editor advocating for and against the Wagner-Rogers Bill of 1939, some of which appear in the museum's special exhibition, *Americans and the Holocaust*, that opened in April 2018.

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Students perform research for the *History Unfolded* project at the Martin Luther King Jr. branch of the D.C. Public Library.

Research by citizen historians has provided visual evidence that illustrates the context in which Americans learned about Nazi persecution and murder of European Jews. For example, major public events that shocked the conscience—such as the Nazi boycott of Jewish businesses in April 1933 and the *Kristallnacht* pogrom of November 1938—often were reported on front pages in communities large and small throughout the United States. These stories ran for several days or even weeks, but they did not appear in a vacuum. The Nazi boycott shared space on the front page with President Roosevelt's order to cut veterans' benefits, efforts to repeal Prohibition, New Deal projects, developments in the Scottsboro Boys case, and devastating storms that killed scores of people across the South.

In many communities across the United States, information about the Holocaust was available, but it was not always prominent, and coverage was often ephemeral. Once America entered the war, the attention of Americans shifted, understandably, to the progress of the war.

Indeed, after U.S. entry into the war in 1942, front pages were dominated by news related to the war effort. Stories about the Nazi plan to kill all Jews (the "Final Solution") appeared in many American newspapers the day before Thanksgiving (November 25, 1942); the top story in many papers that day was that the Soviets finally had broken the siege at Stalingrad and nearly encircled the German army. The Allies' public condemnation of the "Final Solution" appeared December 17, 1942, one week before Christmas. It was not uncommon to find these articles on interior pages of newspapers printed beside advertisements for turkeys and holiday sales. The *History Unfolded* project has helped both the museum and the public learn more about the specific contexts in which many Americans learned about the Holocaust and Nazism.

There is still much to learn from *History Unfolded.* With a more comprehensive data set, staff at the museum look forward to analyzing and comparing coverage across communities—in university newspapers, Jewish and Catholic newspapers, African American newspapers, newspapers large and small, urban and rural.

State and Local History Institutions

In addition to its broad appeal among educators, *History Unfolded* offers librarians, archivists, and staff at historical societies ample opportunities to meet their institutional objectives. Some of the most innovative approaches to and most exciting outcomes from the project have come from special programs in which libraries and historical societies have engaged staff and volunteers to investigate collections.

Though the Holocaust took place primarily in Europe, the research of citizen

The Richmond Museum of History in Richmond, California, for example, began its participation in *History Unfolded i*n 2016. Staff there were curious to find out what information about the Holocaust, if any, was available to the local community—home to the Kaiser Shipyards, which made significant home front contributions to the war effort during WWII. Were the men who built the ships aware of Nazi persecution and murder of European Jews? Or were their eyes solely on the Pacific theatre? The museum placed advertisements in the local Jewish newspaper and invited members of a nearby synagogue to participate in volunteer research using the museum's collections of historical newspapers. Eventually, they expanded research beyond just what their community might have known about the Holocaust to an exploration of the history of Jewish Richmond and surrounding Contra Costa County, resulting in a new exhibit that opened in January 2019 documenting the Jewish history of the city and surrounding region. The exhibition includes the aforementioned story of Fred Hendeles and the local press response to the Holocaust.[3]

Other institutions took different approaches to the project, but with similarly productive results. Jill Weiss Simins, a historian at the Indiana Historical Bureau, viewed participation in the project as an opportunity to "help make sure that the lessons and warnings of the Holocaust are not forgotten" and to "make Holocaust history more accessible [and] relevant to Hoosiers, who sometimes feel removed from national conversations." Weiss Simins worked with intern Jenna Auber to upload content to the *History Unfolded* website, featuring their findings in the Hoosier State Chronicle blog. At the suggestion of the *History Unfolded* community manager Eric Schmalz, Weiss Simins and Auber recruited a small, highly engaged group of citizen historians from local universities for a research sprint to investigate Holocaust events in the two Indiana newspapers with the largest circulation in 1940 and upload entries for each to the *History Unfolded* database.

Similarly, for Natasha Hollenbach, Digital Projects Librarian at the Montana Historical Society, *History Unfolded* offered a way to make her collections more visible and available to scholars. After first digitizing and uploading articles from the historical society collection, Hollenbach set up internal "research sprints" for her colleagues. She started small, asking for a few hours of staff time and maintaining a flexible schedule. Hollenbach made sure everyone knew they were welcome regardless of experience, both on the project and with the microfilm readers; this ensured a continuing number of new converts to the project and extended word of mouth advertising about how much fun it was. Through the staff sprints and Hollenbach's individual contributions, the Montana Historical Society has uploaded hundreds of Montana newspaper articles.

Participation by public history organizations has proven critical to the success of the *History Unfolded* project. Their ability to engage local communities in research, discovery, and learning has made significant contributions to the breadth and diversity of local reporting indexed in the museum's database. Of equal importance, this participation has made local collections and local history more visible, and has allowed staff, volunteers, and members of the public to learn about their community's role in Holocaust history.

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historians from around the United States makes clear that it is also an American story.

Conclusion

History Unfolded has demonstrated its potential as an engaging education tool that teaches valuable research skills and encourages critical thinking. During the project's first three years, the Holocaust Museum has indexed more than fifteen thousand entries for newspaper articles submitted by citizen historians across the country in a searchable online database. This can only be viewed as a major accomplishment and a successful beginning. However, half of these submissions came from newspapers published in only eight states (primarily in what today would be called "the Rust Belt").

For the project to function as a representative index of American news reporting, and to maximize its value for historical institutions and scholars, a consistent minimum data sample must be collected across all fifty states. In an effort to achieve this goal, the museum instructs participants to research newspaper reporting about a specific limited set of Holocaust-related events. It aims to compile a per state sample of at least one data submission for each Holocaust-related event for the two newspapers with the highest circulation in 1940. This should provide a minimum level of consistent data across states and allow for meaningful state-to-state comparisons of reporting at the time.

The museum will continue to accept research submitted to *History Unfolded* through summer 2021. Therefore, libraries, archives, and historical societies have ample time to lend their expertise and ensure that their communities are represented in the project results. In 2021, the museum plans to shift the project focus from collecting new data to synthesizing and analyzing the compiled data. Correspondingly, the Holocaust Museum expects to provide tools that will allow citizen historians, Holocaust historians, and digital humanities scholars to filter, sort, and analyze the data in order to evaluate trends and anomalies and draw conclusions about this history based on the accumulated evidence.

Though the Holocaust took place primarily in Europe, the research of citizen historians from around the United States makes clear that it is also an American story. It was told in front page headlines, editorials, letters-to-the-editor, and political cartoons of local newspapers from Richmond, California, to Helena, Montana, to Indianapolis, Indiana. By examining the information available to Americans, the stories we chose to tell, and the opinions we published, we learn as much about who we were as Americans as we do about how Americans responded to the Holocaust.

High school students perform microfilm research in the historical newspaper collections of the Staunton Public Library.

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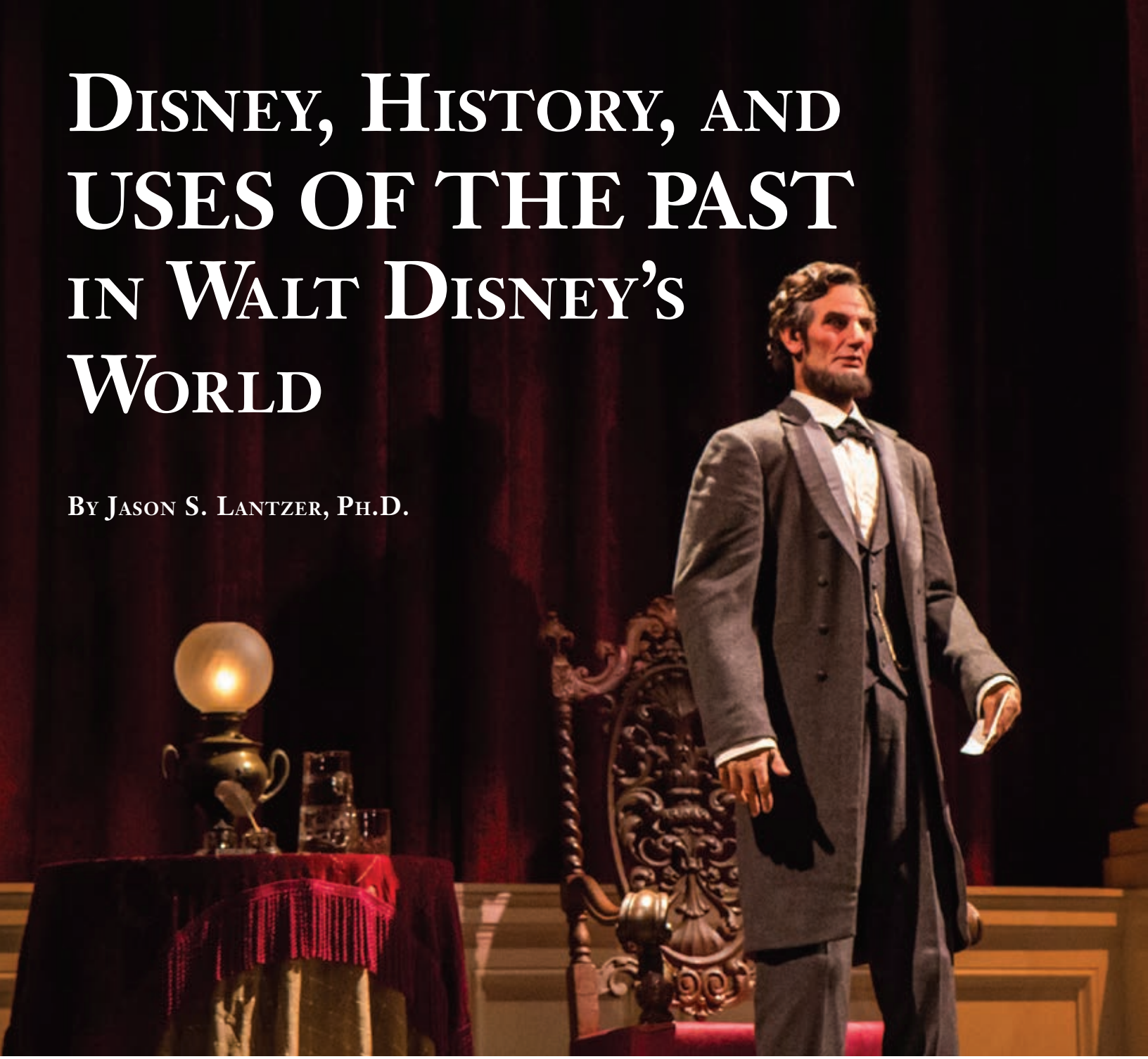
Eric Schmalz is the community manager for the *History Unfolded* project at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. He oversees the review of newspaper submissions to the project website, assists participants with their questions, and helps educators effectively incorporate *History Unfolded* into various learning environments. Mr. Schmalz specializes in developing and deepening authentic human connection through his work. He earned his bachelor's degree in History at the College of William and Mary (2010) and his master's degree in Teaching (Secondary Social Studies) at the University of Virginia (2011). Contact Eric at eschamlz@ushmm.org.

[1] There are several excellent examples of cultural institutions using crowdsourcing to transcribe and index historical documents. For example: "The World Memory Project," U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed January 29, 2019, www.ushmm.org/online/world-memory-project/; "Transcription Center," Smithsonian Instititution, accessed January 29, 2019, https://transcription.si.edu/; "Citizen Archivist Project," National Archives and Records Administration, last reviewed November 7, 2018, www.archives.gov/citizen-archivist; and "Operation War Diary," Imperial War Museum and National Archives, accessed January 29, 2019, www.operationwardiary.org/.

[2] Elissa Frankle, "Making History with the Masses: Citizen History and Racial Trust in Museums," *Digital Dialogues*, Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities, April 4, 2013, https://mith.umd.edu/dialogues/making-history-with-the-masses-citizen-history-and-radical-trust-in-museums/.

[3] Fajwal "Fred" Hendeles became an American. He married, had children, and lived the rest of his life in California. He died at age 91 in Los Angeles.

Disney, History, and Uses of the Past in Walt Disney's World



By Jason S. Lantzer, Ph.D.

Disney is not often associated with the historian's task of preserving, discussing, and passing on history to the next generation, but it should be. After all, Disney's version of history influences millions of people every day. For practitioners at historic sites, museums, and other history organizations, Disney and its uses of the past raise some important questions. How has Disney utilized U.S. history and Western civilization to create a popular American culture through its movies, literature, and parks? What can we learn from Disney when it comes to faithfully interpreting the past?

FLICKR HARSHLIGHT (CC BY 2.0)

ALAN FISHER/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

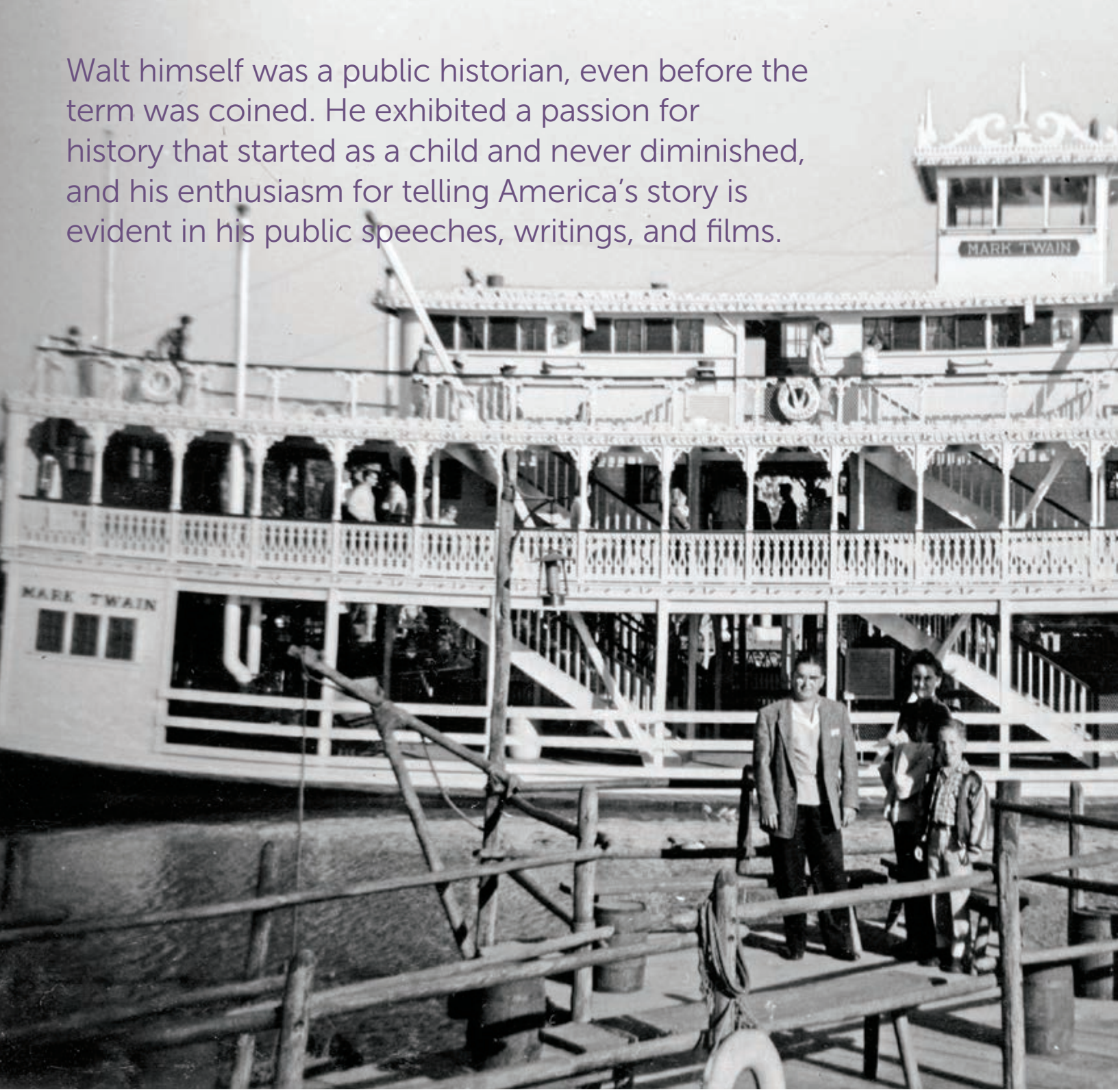
▲ Walt Disney, 1937.

◀ Audio-animatronic President Lincoln, at Disneyland.

Both of those questions came to the forefront after I started researching my book *Dis-History: Uses of the Past at Walt Disney's Worlds.* Like many American families with younger children, my wife and I had shared our favorite Disney movies with our children, and eventually found our way to the parks. As a historian, I had often made comments to my classes about the "Disney version" of historic events and people, but it was not until my family had made our third trip to Walt Disney World that I began more seriously and more critically considering the park's presentation of history. Disney was not just utilizing the past or folktales as story devices; rather, it was actively making historic claims and statements in its park attractions. Indeed, at Walt Disney World, the largest corporation in the world was actively engaged in cultural formation. While Disney has been quite clear that its use of nostalgia, edutainment, and public history is meant to generate revenue and shape the opinions of generations of guests, this culture-creating agenda has been little understood and only sometimes acknowledged by supporters and detractors alike. With the support of two very enthusiastic research assistants —my children—I walked the parks again and again, dove deeply into the vast scholarly and popular literature on all things Disney, and was lucky enough to be granted access to the Disney corporate archives. By doing so, I was able to grasp a fuller picture of how Disney engages with American history and culture and with its own institutional history as well. The end result was both a better-informed narrative and implications for history practitioners outside the veil of all things Disney.

Engagement with the past has been central to Disney since the very beginning. Starting out, Walt Disney and his once-small animation studio relied on folktales, fairy tales, and history as the basis for many of their early cartoon shorts and eventual full-length animated films. The company's reliance on the past became even more evident with the construction of Disneyland. Walt himself was a public historian, even before the term was coined. He exhibited a passion for history that started as a child and never diminished, and his enthusiasm for telling America's story is evident in his public speeches, writings, and films. Walt Disney viewed his park system as a place where guests could interact with the past. As he said at the opening of Disneyland in 1955: "Here age relives fond memories of the past—and here youth may savor the challenge and promise of the future. Disneyland is ded-

Walt himself was a public historian, even before the term was coined. He exhibited a passion for history that started as a child and never diminished, and his enthusiasm for telling America's story is evident in his public speeches, writings, and films.



icated to the ideals, the dreams, and the hard facts that have created America."

Those "hard facts" included his vision for Frontierland, easily the most "American history" space imaginable when the Disneyland park opened. "Here," Walt Disney said, "we experience the story of our country's past. The colorful drama of Frontier America in the exciting days of the covered wagon and the stage coach. The advent of the railroad. And the romantic riverboat. Frontierland is a tribute to the faith, courage, and ingenuity of the pioneers who blazed the trails across America." That guests could also interact with Davy Crockett and Native American actors was simply an added bonus of crossing through Frontierland's stockade entryway. While an idealized and mythologized (some might even add sanitized) version of the past, the largely Euro-centric notions of progress struck a chord with guests who could now walk in the footsteps of their pioneer ancestors without fear of actually living in the past. The invoked sense of nostalgia, a crucial component of Disney's corporate success both in films and in the parks, was a balm for many Americans in a rapidly changing and dangerous Cold War world.

But America's story hardly stayed on the frontier in Disney's imagination. One need only visit Liberty Square at Walt Disney World, with its Hall of Presidents and items on

PHOTOS COURTESY ORANGE COUNTY ARCHIVES

▲ Disneyland, June 1962.

◀ Mark Twain from Tom Sawyer's Island, Disneyland, 1956.

loan from presidential libraries, authorized reproductions of both the Presidential Seal and Liberty Bell, and imagine, as Walt did, of doing more. There were plans for a never constructed audio-animatronic reproduction of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in Liberty Square (an area of Disneyland that eventually shifted to Florida), that would lead guests to Edison Square, where they would be introduced to inventions (and inventors) who had changed the world. The idea was to allow guests to readily interact with figures from the past just as easily as they could with those from Disney films. Guests can still visit the attraction that started them all: Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln at Disneyland. There they can hear the words that inspired both Walt and the nation during America's greatest crisis, the Civil War, straight from Honest Abe himself, via an audio-animatronic encounter that was first revealed at the 1964 World's Fair.

Disney became even more ambitious with its presentation of the past when constructing Epcot. Though not the planned community Walt first envisioned, the company did create a world showcase with the United States at its center. Guests get more than just a crash history survey course in Epcot's American Adventure (though they do receive that as well), because Disney included a full-fledged, interactive museum as part of the experience, along with a choir that sings patriotic songs, and paintings invoking both everyday and famous events from the American past, alongside quotes from prominent Americans. For the years I was doing research for my book, the museum contained wonderful exhibits and artifacts detailing the African American experience. Just recently, in 2018 the content of the museum changed to a focus on Native Americans.

Yet, although Disney's parks sometimes demonstrate earnest engagement with public history, that isn't to say that either Walt, or his company, always wrestled with "hard facts" as much as they might. For most of the history of Disneyland's New Orleans Square, for example, the area's theming has clearly evoked the antebellum period, but there has never been even the hint of a mention about slavery. Indeed, one area in which Disney has continually been called to task by historians is in its historic recreation of race relations. Here, hard facts faded to ambiguity just as consumer merchandise sales overrode the initial morality tale conceived for the nearby Pirates of the Caribbean attraction. Where once a pirate's life was to be viewed as brutal and short, now the fun of adventure is personified by Johnny Depp's Captain Jack Sparrow.

Even as the company that bears Walt's name moves away from his vision of talking about the American past to drawing

PHOTOS COURTESY ORANGE COUNTY ARCHIVES

Walt Disney shows Disneyland plans to Orange County officials, December 1954.

on its own Disney creations, they still retain the ability to put together first-class historic displays, equal to any museum. As such, public historians can learn from Disney's treatment of its own institutional history in a variety of ways. Such skills are evident at the newly rebranded "Walt Disney Presents." Formerly known as "One Man's Dream," the small museum in Disney's Hollywood Studios park in Florida is a stunning example of public history employed by a corporation. Crafted to honor Walt on his one hundredth birthday, the exhibits included artifacts from his boyhood, artwork and clips from early Disney ventures, and various displays showcasing park attractions that Walt had a hand in developing (including one of the early audio-animatronic Lincolns). For a time the attraction also showcased a replica of Walt's Burbank office, with virtually all of the items on display coming straight from the Disney Vault. The changes sweeping over Hollywood Studios, with the inclusion of *Star Wars* and an expanded *Toy Story* area, have also prompted a reimagining of the museum into its present form, which, while keeping many of the earlier exhibits, also puts a focus on newer and upcoming attractions, under the theme of Walt as innovator.

These attractions, and many others at the parks, showcase not only Walt's dedication to talking about the past to the public, but also the skills needed to do so and the commitment to them Walt instilled in his company. As such, Disney has much to teach public historians. Walt, and the Imagineers who have followed in his footsteps, stressed the need for preparation and research, as well as having both a narrative thread for the parks and the ability to tell a story at a particular attraction. Furthermore, Disney showcases the importance of small details in its displays. The ability to create a public space within a totally immersive planned environment, where people interact with each other (whether they are friends or strangers) as well as with the past, is something Disney pioneered. In both its films and parks, Disney shows the ability to both entertain and educate in ways that offer myriad lessons for historians and history practitioners working throughout the historical enterprise.

Furthermore, studying the Disney parks can also help public historians deal with issues related to interpretation and its development over time. As Disney's parks have changed, evolved, and even eliminated attractions, the company has faced sometimes intense public outcry. That the same public continues to come, enjoy, and learn at the parks offers a means for public historians who work at museums to learn how to manage exhibit transformation, as well as deal with guest feedback. Indeed, Disney offers a case study and best practices in the challenges faced by many corporate historians and archivists in how to engage different (and changing) publics, as well as the challenges of integrating new scholarship and even the intent of donors. Presidential libraries, for example, often have a difficult time dealing with controversial issues while the president himself is still alive. One need only witness the changes made to narratives surrounding the Vietnam War and Watergate at the Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon libraries and museums, respectively, in the years after both men were laid to rest. Changing a narrative might be different than transforming a ride or attraction, but both are fraught with peril when guests react negatively.

Of course, most museums do not have the budget, or the Imagineers, of Disney. And we must always remember that Disney is a company that first and foremost seeks to turn a profit. There is little doubt that we have seen the Disneyification (for both ill and good) of public history sites in many places. But we also know that Disney has inspired both its guests and those in public history to do more. Interactive technology and exhibits was something that Disney helped pioneer, as it also did with character actors who remain in character while talking to guests. Even audio-animatronics have found their way into exhibits, helping guests feel even more as though "you are there." And then there are themed nights or activities, usually arriving around a holiday celebration (such as a headless horseman in the fall during Halloween, or candlelit processionals at Christmas). Every museum that holds a themed experience is, in very real ways, following in Disney's footsteps. And if that path is going to be followed, studying Disney's history, not just what it does, is a must.

Disney, then, is a force that public historians and history practitioners must contend with, not disregard as a "frivolous distraction." The company's parks, movies, books, shows, and merchandise are major forces in shaping American, and increasingly global, culture. The House of Mouse's reach influences the general public's understanding of the past and how it can be interpreted. Rather than fear or mock Disney, historians should study both the company and its uses of the past in its public presentations, especially in its parks. Walt's idea to create a common culture for Americans that bridged cultural divides, while also giving his fledgling company a binding idea to work off of, became the very DNA of

FLICKR USER D.K.PETERSON (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Exhibit Panel at "One Man's Dream," now known as "Walt Disney Presents."

Disneyland and Walt Disney World. The fact that the Disney corporation continues to utilize both its past (increasingly) as well as our shared, historic past in the twenty-first century cries out for study. Doing so will only benefit how the public interacts with the past in meaningful ways, regardless of where they encounter it.

And it is not as though scholars have always ignored these tendencies. The literature, both popular and scholarly, on Disney is vast. There is a history of direct engagement by historians with the company as well. In the 1990s, when Disney considered building an American history theme park in Virginia, historians were at the forefront of pointing out potential issues, and a united effort by museum leaders and academic and public historians (along with powerful local land owners) not only convinced the company to scuttle the project, but to take the history they presented more seriously. The end result was a flurry of historians advising Disney on films and attractions, with ideas incorporated into scripts and even into the theme parks.

However, continued engagement has proven to be problematic for historians and Disney. Many historians view the company as something fit only for children—a place that neither delves deeply enough into the past that it does showcase, nor always hews to historic fact in its presentation of the past—Disney always puts telling the story it wants to tell ahead of facts that might get in the way. Others never forgave the House of Mouse for proposing the Virginia-based park. Then there is the fact that as a private corporation, the company's archives are not readily accessible. On the Disney side of things, there are both the lingering scars the Virginian debacle produced, as well as not always wanting to listen to the historians they do consult because it will impact the story they want to tell. Helping to foster continued interaction through studies like *Dis-History*, as well as engagement by the wider scholarly community (not just replication of what Disney does) can only benefit the public at large.

At the end of the day, Disney has much to teach history practitioners about the past and how it can be utilized in the present. Disney is not just a list of "what not to do," or a cautionary tale of a corporation misusing history. Both the company, the stories it tells, and the people behind them have intrinsic historical value. Disney can illustrate not just the ins and outs of a corporation that engages in cultural construction, but also of one committed to rigorous research methodology, careful presentation, cultivating interest among the public, and utilization of stories to talk about the past with a wider audience. We just have to be open to the experience.

Jason S. Lantzer is a historian who looks at the intersection of religion, politics, and law in American culture. He is the author of *Dis-History: Uses of the Past at Walt Disney's Worlds.* He serves as the Assistant Director of the Butler University Honors Program. Contact Jason at jlantzer@butler.edu.

Award Winner Spotlight

BY BRANDI BURNS

Recovering Alaska's People and Places

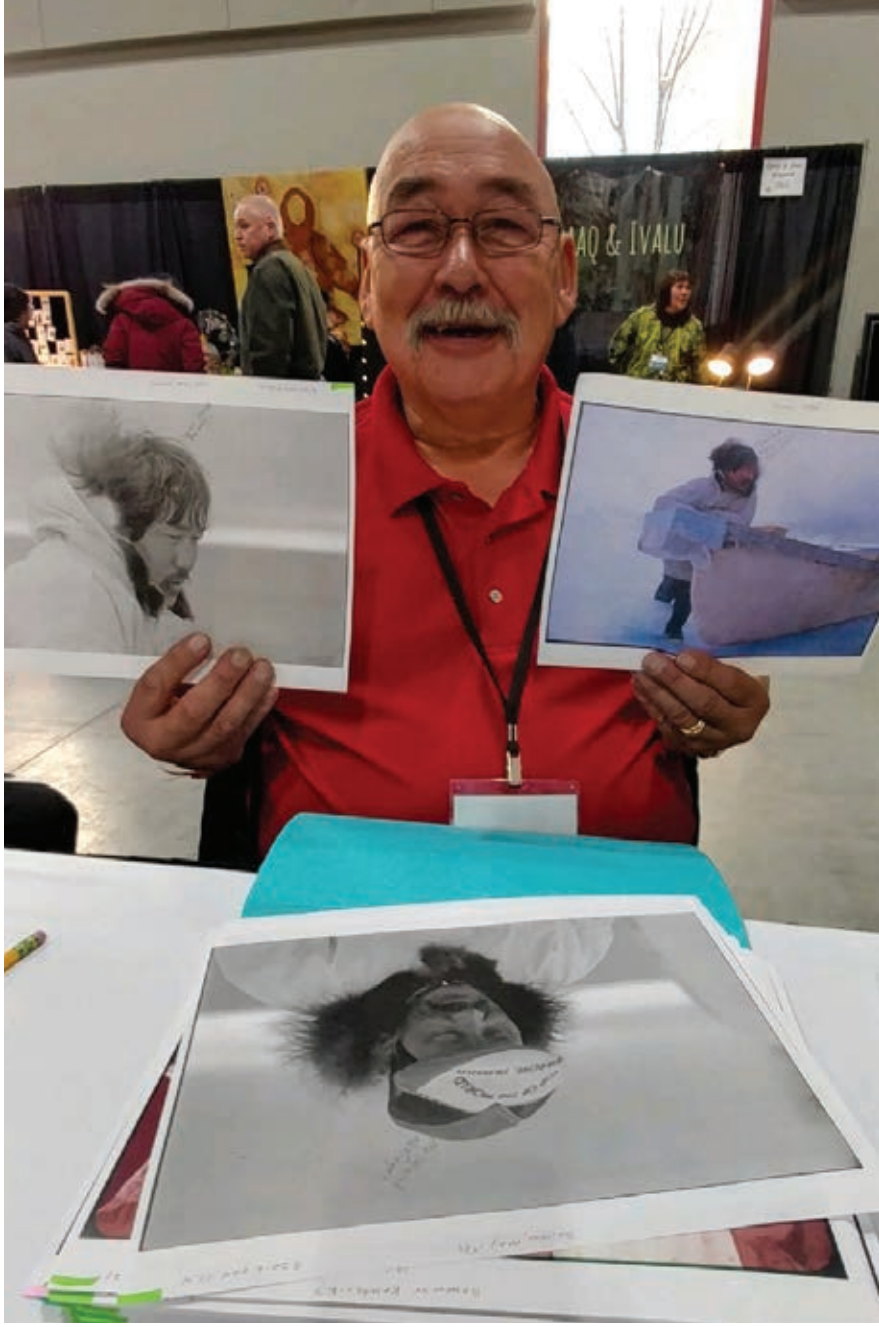
AASLH's History in Progress (HIP) Award winners are chosen from the overall Leadership in History Award winners each year, and represent the best of the best in public history. This additional honor is for organizations whose work is highly inspirational, exhibits exceptional scholarship, and/or is exceedingly entrepreneurial in terms of funding, partnerships, or collaborations, creative problem solving, or unusual project design and inclusiveness. 2018's three HIP winners embody these ideals and provide examples that other institutions and organizations can aspire to and emulate in their work.

One 2018 winner is the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) Photo Identification Project at the Atwood Resource Center of the Anchorage Museum. This project is an inclusive, above-and-beyond best practice model for the field because of the way staff went about documenting current photograph collections and reasserting Native voices and expertise in the archives. These photo collections chronicle Alaska and the Circumpolar North from the late nineteenth century to the recent past and numbers about 750,000 images. The AFN Photo Identification Project is an example of the Anchorage Museum's mission to connect people, expand perspectives, and encourage global dialogue about the North and its distinct environment.

In an email exchange with staff at the Atwood Resource Center about the genesis of the project, Sara Piasecki, archivist, wrote:

"Back in 2012, when I had been at the museum for about a year, [ARC Manager and Librarian] Teressa and I were heading down to the vault on the elevator and I was lamenting (as I had been for a while) about all these great photographs I was processing that had no identifying information. Many of the images were of rural areas in Alaska —small towns and villages off the road system. We had already started thinking about contacting the various native corporations to enlist their help with photo identification, but the logistics of reaching out to so many entities seemed too daunting. And then Teressa suddenly came up with the brilliant idea to attend the Alaska Federation of Natives annual convention, where all the groups gather in one place for a days-long conference. It allowed us to go to one venue and make contact with many groups."[1]

The project's execution was simple: during the three-day AFN Convention, attendees stopped at a booth and could provide identifying details like names of people, places, striking natural features, or information on the built environment



An AFN attendee recognizes photos of himself from the Atwood Resource Center archives.

Two people sitting next to each other suddenly realize they're cousins as they begin to talk about family connections.

in exchange for two free prints of photographs of their choice. The information provided by the visitors is priceless. For example, Alaska's landscape is rapidly transforming due to climate change. A tribal elder identified the original location of her village in one photograph, a village that moved decades earlier because of climate change. In the first year, staff brought 700 photographs to the convention and participants identified 426 images.

"One of the challenges, of course, is time. Every year, we've taken hundreds of new photos for identification… Each photo needs to be accessioned, scanned, and printed before we can put it in a folder for identification. But that's a very time-consuming task when you're dealing with thousands of photos coming in every year. And because we offer two free prints to people who come to our table, we also spend a lot of time after the convention printing and mailing those photos out."

Despite these challenges, staff remain dedicated to the necessity of this project:

"The most exciting part about working on this project has been seeing the connections people make at our table. They see themselves in photos, they see their aunties or grandparents. Young people are called over by elders to see what the village used to look like. Two people sitting next to each other suddenly realize they're cousins as they begin to talk about family connections. Old men begin to sing the songs they remember from their youth. It's just magical."

ATWOOD RESOURCE CENTER

Atwood Resource Center staff record the information provided by project participants.

AFN attendees survey archival photos for recognizable people and places.

Building on these intangible rewards, the next steps for the project expand the long-term benefits for the organization and the Alaskan community:

"This year, the museum is piloting an effort to use the photo identification model to collect information on unattributed objects in the collections. We're taking photographs of dozens of ivory carvings from the collections, and hoping that convention-goers will be able to help us identify the carvers. Many artists had distinctive styles that we hope will be recognizable to community members."

Award-Worthy Model

The AFN Photo Identification Project is a standard worthy of replication in our field in many ways. It is something that many organizations can scale to their organizational capacity and audience, and invites communities back into the archives so they can shape their own narratives. This project is an incredibly popular experience at the AFN Convention. As one reviewer of the project's nomination said, "Prior to, say, 1950, the field of Alaska Native studies was characterized by exploitation of peoples and appropriation (i.e. thievery) of artifacts. This was not unique to Alaska… What this project does is help to reverse the mistreatment of earlier eras of scholarship. By enlisting Native peoples in identifying historic photos, the project accomplishes a valuable task that future scholars will use, but it also gives back to the Natives and their communities."

Does a similar story of mistreatment and historical exclusion echo in your own community? Whether this history involves your community's original peoples or is a more recent one, museums and history organizations hold a special place in our communities as bridges to connect people and facilitate relationships. This kind of work may not explicitly be in our mission or vision statements, but we as professionals are not being honest with ourselves if we don't admit that one of our roles is to bring people together. I believe the most valuable work we do is sharing our histories to help residents create a true community around a shared past. This work creates an obligation we all share to make sure our collections represent the people who call (or called) our place home, to give unrepresented voices the right to speak for themselves, and to contribute to building an inclusive future.

Brandi Burns is the History Programs Manager for the Boise City Department of Arts & History. Burns believes that history, at its basic level, is the most authentic way to connect to a sense of self, nurture a sense of place, and create a true community where people value each other and their shared past. She is currently serving as a Regional Chair of the AASLH Awards Committee for Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. She can be reached at bburns@cityofboise.org.

[1] The Alaska Federation of Natives annual convention "serves as the principal forum and voice for the Alaska Native community in addressing critical issues of public policy and government… The Convention is the largest representative annual gathering in the United States of Natives peoples." Learn more at www.nativefederation.org/convention.

Book Reviews

Teaching with Primary Sources

Edited by Christopher J. Prom and Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe

(Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2016), 204 pp.

Reviewed by Marietta Carr

Primary sources have long been a critical piece of the curricula at all levels of education, but recent changes to education standards, approaches to teaching, and library and archives services have increased the demand for robust instructional services and access to archival collections. Archivists have responded with creativity, variety, and pragmatism in meeting their communities' teaching and learning needs. *Teaching with Primary Sources*, edited by Christopher J. Prom and Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe, gathers some of the struggles archivists have faced and the solutions they have developed in delivering instructional services. The book is divided into three modules. Each module focuses on different aspects of the topic, ranging from theoretical frameworks to case studies and example assignments. As Hinchliffe explains in her introduction, the book is designed as a primer for instruction in academic archival contexts, but can be applied to cultural heritage organizations generally and used by busy educators looking for inspiration for impending primary source instruction sessions.

The first module lays out a theoretical framework of archival literacy and relates it to concepts and literacies commonly addressed in teaching and education literature such as information literacy, assessment, and domain knowledge. The second module moves into more practical ground by proposing solutions to possible barriers to teaching with archival materials. While the first module gives archivists the terminology and conceptual background necessary to engage with faculty, the second module is a how-to guide for implementing instructional services. The module includes tips for identifying resources like time and professional development, communicating with administrators and faculty, and creating lesson plans. The third module explores common themes expressed in case studies and interviews with archivists, college faculty, and a high school teacher. This module includes examples of assignments and class tools that can be adapted to each reader's institutional situation.

Teaching with Primary Sources is an excellent overview of this trend in archival practice, especially for archivists with little formal teaching experience or training. Each module includes an appendix with suggestions for further reading so interested readers can delve further into the topic. There are several recurring themes that appear in each module. Perhaps the most prevalent theme is the authors' emphasis on building relationships with educators. The authors point out that one of the most common instructional services is a single session within the context of a larger course. Strong collaborative relationships with faculty will make these sessions more effective and create opportunities to develop other types of instructional services. For example, one archivist reported that the professors he worked with revised their course learning objectives in response to feedback from archives staff. This theme also highlights two of the book's weaknesses: a predominant concern for academic archival settings and a lack of input from K-12 teachers. The authors draw primarily from their own experiences as archivists in higher education institutions and interviews with other archivists and faculty.

While the academic archivist will benefit most directly from the authors' advice, the book is written with the larger cultural heritage environment in mind and the authors' solutions can be adapted to non-academic institutions. Online tools such as tutorials for accessing and citing materials can encourage college students to use non-academic archives. Creating programs for students in newer initiatives such as massive open online courses (MOOCs) and co-curricular programs in colleges' education departments can benefit both the cultural heritage organization and the academic institution. The authors stress that selecting the right materials significantly impacts educators' success in integrating primary sources into their curriculum or museum programming. For example, items with unique provenance or preservation histories will engage students and adult audiences and enable significant learning experiences. Educators must have clear and limited objectives for what they expect the audience to learn when working with their primary sources, recognizing that many individuals will likely lack necessary analytical skills such as visual literacy.

Marietta Carr is the College Archivist at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, OH. She holds an M.L.I.S from the University of Pittsburgh and an M.A. in History from Northeastern University, and can be reached at marietta.carr@tri-c.edu.

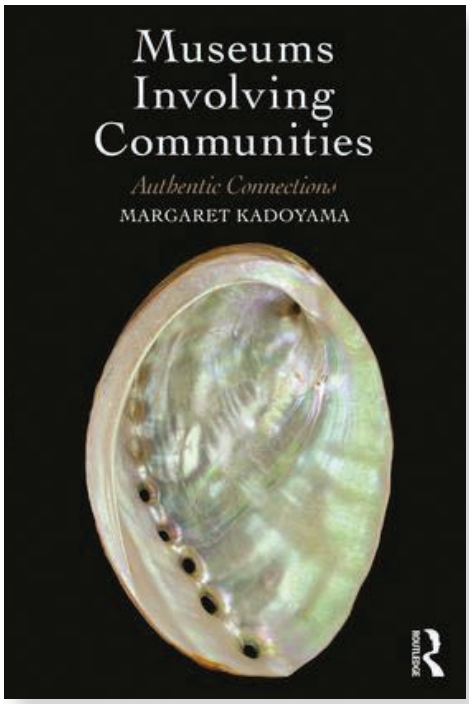
Museums Involving Communities: Authentic Connections

By Margaret Kadoyama

(New York: Routledge, 2018), 186 pp.

Reviewed by Inez S. Wolins

On a daily basis, museum staff create and present a wide range of tangible products: programs, exhibitions, newsletters, publications, and galas, to name just a few. Add to this mix the notion of co-creating experiences with communities, a relatively nascent way of thinking and working, and institutions may need some guidance for this approach. Luckily, there is a new resource to help navigate operations, inspire reflection, and provoke institutional change.



Museums Involving Communities: Authentic Connections explores how museums can involve members of their local communities in their everyday work. Sounds simple enough, but at its very core, this book is both a challenge and a promise toward relevance. Somewhere along the spectrum of the museum-community relationship lies the invitation to become engaged through more extensive involvement. That overture is often forged by a museum employee to a target group, with the goal of increasing meaning and diversifying audiences by offering something of value that speaks to them. Learning what a group wants requires foresight, patience, and conversation, and listening to what a community group needs takes practice and discipline. Listening well facilitates relationships, and in part, that is what this book espouses.

This publication is both practical and tactical, philosophical and inspirational. It is a how-to book ripe with insights. It is a cheerleader encouraging museum workers to jump in, fail, achieve, and continuously improve. Kadoyama shares theory about change management and situates the work of relationship-building in a social and historical context, and the plethora of examples from the field and her years of experience shed light on just how hard it is to connect.

One case study highlights the Thanksgiving Point Institute in Lehi, Utah, a farm, garden, and museum complex that draws upon the natural world to cultivate transformative family learning. TPI staff sought to better serve their community, and through active listening sessions, realized that they had to think about their institution differently. Through understanding what their community needed from them, they adapted their work to use their unique assets and resources to provide it. The "Operation Inquiry" program was developed with parents, teachers, and counselors from local secondary schools and set up an afterschool makerspace where at-risk teens could build technical skillsets to prepare them for jobs, higher education, and careers in the STEM industries that surround the Thanksgiving Point area. Participants learned about biotech, film and video production, and design thinking while developing problem solving skills and new relationships. The program benefited students academically and personally, and this community involvement enabled TPI to deepen its relationship with neighbors as it worked alongside them and facilitated meaningful interactions with area families.

Museums Involving Communities: Authentic Connections offers plenty of worksheets, tips, and advice for the novice and the expert alike. It digs deep to unpack the role of museums in the cultural and civic life of local communities and as agents of community change. The deepening of relationships by museum workers looking to make an impact, while building long-term partnerships with local communities, can profoundly benefit the individuals involved, the museum and its bottom line, and the community. The extent to which this book can assist museums in developing engagement strategies for implementation and evaluation will cement its true value to the profession. It's not only a tall order, but a collective call to action that positions institutions to shape a better tomorrow for those they serve.

Inez S. Wolins is the Chief Public Experience Officer at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City, OK. She was previously Executive Director of the C.M. Russell Museum and Director/CEO of the Wichita Museum of Art. Inez can be reached at IWolins@nationalcowboymuseum.org.

AASLH News

Boise SHAM

In December, AASLH convened and the Idaho State Historical Society hosted the 2018 SHAM—the State Historical Administrators Meeting. Thirty-two leaders representing twenty-seven states participated in the two-day meeting, which took place in the sparkling new digs of the Idaho State Museum in Boise. Attendance was high overall and was strong for Western states, of which there were fourteen represented.

Major topics at SHAM in Boise covered a wide range. Participants shared techniques for gaining the attention of new gubernatorial administrations and for working effectively with state legislators. They offered case studies in dealing with controversial historical topics, discussed forming regional groups to plan for the nation's Semiquincentennial, shared resources for the centennial of women's suffrage, and delved into branding, staff development, creating sustainable work cultures in history institutions, and scanning the field through joint research efforts.

At its heart, SHAM, like any conference, is a mix of social connection and business. Participants get to know each other and each other's institutions by sharing ideas, policies, plans, strategies, and approaches. AASLH's role is to help organize the meeting and its logistics each year and to build the agenda with the given year's host (kudos to Janet Gallimore, executive director of the Idaho State Historical Society, for 2018). AASLH also is beginning to provide key strategic and statistical data about the field to the directors involved. For example, the site visitation survey that AASLH is doing this year will be a major topic discussed at the 2019 meeting, as will be its annual survey about plans taking shape for the 250th anniversary of the U.S. in 2026.

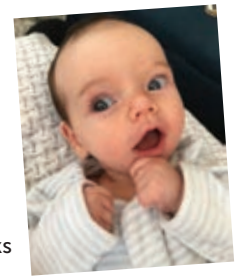
When the discussion continues in December 2019, SHAM will take place in Montgomery, Alabama, hosted by the Alabama Department of Archives and History, and will return west in 2020 in Pierre, South Dakota.

Annual Meeting Program Committee

The 2019 Program Committee, led by Jackie Barton, met in Philadelphia on January

AASLH 2018 BY THE NUMBERS

1 New Staff Family Member
Nathan Richard Marks



5 New Council Members

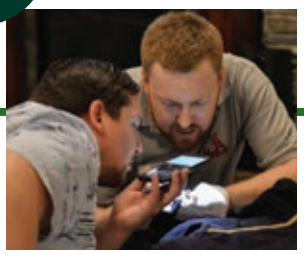
13 New Books Published

42 Webinars Presented

45 Scholarships Given Out

85% Member Retention Rate

3,539 Continuing Education Participants



StEPs

977 Annual Meeting Attendees

5,240 AASLH members

1,556 New Members

995 Total StEPs Members

Leaders gathered in Boise, Idaho, in December for the annual State Historical Administrators Meeting.

26 to select sessions for the upcoming Annual Meeting. Forty-five individuals gathered for a full day of review of 164 proposed sessions. Approximately 70% of participants were new to the AASLH Program Committee, which brought a lot of new perspectives and ideas to the table. The conference program is currently being scheduled, and the full program guide will be released in mid-May.

2019 Continuing Education

This year is shaping up to be a busy and exciting one for continuing education. All five Small Museum Pro! Courses (**Developing Exhibitions, Museum Education and Outreach, Leadership and Administration for History Organizations, Collections Management, and Caring for Museum Collections**) will return, along with AASLH signature online courses like **Basics of Archives** and **Project Management for History Professionals.** A new online course on financial management with Dr. Rebekah Beaulieu will debut in the summer.

A full schedule of in-person workshops will bring learning and networking opportunities to sites across the country, including our **Collections Camp: Textiles (April 1-2)** in Hartford, Connecticut (first time on the East Coast!), **Exhibit Makeovers (April 29-30)** in Denver, **Collections Management and Practices (June 3-4)** in Charleston, South Carolina, and more. Check out **www.aaslh.org/calendar** for the most up-to-date listings.

Upcoming Conference Travel

Headed to a conference or annual meeting this year? Hope to see you there! AASLH staff will be attending and presenting at a number of events around the country. Chief of Operations Bethany Hawkins spoke at the **2019 AAM Historic House Summit on Sustainability: Governance, Relevance and the Environment,** held in Miami. In March, she, Program and Publications Manager Aja Bain, and President and CEO John Dichtl also presented at the **Tennessee Association of Museums** annual conference in Clarksville, Tennessee. Aja, John, and Marketing Manager Darah Fogarty attended the **National Council on Public History** annual meeting in Hartford, Connecticut, March 27-30. Senior Program Manager Cherie Cook will speak at the **Pennsylvania Museums Conference** in April in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. Darah and John will also attend the **American Alliance of Museums** conference in New Orleans in May. John will attend the **Association of African American Museums** conference in Jackson, Mississippi, in August; the **International Conference of Indigenous Archives, Libraries, and Museums** in Temecula, California, and the **National Humanities Conference** in Honolulu in November.

Bundle Up!

AASLH is refreshing our popular educational bundles series to incorporate online learning into our Technical Leaflet packages. We're starting with three of our most popular and asked-about topics: archives, collections, and new professionals. By combining leaflets with recordings of recent webinars, these multimedia bundles offer up-to-date perspectives and techniques for the field in a convenient, one-stop-shop package. Look for the bundles now in our Resource Center!

New Faces at AASLH

We are pleased to welcome two new hires to the AASLH office!

Alex Collins, our Program Coordinator, is a Middle Tennessee local who has worked and volunteered at historic sites and museums since 2011. She holds a B.A. in history from Middle Tennessee State University and is working toward completing an M.A. in public history.

Alex Collins

Rey Regenstreif-Harms

Before joining AASLH, Alex was employed with Bynon Art Services as a Conservation Technician at the new Tennessee State Museum. She has also previously held positions at Stones River National Battlefield in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, as well as the Sam Davis Home in Smyrna. Alex is currently the Secretary and Membership Chair for the Inter-Museum Council of Nashville and serves on the Awards Committee for the Tennessee Association of Museums.

Reynard (Rey) Regenstreif-Harms is our new Membership and Development Coordinator. Rey has a B.A. in history from the University of Montana and a M.S. in Information Sciences from the University of Tennessee. He has worked as project archivist at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Library, a project archival technician at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and Group Sales Manager and Corporate Sales Executive for the Tennessee Smokies Baseball Club. A new position for AASLH, the Membership and Development Coordinator will work directly with members and donors to AASLH, including our Academic Program members and Partner level institutional members. ●

Doing History

with Joseph McGill, The Slave Dwelling Project

Joseph McGill is the director of The Slave Dwelling Project, a multifaceted initiative that combines preservation and education about extant slave dwellings across the country with the experience of having discussions and spending nights in these structures. Associate Editor Aja Bain sat down with Joseph at the 2018 Annual Meeting to learn more about how he does history.

Tell us a little bit about your background.

I was born and raised in South Carolina. After high school, I went into the Air Force for six years, got out of there, and went to school. I was a non-traditional student. South Carolina State University, I graduated from there with an English degree. Nothing to do with history. But before I graduated from college, the summer of my sophomore year, I worked for the National Park Service at Fort Sumter. In fact, I worked for them for two summers and when I graduated I had a choice to make because they offered me a job: take the sure thing or gamble? So I took the sure thing and I worked for the National Park Service for six years. I left there and I went to Penn Center on Saint Helena Island, which was one of the first schools built during the Civil War for the education of recently freed slaves. I worked there for about three years, then I went to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to oversee the building of the African American museum that's there now. From there, I started working for the National Trust, and I worked with them until 2013. When I left there, I had already started working at the Magnolia Plantation and Gardens [in Charleston] where I'm still currently employed on a part-time basis. But before I even started working there, I started The Slave Dwelling Project.

How did you come up with your project?

I noticed a void in preservation and the buildings we preserve. We tend to interpret our history through the buildings we preserve, and we like the beautiful, architecturally-significant house on the hill, but when those are antebellum houses, we tend to leave out a very important element, and that's the houses or the spaces attached to those who were enslaved in those spaces, because it's a part of history that we're not comfortable with. I saw it ten years ago when I was employed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, who specializes and does a great job in assisting people in saving these places; also being a Civil War reenactor, having the opportunities to go to historic battlefields and interact with those spaces, either through reenactments or spending nights at some of these places. Also having the DNA of an African American, of people who were formerly enslaved in the United States, noticing that their stories weren't being told in some of these buildings, I saw an opportunity.

Because I knew some of these buildings still existed, because I had visited many plantations, I've heard the stories that they told, and those stories that they were telling weren't including the stories of those that were enslaved or weren't being told at all. Or sometimes if they were being told, they weren't being told in a manner that was respectful to those who were enslaved. So there was that opportunity, and I jumped right in there. These places exist, and they should continue to exist, and they should also be used as a tool to change the narrative, to insert into the narrative the rest of the story, that element of the story that we've often run away from as people. And because we've run away from this subject matter is part of the reason why we're still dealing with things that we're dealing with today, things like racism, because we don't know the complete history of these United States. A lot of the racism that we deal with today is rooted in the founding of this nation. These buildings are evidence of that. It helps us connect those dots. These things aren't unconnected, so we've got to follow that thread. And if you get rid of that beginning thread, then it's easier to deny the rest of the story and just continue to sugarcoat this history.

The first year it was just acquiring that list from the state historic preservation office in Columbia, South Carolina. It was easy explaining to them my intent because they think a lot like me: preservation, here's a great idea. So for them it was an easy sell. The hardest sell was making that first phone call [to a property owner] and trying to explain.

My intent was to be one and done, one year and it's done, and I was going to stay within the boundaries of South Carolina because that's where my limited resources would take me. But once NPR got hold of this thing, I started getting calls from other states, and I let them know what it would take to bring me there, the resources required. And they were signing off on it. And eight years into this thing, I'm still at it. Since 2014, we've been a nonprofit. I've got folks now helping me shape and mold this thing and helping make some of the decisions, which is beautiful. But now, we get calls. We're in a situation now, we're in a great place because we get to vet these requests.

What would you say are some of the unique challenges you've faced?

I think the biggest challenge is the willingness of these owners to allow the stories of the enslaved to be told in these spaces. Today versus ten or twenty years ago, we're in a better place as far as preservation and interpretation, maintaining and sustaining. But we're not even close to where we need to be. Since 2010, I've gone to twenty-two states and the District of Columbia, spending nights in spaces like this. Sites themselves, I've stayed at about 120. But there are a whole lot more out there. I can't sleep in all these places in my lifetime, even if I had permission to do so. So this thing is ongoing.

But the hardest part is convincing people that we come in peace, we mean no harm. We're not seeking reparations, we're not looking for ghosts, we're not looking for artifacts, none of that stuff. It's all about preserving the buildings, making sure the buildings remain on the landscape. Because when the buildings remain on the landscape, it's easier to tell the story. It's harder to deny the story. So that's the challenge that will always be there. But people want to stay in that comfort zone. They don't want to be told that we are a nation that along the way committed some atrocities, one atrocity being enslaving people. But this project reminds them that yes, we're a great nation, but we did some bad things along the way. We're not that "more perfect union" yet.

What does the future hold for The Slave Dwelling Project?

Five years from now, I hope this number of twenty-two states and the District of Columbia would have spread across these whole United States. I get the biggest pushback when I talk about this project, when I tell folks that eight of the twenty-two states have been Northern states. And then these Northerners want to shut down on me. I explain to them that once upon a time, your state also enslaved people. But I'm hoping that folks will know that although they may live in a state that never sanctioned slavery, when these United States functioned as territories, when we were purging the Natives, people were going out there, out west into some of these places that were territories at the time, and they were enslaving people in those places. We even want to be clear about the Native American slavery that went on, Native Americans themselves who were enslaved and the Native Americans who enslaved Africans or people of African descent. We want all that stuff. We want a complete story, a complete narrative, not just the good parts.

What advice do you have for people just starting out in the preservation or public history field?

I think passion is important. You're not going to get rich; it's pretty brutal. It consumes you. But that's all a part of making it work. I think being grounded in the fact that we come from a proud past, a past that I myself had to find out on my own, because the education system did not give me that pride. So you've to have that desire to do that research, a patience for that, to read, the patience of an archaeologist or a genealogist. Personally, I don't have that kind of patience. I'm more of a practical, hands-on type. But you've got to find that component, your strength, and then roll with it.

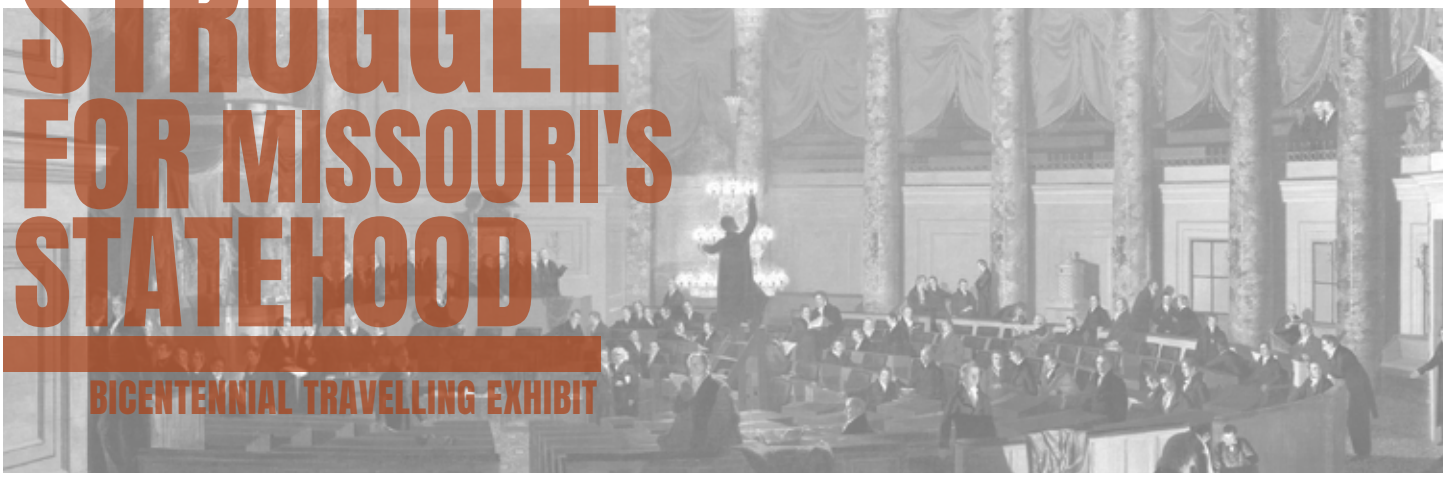
I give my presentations and I get comments like, "Do you sleep at Underground Railroad sites? Do you sleep in Rosenwald schools? Do you sleep in churches?" No, I don't. Why don't you take that up? Why don't you take that slice and do with that what I'm doing with The Slave Dwelling Project? I want to encourage people to do that. I want people to take elements, components of our history, and take it to that next level. Make it the thing you live and breathe. Any public historian could do something similar to that. If somebody's looking for something to do, they need to take a component of this history and take it in the direction of Michael Twitty or Joe McGill. I would encourage anybody to do that.

Do you recall a specific experience or moment when you thought "This is why I do what I do?"

A few of those. It was that first night at Magnolia Plantation with the project existing as it does now. Waking up on Mother's Day 2010, thinking about enslaved mothers giving birth to chattel, a child that belonged to someone else. At that same sleepover, I went for a walk and came across a cemetery for the first time, and I saw those indentions in the earth and I said, "For those folks, I'm doing this." A few years later, I went to Seward Plantation in Texas, and I stood on an authentic auction block and thought about enslaved people standing on auction blocks, having to bare their backs to show a potential buyer that there are no marks on his or her back, because that was a sign of a defiant enslaved person.

But my "aha" moment in loving history was something not related to The Slave Dwelling Project. Well, it's kind of related, because it gave me the inspiration to start the project. I was in Amsterdam and went into the space where Anne Frank hid from the Nazis. That was powerful. That made me realize that, when I sat in history class, I got bits and pieces, but when I went into that space, it made it real. And it made me realize that these spaces are important. All associated with this space is not good, but the space needs to exist nonetheless. And I carry that over to The Slave Dwelling Project, because everything in those spaces wasn't good, but it still needs to exist. ●

STRUGGLE FOR MISSOURI'S STATEHOOD



BICENTENNIAL TRAVELLING EXHIBIT

Struggle for Statehood is a traveling exhibit chronicling the three years in which the controversy over Missouri's admission into the Union was fiercely debated.

The exhibit will debut at the Missouri State Capitol in Spring 2019 and will be on display at host sites throughout the state until December 2021.

For questions or to request this exhibit, go to www.mohumanities.org.

MISSOURI HUMANITIES

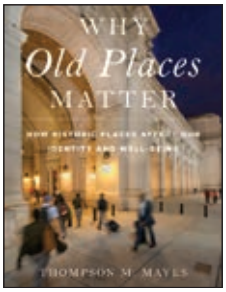
Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy
University of Missouri

The latest resources from your professional organization

WHY OLD PLACES MATTER

How Historic Places Affect Our Identity and Well-Being

By Thompson M. Mayes



"Whether you're a student, an activist, a professional in the field, or just care about your community, there is no better way to understand the 'why' of historic preservation than by reading this superb book." *—Donovan D. Rypkema, Heritage Strategies International*

2019 • 168 pages
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978-1-5381-1769-9 • $42.50 • eBook

101 MUSEUM PROGRAMS UNDER $100

Proven Programs that Work on a Shoestring Budget

By Lauren E. Hunley

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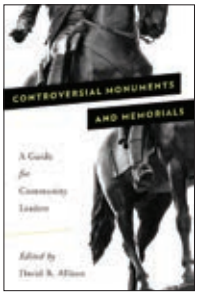

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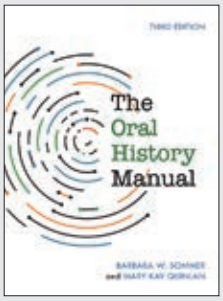

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