

AASLH Conversations: Monuments and Memory

Ashleigh Lawrence-Sanders of the University of Dayton

Estevan Rael-Galvez of Creative Strategies 360°

Todd Groce of the Georgia Historical Society

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>> THANK YOU FOR JOINING US. I'M JOHN MARKS, AND I'M THE SENIOR MANAGER, STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AT AASLH. TODAY'S CONVERSATION HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES. PRESENTATIONS ARE INTENDED FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND DO NOT REPLACE INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT. WITH US TODAY ARE ASHLEIGH LAWRENCE-SANDERS, DR. ESTEVAN RAE-GALVEZ AND W. TODD GROCE.

>> ASHLEIGH LAWRENCE-SANDERS IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON. AT DAYTON, SHE TEACHES COURSES ON AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY, BLACK WOMENS HISTORY, CIVIL WAR MEMORY AND U.S. HISTORY. SHE IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON HE FIRST BOOK PROJECT, THEY KNEW WHAT THE WAR WAS ABOUT: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE MEMORY OF THE CIVIL WAR WHICH EXAMINES AMERICAN CIVIL WAR MEMORY BY CENTERING THE CONSTRUCTION AND MEANING OF BLACK MEMORY AND COUNTER-MEMORY OF THE WAR FROM 1865 UNTIL THE NEAR-PRESENT. ANTHROPOLOGIST, HISTORIAN AND CULTURAL CONSULTANT, DR. ESTEVAN RAE-GALVEZ IS THE FORMER SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF HISTORIC SITES AT THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION. HE ALSO SERVED AS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL HISPANIC CULTURAL CENTER AND AS THE STATE HISTORIAN OF NEW MEXICO. A NATIVE SON OF NEW MEXICO, WITH ANCESTRAL AND LIVING TIES TO BOTH NATIVE AMERICAN AND HISPANO/CHICANO COMMUNITIES, HE IS IN THE PROCESS OF COMPLETING HIS BOOK, BOUND -THE SHADOWS OF NATIVE AMERICAN SLAVERY AND ITS LEGACY. HIS CONSULTING FIRM IS CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN SEVERAL INITIATIVES, INCLUDING DEVELOPING COMMUNITY BASED ARCHIVES WITHIN INDIGENOUS AND HISPANO COMMUNITIES AND IN LEADING A TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION EFFORT IN THE SOUTHWEST. W. TODD GROCE IS PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, THE INDEPENDENT, STATEWIDE EDUCATIONAL AND RESEARCH INSTITUTION RESPONSIBLE FOR COLLECTING AND TEACHING GEORGIA HISTORY. DR. GROCE HAS THIRTY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS AN EDUCATOR, ADMINISTRATOR, AND FUND RAISER AND HOLDS THREE DEGREES IN HISTORY, INCLUDING A PH.D. FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE. HE IS THE AUTHOR AND CO-EDITOR OF TWO BOOKS AND OVER 100 ARTICLES AND HAS MADE TELEVISION APPEARANCES ON THE HISTORY CHANNEL, DISCOVERY CHANNEL, AND



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CSPAN.

>> WELCOME TO THE THREE OF YOU AND THANK YOU FOR FACILITATING TODAY'S CONVERSATION.

>> IF THE THREE OF YOU WANT TO TURN YOUR VIDEO BACK ON AND UNMUTE YOURSELVES I WILL GLADLY HAND OVER THE CONVERSATION TO THE THREE OF YOU.

>> HI, EVERYONE. I'M VERY HAPPY AND VERY EXCITED TO BE ASKED TO BE HERE TODAY. AS AN ACADEMIC HISTORIAN I FEEL LIKE I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH OPPORTUNITIES TO TALK TO PEOPLE WHO WORK IN THE HISTORY ARCHIVES AND SOCIETIES THAT FORM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORK WE DO. I'M EXCITED TO BE ABLE TO TALK WITH YOU GUYS TODAY, AND I HOPE WE CAN HAVE A GOOD CONVERSATION ABOUT THIS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT ISSUE. I'M GOING TO MAKE THREE POINTS I THINK TO KIND OF GIVE A BIT OF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AS I SEE IT TO THIS MOMENT THAT WE'RE HAVING RIGHT NOW. OF COURSE, MY BACKGROUND IS IN AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY, AND I STUDY CIVIL WAR MEMORY. SO IT HAS BEEN A VERY BUSY LAST MONTH FOR ME DISCUSSING MONUMENTS BUT ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY TO MOVE BEYOND THE MONUMENTS DISCUSSION TO THE ROLE OF HISTORIANS AND THOSE IN PARTICULAR WHO DO STATE AND LOCAL HISTORIES FOR THIS MOMENT. IT'S BEEN A SPECTACULAR DISPLAY OF THE POWER PROTEST, CONFEDERATE AND OTHER MONUMENTS ARE BEING REMOVED LONGER HISTORY AFRICAN AMERICAN COUNTER MEMORY OF THE CIVIL WAR. SINCE THE CIVIL WAR BLACK AMERICANS HAVE CONTESTED THE DOMINANT NARRATIVES OF CIVIL WAR MEMORY AND CHALLENGE LOST CAUSE OF THE CIVIL WAR. IN FACT, I ALWAYS SAY THAT BLACKS IN WAR MEMORY ITSELF IS FOUNDATION TO UNDERSTANDING BLACK AMERICAN HISTORY IN THIS COUNTRY. THE CIVIL WAR IS THE STORY OF AFRICAN AMERICANS. WHENEVER BLACK MOVEMENTS OVER THE LAST ONE HUNDRED FIFTY PLUS YEARS HAVE INTENSIFIED THIS MOMENT I THAT SENSE IS NO DIFFERENT. DURING THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT AND WORLD WAR II WHERE PEOPLE AGITATED FOR THEIR RIGHTS, WE'VE SEEN THESE MOMENTS HAPPEN OVER AND OVER AGAIN WHEN THEY ARE BROADER SOCIAL MOMENTS. I WANT TO GO OVER THREE QUICK THINGS TO SORT OF SET UP THE MORE IMMEDIATE HISTORY AND THE LONGER HISTORY OF THIS MOMENT. THE FIRST THING IS THAT THESE MONUMENT REMOVALS HAPPENED IN NOT JUST THE POST MASSACRE, THE MASSACRE THAT CHAPPED IN CHARLESTON IN 2015 WHERE THE ROOFS HAD CONFEDERATE FLAGS AND SYMBOLS AND STUFF. AND AFTER THAT, THE CONFEDERATE FLAG CAME DOWN IN SOUTH CAROLINA, AND THEN THE EARLY WAIVER OF MONUMENT PROTEST MOMENT HAPPENS. WHAT I'D LIKE TO POINT OUT ABOUT THAT MOMENT IT WASN'T JUST THE MURDERS, IT'S ALSO THE FACT THAT THIS CAME RIGHT DURING THE HEIGHT OF THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT. THE EARLY HEIGHT OF THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT, BLACK LIVES



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MATTER BEING A YOUNG ORGANIZATION THAT CAN MOBILIZE VERY QUICKLY, SET THE CONVERSATION ABOUT MONUMENTS AND SYMBOLS TO A VERY QUICK SPRINT, AND THEY USE THE SAME ORGANIZING TECHNOLOGY THAT THEY DID AND JOINED WITH LOCAL LONGSTANDING PROTESTS AGAINST A LOT OF THESE SYMBOLS. IT WAS SORT OF TWO GROUPS THAT OVERLAP IN SOME WAYS. IN THE CASE OF SOUTH CAROLINA THERE HAD BEEN A LONG PROTEST OVER CONFEDERATE FLAGS, AND THEY JOINED TOGETHER IN THIS MOMENT. NOW, WE'RE SEEING A YOUNGER MOMENT OF PEOPLE CONFRONTING THIS, AND IT'S THE NATURAL TRAJECTORY ARE BLACK ACTIVISTS HAVE WORKED IN THE UNITED STATES TARGETING LOSS CAUSE ALONGSIDE STRUCTURAL GOALS. SO IT HASN'T JUST BEEN ABOUT THE MONUMENTS AND THE WORK HASN' ENDED WITH THE MONUMENTS, AND THAT SHOULD BE THE EXPECTATION IN THE MOMENT AND LOCAL HISTORIES, WHAT WE UNDERSTAND GOING FORWARD EVEN IF THE MONUMENTS COME DOWN, BUT HOW DOES HISTORY LOOK IN A POST MONUMENT MOMENT? WE HAVE TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT HOW THE PEOPLE VIEW THE PHYSICAL SPACE HISTORICALLY. THEY TAKE UP A LOT OF SPACE AND REPRESENT A LOT TO A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THESE SPACES. THE CONSENT OF LOCAL BLACK COMMUNITIES HAS TAKE MILLIONS AND MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO MAINTAIN. I THINK WE CAN'T MAKE THIS POINT ENOUGH. IT'S NOT JUST THAT THE MONUMENTS ARE FAIR BUT WHAT IT'S TAKE TO MAINTAIN THEM OVER THE YEARS AS WELL. SOME OF THEM ARE LITERALLY MARKERS OF RACIA VIOLENCE THEMSELVES, SOME OF THESE MONUMENTS ARE. THEY ARE PLACES WHERE RACIAL VIOLENCE HAS HAPPENED AND SECLUDED OR SEGREGATING ELEMENTS OF TOWN AND THERE WAS RAGE IN THIS MOMENT AND MONUMENTS WERE THE NATURAL PLACE. THEY COULD BE HIT AND DEFACED AND VANDALIZED PRETTY EASILY AS A MATTER OF JUST PLAIN RAGE OR AS I LIKE TO SAY, YOU KNOW, EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY A MATTER OF EXTRA LEGAL CONTEXTUALIZATION, RIGHT? SO THE LEVEL PROCESSES THAT PROTECT MONUMENTS ARE THE SAME PROCESSES THAT HAVE EXCLUDED AND DISENFRANCHISED MANY PEOPLE IN THESE SAME AREAS AND IN THE SOUTH WE'RE TALKING ABOUT VOTER DISENFRANCHISEMENT, AND THE LOCAL OFFICIALS HAVE CREATED LAWS LIKE THE HERITAGE ACT IN SOUTH CAROLINA PREVENTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES FROM TAKING CONTROL OF WHAT HAPPENS TO THEIR MONUMENTS. THERE HAVE BEEN PETITIONS AND ARGUMENTS ABOUT IT WITH COUNCILS AND STATE REPRESENTATIVES, AND THAT PROCESS HAS NEVER BEEN ABLE TO GIVE THE FINALITY THAT MANY PEOPLE PROTESTING HAVE SOUGHT. AND THEY BEGAN REMOVING THE MONUMENTS THEMSELVES. I THINK WE SHOULD VIEW THIS AS NOT JUST A RAGING MOB THAT DOESN'T UNDERSTAND HISTORY. BUT ALSO WAYS IN WHICH PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO SEE HISTORY FOR THEMSELVES BECAUSE THEY FEEL DISCONNECT TO THEIR LOCAL AND STATE HISTORIES. FINALLY, AND I THINK PROBABLY TODD MAY TALK ABOUT THIS A BIT MORE BUT WE'VE SEEN THAT THIS HAS SPREAD BEYOND CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS. THIS HAS LEAD TO A BROADER CONVERSATION. WE SAW THE FRANK RIZZO STATUTE COME DONE IN PHILADELPHIA AND COLUMBUS STATUTES HAVE COME DOWN ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY AT



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THIS POINT. IN MEXICO, THE STATUE CAME DOWN AFTER THE VIOLENT CONFRONTATION THAT HAPPENS THERE, BUT I THINK THIS IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW BECAUSE I THINK THE SPREAD OF THIS BEYOND WHAT I THINK HAS BEEN THE EASY TARGET OF THE CONFEDERATE STATUES IS INTERESTING AND TELLING. THE CONFEDERATE STATUE PHENOMENA, THAT PEOPLE FRAMED AS THE SOUTHERN TRADERS, THE FACT IS THAT THERE IS A REALIZATION AS MORE STATUES ARE COMING DOWN THAT THE WHITE SUPREMACY THAT WE SAY IS AT THE ROOT OF THE STATUES. THAT'S WHY WE SEE THIS IN EVERY STATE IN THE COUNTRY. THE NEXT LOGICAL THING IS THOSE PEOPLE WILL QUESTION THE HISTORICAL LANDSCAPE THEY ARE FROM. IT'S FOUNDATIONAL AND MOVING THE CONVERSATION BEYOND THE SOUTH, WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN INEVITABLE? TARGETING THESE HISTORICAL SITES FOR THE ACTIVISTS WHO HAVE TALKED ABOUT THIS IS RENEGOTIATING THESE SITES AND WHAT CAN HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE. REPAIR TUFF JUSTICE REALLY DEPENDS ON HOW LOCAL COMMUNITIES TAKE CONTROL OF THIS THEMSELVES AND ACTIVISTS HAVE LEVERAGED HISTORICAL AT THIS POINT AND SEE IT LINKED TO POWER. MONUMENTS ARE THE PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION OF THAT POWER. PEOPLE THEMSELVES ARE TRYING TO ATTACK AND PROTEST AND AGITATE AGAINST AND I WAS GOING TO SAY QUICKLY AGAIN THAT THIS IS AN INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT MOMENT FOR THOSE WHO DO STUDY AND HISTORIANS LIKE ME WHO ARE EXCITED ABOUT THESE CONVERSATIONS AROUND THESE TOPICS. I'M WEARY A LITTLE BIT OF SOME OF THE PRESCRIBE SOLUTIONS WITH DELIBERATIVE PROCESSES IN A MOMENT LIKE THIS, BUT I THINK IT MEANS THAT WE, AS HISTORIANS, NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF HISTORY WE DO CAN BE A LIT MORE CREATIVE ABOUT HOW WE ACCESS THE POPULATIONS AND REPRESENT HISTORIES AND ALL THE MONEY THAT GOES INTO MONUMENT. WHAT ELSE COULD IT GO TO? WHAT ELSE COULD WE ENVISION DOING? IT'S AN EXCITING TIME TO BE A HISTORIAN AND I AM JUST HAPPY THAT THIS CONVERSATION IS HAPPENING THANK YOU.

>> I'M NEXT. GOOD AFTERNOON, EVERYONE. IT'S GOOD TO JOIN YOU FROM SANTA FE. I WAS WATCHING A LITTLE BIT, THE FOLKS THAT ARE JOINING FROM ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY. IT'S HEARTENING TO KNOW THAT I'M ABLE TO ENTER INTO THIS CONVERSATION WITH BOTH ASHLEIGH AND TODD, BUT ALSO WITH SO MANY OF YOU, AS ASHLEIGH HAS SAID, WHO ARE DOING STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY ALL ACROSS THE NATION FRO COAST TO COAST. IT LOOKED LIKE THERE WAS SOME OF MY COLLEAGUES FROM HERE IN NEW MEXICO AS WELL AND OTHERS THAT I'VE BEEN ABLE TO WORK WITH WHEN I WAS AT THE NATIONAL TRUST IN MANY PLACES. SO THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR ASKING ME TO BE A PART OF THIS. I'M HONORED. I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE I ENTER INTO THESE CONVERSATIONS FROM THE MARGINS BECAUSE OF HOW RACE AND IDENTITY AND NATIONALISM HAS BEEN CONSTRUCTED AROUND A VERY PARTICULAR PARADIGM THAT AS MY PROFESSOR MANY YEAR AGO, ROBIN KELLY SAID, MAKE RENDERS INVISIBLE THOSE WHO ARE NOT BLACK AND WHITE. FOR THAT REASON, I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE I, AS A HISTORIAN, HAVE TO CONTEXTUALIZE MORE, GIVE MORE HISTOR WHICH



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THOSE OF US WHO ARE HISTORIANS LOVE TO DO, OF COURSE, BUT THERE'S NEVER ENOUGH TIME. IN THINKING ABOUT SOME OF MY REMARKS TODAY, I WAS THINKING THAT IT'S BEEN OVER 170 YEARS SINCE THE REGION THAT I LIVE IN WAS CONCURRED BY WAR AND A WAR THAT WAS DIVIDED IN THIS COUNTRY, BUT THAT THIS REGION AND THE PEOPLE IN IT WERE BROUGHT INTO THE NATION. AND THEN THERE WAS A DEBATE THAT ENSUED FOR 60 YEARS WHETHE THEY BELONGED AS FULL CITIZENS. SO THE MEMORY OF THAT CONTINUES TO LINGER. IT'S ONLY BEEN 170 YEARS AND BECAUSE OF THAT, OUR NARRATIVES WHETHER HISPANOS WHO ARE LIVED IN THESE PLACES FOR 500 YEARS LONGER THAN ANY OTHER PLACES IN WHAT WE NOW CALL THE UNITED STATES AND CERTAINLY INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES EVEN LONGER ARE RENDERED MARGINA NOT JUST TO THE STORIES BUT TO THE NATIONAL NARRATIVE AND CONSCIOUSNESS. FOR THAT REASON, I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE NEED TO BRING THAT, BUT AS MY GRANDMOTHER ALWAYS TAUGHT ME, BEGIN THE STORY WHERE YOU ARE STANDING. SO I THINK ABOUT THIS ANCIENT AND SOVEREIGN LANDSCAPE, WHICH I'M BLESSED TO BE A PART OF, I THINK ABOUT WHAT PUEBLO ELDERS SAYS: WHEREVER WE GO, WE LEAVE OUR BREATH BEHIND US. IT'S AN INVOCATION THAT RECOGNIZE NOT ONLY THOSE WHO PROCEED US BUT THE LIGHT FORCE THAT REMAINS LONG AFTER WE'RE GONE. IT ALSO ENCOURAGES US TO THINK ABOUT OUR OWN BREATH, WHAT WE SAY, WHAT WE DO IN THIS LANDSCAPE. OF COURSE, I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THAT LESSON, THAT CORE VALUE A LOT IN RELATION TO GEORGE FLOYD AND SO MUCH OTHERS WHO'S BREATHE WAS DEPLETED, THOUGH IT'S HAPPENED COUNTLESS TIMES, COUNTLESS, COUNTLESS, COUNTLESS TIMES. SOMETHING ABOUT THIS MOMENT PERHAPS TRIGGERED BY THE PANDEMIC. PERHAPS BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE SICK AND TIRED O BEING SICK AND TIRED, SO TO SPEAK. A NEW MOVEMENT HAS BEEN BORN IN EVERY COMMUNITY NOT ONLY NATIONALLY BUT GLOBALLY IN RESPONSE TO NOT BEING REPRESENTED BUT IN RESPONSE TO THE VIOLENCE THAT HAS BEEN ONGOING AS ASHLEIGH SAID MUCH BETTER THAN I HAVE. I'M NOT ONLY A NATIVE SON OF THIS PLACE BUT A TRAINED ANTHROPOLOGIST. SO I'VE BEEN TRAINED TO LISTE ON THE GROUND TO WHAT PEOPLE SAY IN A CONTEMPORARY WORL BUT ALSO AS A HISTORIAN TO BE ABLE TO SITUATE MYSELF AN ARTICULATE WHY I SITUATE MYSELF IN RELATION TO THE SUBJECTS THAT I STUDY. BUT I'VE BEEN ABLE TO ALSO WORK ON THE GROUND IN CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS FOR DECADES TO DO WHAT CALL MY THREE C'S, WHICH IS RAISING CONSCIOUSNESS, INSPIRING CREATIVITY WHEN WE CAN AND FOSTER A SENSE OF COMMUNITY. AND IN MANY CASES INTERROGATE WHO GETS TO SPEAK FOR THE COMMUNITY. IN ALL OF THOSE EFFORTS I FEEL LIKE I'M ABL TO CONNECT THE PAST WITH THE PRESENT, WHICH IS IMPORTAN IN THIS LANDSCAPE WHICH HAS BEEN SO ROCKED BY HISTORIC TRAUMA. IN THAT HISTORIC TRAUMA IS TIED TO THESE RATES OF POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS AND POLICE VIOLENCE AND SO MANY OTHER CONTINUING ASPECTS AND REFLECTIONS OF THE HISTORIC TRAUMA THAT WE HAVE TO CONTEND TO. AND IT'S ALSO WHY IN A PLACE LIKE THIS, IT GETS COMPLICATED WHEN HISPANOS ARE CELEBRATING AND POINTING TO THOSE AS



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REFLECTIONS OF WHO THEY ARE EVEN THOUGH IT'S NOT. ANY SINGLE MONUMENT CANNOT REPRESENT IDENTITY, BUT ALSO, WHEN I HEAR THAT OR SEE THAT, I THINK NOT ONLY DO THESE MONUMENTS CAUSE AND HAVE CAUSED HARM TO ANYONE WHO IS IN THEIR SHADOWS. BUT IT CAUSES HARM TO THE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THAT THEY REPRESENT WHO THEY ARE. AND I THINK THAT'S TRUE OF ANY MONUMENT, BU IT'S CERTAINLY BEEN TRUE HERE COMPLICATED BY A POPULATION, NOT ALL. I WANT TO BE VERY CLEAR THAT THERE HAVE BEEN CHICANOS AT THE FOREFRONT OF THESE MOVEMENTS FOR A CENTURY AT LEAST, AND IT OFTEN, EVEN HERE WE BREA IT UP INTO THE BINARIES AND THOSE BINARIES DON'T RECOGNIZE THE NUANCE AND THE COMPLEXITY OF CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS THAT HAVE RISEN UP EVERYWHERE AND CERTAINLY HERE. BUT THOSE MONUMENTS, IT ACTUALLY HAS BEEN SAID, THEY ARE ESSENTIALLY OR HAVE SERVED AS INSTRUMENT OF POWER GLORIFYING SYMBOLIC ICONS OF COLONIAL VIOLENCE WHITE SUPREMACY, PATRIARCHY AND SLAVERY AND AS THESE MONUMENTS ARE BEING REMOVED OPPONENTS HAVE PRACTICED THESE ACTS AS ERASING HISTORY, WHICH IS BASED ON AN ASSUMPTION THAT STATIC OBJECTS CAN REPRESENT THE FULLNESS, COMPLEXITY AND NUANCE OF WHAT HISTORY IS IN THE FIRST PLACE. MORE THAN THE DISMANTLING OF THE INDIVIDUAL PLACED ON THESE PEDESTALS OR HORSES, IT'S IMPORTANT TO ALSO RECOGNIZE THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING HOW THESE MONUMENTS GET PLACED THERE IN THE FIRST PLACED, THE CAMPAIGNS THAT WERE DEVELOPED TO ERECT THESE PIECES, INTENTIONAL EFFORTS TO CODIFY MEMORY THROUGH MYTHOLOGY AND ALL TO PURPOSELY HARM THOSE IN THEIR SHADOWS. AND I LOVE THAT ASHLEIGH HAS POINTED TO THERE'S ALSO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEM. IT'S CONTINUIN EFFORTS TO INVEST IN THESE MONUMENTS THAT ARE OFTEN PLACED AT THE CENTERS OF THE COMMUNITY, IN PUBLIC SQUARES, IN PUBLIC PLAZAS AND WHO GETS TO REPRESENT IT AND HOW THEY GET TO REPRESENT IT. I THINK OF LINDA SMITH WHO HAS OBSERVED IN ORDER TO DECOLONIZE OUR HISTORIES WE MUST REVISIT SITE BY SITE. SHE WROTE THAT, I THINK, PROBABLY 30 YEARS AGO AGAIN, THIS HAS BEEN GOING ON A VERY, VERY LONG TIME, A ASHLEIGH SAID, AND THE EFFORT TO TRANSFORM THE IMPACT O THAT TRAUMA WILL ACTUALLY REQUIRE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO CONTEXTUALIZE AND REIMAGINE NOT ONLY SITE BY SITE BUT EVENT BY EVENT AND STORY BY STORY, WHO GETS TO TELL THOSE STORIES. IGNORING THIS IMPERATIVE AND THE OPPORTUNIT BEFORE US IS CRITICAL TO UNDERSTANDING THE NEW POSSIBILITIES INCLUDING HEALTHY VIBRANT AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES. THE DECOLONIAL WORK WILL REQUIRE NOT ONLY CRITICAL THINKING. IT'S IN THE HISTORY BOOK. ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING THINGS TO BE ABOUT THE THREE STATUES IN THI LANDSCAPE, BUT AT THE TIME THAT JUAN DE ONATE, IN HIS OWN ERA, HE WAS TRIED AND CONVICTED FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, NOT ONLY INDIGENOUS PEOPLE BUT HIS OWN PEERS. THE FACT THAT HE WAS RESURRECTED IN MEMORY IN 1901, AND THEN IN 1992 TO DEVELOP THOSE MONUMENTS WOULD HAVE BEEN STUNNING EVEN TO THE SPANISH CORE IN TH 16TH CENTURY. RIGHT NOW AND I'M ENDING HERE, ALL CULTURAL

INSTITUTION, STATE AND LOCAL HISTORIES HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY IF NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY, I THINK, TO PROVIDE CIVIC DIALOGUE AND THESE INSTITUTIONS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE SPACE FOR THIS DIALOGUE BUT I ALSO BELIEVE THAT ARCHIVES, LIBRARIES, MUSEUMS, HISTORICAL ORGANIZATIONS, BEFORE THEY DO THIS, THEY HAVE THEIR OWN WORK TO DO. HISTORICALLY, THESE ORGANIZATIONS HAVE PRIVILEGED SOME VOICES AND SILENCED OTHERS IN WHAT THEY COLLECT, WHAT THEY DON'T, WHAT THEY EXHIBIT, HOW THEY EXHIBIT, WHAT THEY DON'T, WHO THEY SERVE, EVEN OPERATIONAL MATTERS OF WHO IS ON THEIR STAFF, WHO IS ON THEIR BOARD AND HOW THEY REFLECT A PARTICIPATORY MODEL FOR THE COMMUNITIES IN WHICH THEY ARE FACED. I WELCOME, WELCOME, WELCOME, ANY THOUGHTS OR QUESTIONS THAT YOU ALL HAVE AND THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS CONVERSATION. TODD.

>> THANK YOU AND THANK YOU, ASHLEIGH, AND EVERYBODY FOR INVITING ME TO PARTICIPATE TODAY, AND THIS IS A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY AND I'M GLAD TO SHARE THOUGHTS. THE ONE DRAWBACK TO WEBINARS IS WE CAN'T GIVE APPLAUSE TO WHAT WE'VE ALREADY HEARD, AND THERE'S A LOT OF ENERGY AND AFFIRMATION FROM THAT. ANYWAY I APPLAUD WHAT I'VE ALREADY HEARD. I THINK IT'S WONDERFUL WHAT EVERYONE HAS SAID SO FAR, AND YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT. THIS IS A DIFFICULT BUT EXCITING TIME. I'VE BEEN IN THIS BUSINESS FOR 30 YEARS, AND I DON'T THINK I'VE SEEN A TIME WHEN HISTORY HAS BEEN MORE RELEVANT, WHEN IT'S BEEN MORE AT THE FOREFRONT OF PUBLIC ATTENTION, DEBATER ATTENTION TO PUBLISH HISTORY. MEANING HISTORICAL ORGANIZATIONS AND MUSEUM ARE MUCH MORE RELEVANT RIGHT NOW TO OUR COUNTRY THAN WE'VE EVER BEEN AND WE HAVE A BIG ROLE TO PLAY. PEOPLE ARE LOOKING TO US FOR ANSWER AND SOME SORT OF DIRECTION RIGHT NOW, AND WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO DO IN THE LITTLE BIT OF TIME I HAVE IS TO JUST OFFER THREE POINTS OF ADVICE. FIRST OF ALL, ONE OF THE THINGS I THINK AS YOU WEIGH INTO THIS AS AN ORGANIZATION OR INSTITUTION, YOU NEED TO DETERMINE WHAT YOUR ROLE IS GOING TO BE. WHAT ROLE ARE YOU GOING TO PLAY IN THIS PROCESS AND IN THIS TO BE? VERY EARLY IN ALL OF THIS THE GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY DECIDED THAT BECAUSE WE'RE AN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH INSTITUTION THAT OUR ROLE IN THIS PROCESS WOULD BE EXACTLY THAT, WOULD BE EDUCATION. WE WOULD BE THERE TO MAKE SURE THAT THE DEBATE WAS AN INFORMED ONE, TO MAKE SURE THAT WE KEPT EVERYBODY HONEST WHEN IT CAME TO THE HISTORY, THAT IT WAS NOT OUR ROLE TO BECOME POLITICALLY INVOLVED IN THE FINAL DECISIONS AS TO WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN BECAUSE THOSE WERE POLITICAL DECISIONS. WHETHER THEY HAPPENED THROUGH STATE LAWS OR PROTESTERS THAT WAS ALL A POLITICAL PROCESS AND DECISION. ONE OF THE THINGS WE'VE WORKED HARD IN OUR STATE TO DEVELOP IS A REPUTATION OF BEING AN HONEST BROKER, AND THAT'S A PHRASE THAT'S BEEN USED TO DESCRIBE OUR INSTITUTION. WHAT THAT PERSON MEANT BY THAT WHEN THEY SAID THAT TO BE WOULD HAVE TO BE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA YOU HAVE A REPUTATION O BEING AN HONEST BROKER AND PEOPLE AROUND THE STATE LISTEN TO YOU JUST BECAUSE THEY KNOW YOU ARE GOING TO TELL US THE TRUTH AND YOU ARE NOT COMING WITH AN AGENDA BUT TO HELP US UNDERSTAND HOW WE GOT TO THIS POINT. WE DECIDED THAT WE NEEDED TO MAINTAIN THAT EDUCATION FOCUS, THAT WE DON'T NEED TO DO ANYTHING THAT WOULD COMPROMISE THAT OR HAMPER OUR ABILITY TO DO GOOD. I'VE HAD PEOPLE SAY TO ME THERE'S SO MUCH POWER IN THE WAY THAT YOU STATE THE FACTS, YOU TELL THE HISTORY. IT' POWERFUL, AND IT'S GOTTEN MY ATTENTION, AND I'M LEARNIN NOW AND THE IDEA OF CHANGING PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVES HELPING THEM TO UNDERSTAND AND SEE THE PAST AND ENHANCE THE PRESENT AND IN NEW WAY AND THEY CAN MAKE DIFFERENT DECISIONS GOING FORWARD. THE EDUCATION PART OF THIS AND YOU'VE HEARD THIS, IT'S ALREADY BEEN SPOKEN, CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS TO TAKE PLACE, HELP PEOPLE SEE THE PAST IN A NEW WAY. MANY TIMES WE'VE SAID YOU THINK YOU KNOW WHAT THIS PARTICULAR SUBJECT IS ABOUT. COME STAND OVER HERE WITH US AND LOOK AT IT FROM A DIFFERENT ANGLE AND SEE IF YOU DON'T THINK ABOUT THIS I A NEW EXCITING WAY. IT'S DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS THAT ARE NECESSARY. WE HAVE TO HAVE A RECKONING WITH THE PAS IF WE EXPECT TO HAVE RECONCILIATION WITH IT AND WITH EACH OTHER. WE'VE BEEN GOING ABOUT THE PROCESS OF MAKIN SURE THAT DURING THIS DEBATE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS THE CAUSE OF THE CIVIL WAR. I DIDN'T SAY CAUSES. I SAID CAUSE OF THE CIVIL WAR. WHAT WAS THE CORNERSTONE OF THE CONFEDERACY? IF THE CONFEDERACY HAD SUCCEDED WHAT WOUL THAT HAVE MEANT FOR THE UNITED STATES? WHAT TRAJECTORY WOULD THIS COUNTRY HAVE HAD? UNDERSTAND THE BACKSTORY. THERE'S A MISUNDERSTANDING THAT THE MONUMENTS WENT UP AFTER THE CIVIL WAR. WE KNOW THAT IS NOT TRUE AND HELPING THEM TO UNDERSTAND WELL WHAT IS HISTORY? WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HISTORY AND MEMORY AND HISTORY AND THE PAST? HISTORY AND THE PAST ARE NOT THE SAME THING EVEN THOUGH THOSE TERMS ARE USED INTERCHANGEABLY BY THE PUBLIC. THE PAST DOESN'T CHANGE. WE LEARN NEW EVIDENCE BUT HISTORY CHANGES BECAUSE WE CHANGE AND THE MEANING THAT WE GIVE TO THE PAST THAT'S WHAT HISTORY IS. IT'S THE NOT THE PAST ITSELF, IT'S THE MEANING THAT THE PRESENT GIVES TO THAT PAST SO WE CAN EXPECT IT TO BE CHANGED. WE CAN EXPECT IT TO BE REVISED AND WE CAN EXPECT THE STORY TO CHANGE OVER TIME. SO HOW IS HISTORY DIFFERENT FROM MEMORY? I CAN'T DO BETTER IN TERMS OF GIVING YOU A DEFINITION. I WANT SHARE THIS. HISTORY IS WHAT TRAINED HISTORIANS DO, A REASONED RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PAST ROOTED IN RESEARCH. ON THE OTHER HAND, MEMORY IS OFTEN TREATED AS A SACRED SET OF MEANINGS AND STORIES POSSESSED AS A HERITAGE OR IDENTITY OF A COMMUNITY. MEMORY IS OFTEN OWNED. HISTORY IS INTERPRETED. MEMORY I PASSED DOWN THROUGH GENERATIONS. HISTORY SEEKS TO UNDERSTAND CONTEXT IN ALL ITS COMPLEXITY. HISTORY ASSERTS THE AUTHORITY OF ACADEMIC TRAINING AND MEMORY

CARRIES THE OFTEN MORE IMMEDIATE AUTHORITY OF COMMUNITY, MEMBERSHIP. THE HISTORIAN BROUGHT IT ALL TOGETHER WHEN HE SAID THAT THE APPEAL OF MEMORY, IT'S MEMORIES' RELATION TO THE PAST IS AN EMBRACE. ULTIMATELY, MEMORIES' RELATIONSHIP TO THE PAST IS EMOTIONAL BUT NOT INTELLECTUAL. IF THAT DEFINITION IS TRUE THEN WHERE DO MONUMENTS FIT IN? ARE THEY HISTORY OR MEMORIES? THEY ARE NOT HISTORY AT ALL. THEY MAY BE HISTORY OF THE TIME PERIOD THEY WERE PUT UP BUT NOT HISTORY OF WHAT THEY ARE PURPORTED TO HOLD UP. MONUMENTS MAKE A STATEMENT ABOUT HOW WE WANT THE PAST TO BE REMEMBERED, WHETHER THAT IS ACTUALLY IN LINE WITH HOW IT HAPPENED OR NOT. AND THAT, UNFORTUNATELY, THEN MONUMENTS LAG BEHIND THE HISTORY. THEY DON'T KEEP UP WITH THE WAY THAT WE ARE SEEING THE PAST TODAY IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT. SO, THERE'S A NEED FOR AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY, OF OUR STATES AND THEN THERE'S ALSO A NEED FOR THE BACKSTORY ON THE MONUMENTS THEMSELVES, WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW DID THEY GO UP? THERE'S A NEED FOR AGREEMENT UPON DEFINITIONS AND A CONSISTENCY IN OUR TERMINOLOGY. I DON'T THINK WE'RE GOING TO GET TO WHERE WE NEED TO BE UNTIL WE CLEAR UP THESE THINGS. I WAS STRUCK WHEN THE DEBATE BEGAN ABOUT THE CONFEDERATE MONUMENT AND THERE WAS A SURVEY THAT WAS DONE. I ASKED A SERIES OF QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CIVIL WAR AND WHAT WAS REVEALED AT THE END OF THAT SURVEY WAS THE FACT THAT THE PEOPLE WHO KNEW THE LEAST ABOUT THE CIVIL WAR WERE THE MOST CONNECTED TO THE CONFEDERATE FLAG. THEY COULD ANSWER NO QUESTIONS AT ALL ABOUT THE WAR BUT BELIEVED IN THE CONFEDERATE FLAG, AND CONVERSELY, THE MORE YOU KNEW ABOUT THE WAR THE LESS COMMITTED YOU WERE TO THE FLAG. BE CAREFUL ABOUT NOT GETTING AHEAD OF YOUR LEADERSHIP WITHIN YOUR INSTITUTION. WHEN THIS BEGAN FOR US WE STAKED OUT GROUND, I AND MY TEAM, WE HAD A BOARD MEETING, AND I SAID, I WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE WITH US AND AGREE WITH THE POSITIONS WE'RE TAKING BECAUSE MEDIA AROUND THE COUNTRY IS CONTACTING US. AND WE'VE STAKED OUT THIS GROUND, AND WE WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE WITH US. WE HAD AN INTERESTING DEBATE THAT RANG ALL OVER THE PLACE. I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT FOR YOU AS LEADERS IN YOUR INSTITUTIONS TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE ON THE SAME PAGE WITH YOUR BOARD. YOUR BOARD MUST BE EDUCATED, AND YOU'VE GOT TO PLAY A ROLE IN HELPING TO EDUCATE THEM BECAUSE THEY WILL ULTIMATELY HELP YOU IN THIS PROCESS. THE LAST PIECE OF ADVICE I WOULD HAVE IS TO STAY IN YOUR LANE, KNOW WHAT YOUR LIMITATIONS ARE. I THINK ONE OF THE PROBLEMS THAT WE HAVE RUN INTO IS THAT WE SOMETIMES FORGET THAT WE DO HAVE AN EDUCATION MISSION. NOW, YOU MAY DECIDE THAT POLITICAL ADVOCACY IS WHAT YOU WANT TO DO, AND YOU HAVE TO MAKE THAT DECISION WITH YOUR BOARD. BUT EDUCATION IS WHERE WE WANT TO BE AND WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE LIMITS OF WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE. ONE OF THE THINGS WE FOUND OUT IN THIS PROCESS WAS THAT EARLY ON PUBLIC HISTORIANS WE RUSHED INTO CONTEXTUALIZATION. THAT'S HOW WE'RE GOING TO DEAL WITH THIS. IT'S THE



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MIDDLE GROUND. WE'LL LEAVE THE MONUMENTS UP, AND WE'LL HAVE PLAQUES THAT WILL TELL AND EXPLAIN WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT. MANY OF THE MONUMENTS THAT HAD BEEN TORN DOWN WERE THE ONES THAT WERE CONTEXTUALIZED. WHY? BECAUSE WE PUT UP PLAQUES SAYING THESE ARE SYMBOLS OF RACISM. THEY WENT UP IN THE 20TH CENTURY. WELL THANK YOU FOR SHARING THAT WITH US AND NOW THAT YOU'VE CONFIRMED WHAT WE ALREADY THOUGHT LET'S TAKE THIS THING DOWN. CONTEXTUALATION WAS NOT THE EASY ANSWER WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE. PEOPLE LIKE THAT DIDN'T WANT A HISTORY LESSON. THEY WANTED TO SEE CHANGE. THE PROBLEM WAS THAT WE TRIED TO GIVE HISTORY LESSONS IN SPACES THAT WERE NOT DESIGNED TO BE CLASSROOMS. PUBLIC SPACES AROUND COURTHOUSES ARE NOT DESIGNED TO BE A CLASSROOM. THEY ARE NOT DESIGNED AS A PLACE FOR EDUCATION. I THINK WE HAVE TO COME TO TERMS WITH THAT. SO THOSE ARE THE THREE THINGS TODAY THAT I WOULD ADVISE TO THINK ABOUT, DETERMINE WHAT YOUR INSTITUTIONS ROLE IS GOING TO BE IN THIS PROCESS. KEEP YOUR BOARD AND YOUR STAFF ALL TOGETHER ON THE SAME PAGE, AND THEN STAY WITHIN YOUR LANE, KNOW WHAT YOUR LIMITATIONS ARE AND I THINK IN THE END WHAT WE'LL FIND IS THAT WHAT WE HAVE TO SAY, THE TEACHING THAT WE WILL DO, THE UNDERSTANDING THAT WE'LL BRING ABOUT HISTORY AND HOW WE GOT TO THIS POINT AND THIS PROCESS WILL BE EMPOWERING AND CHANGE THE WAY THAT PEOPLE SEE THE MONUMENTS AND THE LANDSCAPE AROUND IT.

>> THANK YOU. WE HAVE A LOT OF QUESTIONS COMING IN QUICKLY INTO THE Q&A SO WE'LL GO AHEAD AND DIVE IN. THEY ADDRESS A RANGE OF ISSUES SO OUR SPEAKERS WILL HAVE TO BE FLEXIBLE. WE'RE GOING TO START WITH ONE THAT I KNOW I ON A LOT OF PEOPLE'S MINDS, AND I'LL MAKE SURE TO READ THE QUESTIONS VERBATIM. THE FIRST ONE I'D LIKE YOU TO ADDRESSES IS FROM HARRY, AND HE ASKS, MANY ARE RECOMMENDING THAT THESE MONUMENTS BE RELOCATED TO MUSEUMS. HOW DO YOU RECOMMEND OR HOW DO WE RESPOND AND WHAT SOLUTIONS SHOUL WE SUGGEST?

>> I'LL TRY TO LEAD OFF WITH THAT. ONE OF THE SUGGESTIONS THAT'S BEEN MADE IS IN OUR STATE IN GEORGIA WE HAVE THE LARGEST CONFEDERATE MONUMENT IN THE WORLD, STONE MOUNTAIN AND IT'S BEEN SUGGESTED THAT A GARDEN OF CONFEDERATE STATUES, A GARDE BASICALLY OF OLD STATUES BEING BROUGHT TOGETHER. THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY THERE TO CREATE A LARGE OUTDOOR MUSEUM FOR THE HISTORY OF THE LOST CAUSE, WHICH IS WARPED AND SHAPED THE WAY WE UNDERSTAND THE CIVIL WAR, WHITE AND BLACK, WITH THE WAY WE UNDERSTAND THAT PAST, A PLACE WHERE THAT CAN BE TAUGHT AND UNDERSTOOD SO THAT WE CAN LEARN FROM ALL OF THIS AND LEARN THAT WE ALL NEED TO EMBRACE THAT LEGACY AND CIVIL WAR AND WHAT THAT LEGACY REALLY IS. FREE OF THAT INTERPRETATION OF THE LOST CAUSE BUT THE IDEA THAT SOMEHOW WE'RE GOING TO BRING AL OF THESE MONUMENTS INTO MUSEUMS IT REALLY IS LOGISTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE. LET'S PUT

THEM INTO QUARANTINE UNTIL WE CAN THINK CLEARLY. SOME OF IT IS NOT GOOD ART. IT'S NOT PRESERVING SOMETHING THAT IS BEAUTIFUL. IF YOU'VE SEEN SOME OF THESE THAT ARE ON THE COURTHOUSE LOG THEY WERE ORDERED OUT OF A CATALOG. THEY ARE NOT NECESSARILY UNIQUE OR EXECUTED BY GREAT ARTISTS. THAT'S THOUGHTS ABOUT WHAT CAN BE DONE WITH THAT.

>> I THINK IF WE LOOK AT THE INCREDIBLE LOGISTICAL CONCERNS BECAUSE THIS HAS BEEN THE SOLUTION FOR A WHILE, RIGHT, IS THAT WE'LL JUST PUT IT IN A MUSEUM, AND WE CAN CONTEXTUALIZE IT THERE. I'M NOT A MUSEUM SPECIALIST BUT PEOPLE HAVE SAID, ARE YOU CRAZY? WHAT MUSEUM HAS THE STAFF AND SPACE? HOW DO WE SEE MUSEUM SPACES THEMSELVES? IF WE'RE TALKING ABOUT AN INDOOR/OUTDOOR MUSEUM OR REPLICATING THE SAME ISSUES WE HAD WHEN MONUMENTS WERE ON TOP OF A PEDESTAL BY PUTTING THEM IN ANOTHER LOCATION WHERE THERE'S STILL GOING TO BE MORE FUNDING AND UPKEEP AND ASSUMING THAT SPOT IS A CONTEXTUALIZED SPOT THAT SOMEHOW DIFFERS SUBSTANTIALLY FROM IT BEING IN FRONT OF A COURTHOUSE, I THINK IT'S LIKELY TO BE IN THE SAME WAY SOME SORT OF PUBLIC STATE LEND OR PROPERTY OR SOMETHING OF THAT SORT THAT WOULD REQUIRE A LEVEL OF UPKEEP THAT MAYBE PEOPLE WOULD BE MORE COMFORTABLE WITH THAT SOLUTION THAN THE SOLUTION OF THROWING IT IN THE RIVER LIKE THEY DID WITH THE COLUMBU STATUE. WHAT GOES UP IN A MUSEUM IS NOT A POLITICAL DECISION ITSELF. WHAT'S REPRESENTED IN MUSEUMS AND WHO IS REPRESENTED IN MUSEUMS, ITSELF, IS NOT A POLITICAL DECISION. SO I THINK YOU ARE INVITING ANOTHER SET OF CONVERSATIONS. WE NEED TO SORT OF START WITH THESE ORGANIZATIONS THEMSELVES AND WHAT HAPPENS INTERNALLY AN MUSEUMS AND HOW HISTORY IS REPRESENTED IN THESE PLACES.

>> I WANT TO UNDERLINE. A LOT OF WHAT ASHLEIGH SAID IN TERMS OF SUSTAINABLE, THE MAINTENANCE, IT'S ALSO A CULTURAL ISSUE. SUDDENLY, WE ARE JUST SHIFTING THE RESPONSIBILITY FROM ONE PUBLIC SPACE TO ANOTHER PUBLIC SPACE AND TASKING MUSEUM CURATORS TO FOCUS MORE TIME TO CONTEXTUALIZE THAT. WHEN I ACTUALLY WANT TO TALK ABOUT THE STORIES THAT HAVE NOT BEEN TOLD, RIGHT? THE STORIES OF THE ENSLAVED, WHETHER AFRICAN AMERICAN OR NATIVE AMERICAN, WHICH IS THE FOCUS OF A LOT OF MY WORK OR JUS THE OTHER TYPES OF ICONS IN THIS LANDSCAPE, THE STEWARD OF THE LAND, THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE MAINTAINED THE WATERS, THE WOMEN WHO ARE THE HEALTH, THOSE WHO MAINTAIN THE HEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY, THOSE ARE THE ICONS THAT REFLECT WHO THESE LIVING COMMUNITIES ARE. IF WE CONTINU TO INVEST IN THESE MONUMENTS OR STATUES, WHEREVER THEY GET PLACED, WE ARE CONTINUING TO INVEST IN THAT TYPE OF HISTORY. I DON'T AGREE WITH IT THOUGH I AM ABOUT TO MAKE AN ARGUMENT WITH A MONUMENT THAT SITS AT THE CENTE OF SANTA FE THAT THERE'S A

PLAQUE THAT'S ABOUT TWO FEET ACROSS THAT ACTUALLY USES THE WORD SAVAGE TO SPEAK TO SOME OF THE NATIVE TRIBES THAT LIVE DOWN HERE, THE APACHE PEOPLE TO REPRESENT THEM IN THAT WAY, THAT'S A PANEL THAT I WOULD REMOVE AND GIVE MAYBE ANY CULTURAL INSTITUTION, DOESN'T HAVE TO BE A MUSEUM, THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTEXTUALIZE THE VOCABULARY THAT WAS USED IN THE COLONIAL PERIOD AND THE VOCABULARY THAT CONTINUES TO BE USED NOW, NOT THE WHOLE MONUMENT BUT PARTS OF IT MAYBE.

>> THAT'S A GOOD POINT. JUST TO CORRECT THE WHOLE THING UP, WE'VE HEARD THIS ARGUMENT; WHEN WE TAKE DOWN MONUMENTS WE'RE ERASING HISTORY. BUT WHAT WE'RE FINDING IS IT'S CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO BEGIN TELLING REAL HISTORY, THE FULL STORY AND NEW STORIES THAT HAVE NOT BEEN TOLD BEFORE. WE'LL BE WORKING WITH THE COUNTY TO PUT UP SERIES OF NEW HISTORICAL MARKERS TELLING STORIES THAT HAVE NOT BEEN TOLD BEFORE. THAT WAS ANNOUNCED THE NIGHT THE CONFEDERATE FLAG CAME DOWN. LOOK AT THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO TELL THE FULL STORY OF OUR COUNTRY'S PAST.

>> GREAT. THANK YOU. WE HAVE A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS IN THE Q&A THAT ARE ALL KIND OF TOUCHING ON A SIMILAR THEME, WHICH IS HOW TO CARRY OUT OUR ROLE AS HISTORY PROFESSIONALS AND HISTORY ORGANIZATIONS IN THE WAY THAT WE FEEL LIKE WE NEED TO AND WHAT IS AN INCREASINGLY POLARIZED PARTISAN ENVIRONMENT. I'M GOING TO READ A QUESTION FROM ELANA. SHE ASKED, HOW DOES A LOCAL HISTORIAN VOICE THESE CONCERNS WHEN OUR MUNICIPAL MUSEUM HISTORIAN IS RUN BY THE CITY AND THE CITY IS STRONGLY REPUBLICAN. I FEEL LIKE I CANNOT BRING UP A DEBATE WITHOUT LOSING MY JOB. WHETHER IT'S THE PRIORITIES OF FUNDERS OR BOARD MEMBERS OR YOU ARE IN A COMMUNITY THAT DOESN'T SEE THINGS THE SAME WAY YOU DO AS A HISTORY PROFESSIONAL, HOW DO YOU NAVIGATE THIS AS IT BECOMES A HOT BUTTON ISSUE?

>> THIS TOUCHES ON SOMETHING THAT I JUST MENTIONED EARLIER, WHICH AGAIN, IS STAYING FOCUSED ON THE HISTORY ITSELF AND GETTING PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND THAT AND GETTING THEM TO CHANGE THEIR PERSPECTIVE THAT WAY. THEY ARE NOT GOING TO AGREE WITH YOU EVEN WHEN YOU BEGIN TO TELL WHAT HAPPENED AND PRESENT THE EVIDENCE AND THE SCHOLARSHIP TO THEM, BUT AT LEAST YOU ARE IN GOOD GROUND THERE. THIS IS NOT YOUR OPINION. THIS IS NOT TODD GROCE'S OR ANYBODY ELSE'S OPINION. THESE ARE THE FACTS AND I'VE HAD THIS HAPPEN WHEN I GOT UP AND READ ALEXANDER STEVEN CORNERSTONE'S SPEECH. I WAS LIKE, THIS IS ALEXANDER STEVEN'S. THIS IS THE CONFEDERATE SAYING THIS, AND I'M USING THEIR WORDS AND HELPING YOU TO HEAR THEIR WORDS. I THINK IF YOU CAN STAY GROUNDED IN THE HISTORY, HELP PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT



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REALLY HAPPENED AND WHY IT HAPPENED AND HELP THEM TO GET A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON THIS, HELP THEM TO UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HISTORY AND MEMORY AND WHERE THE MONUMENTS FIT IN ALL THAT, I THINK ULTIMATELY PEOPLE WILL FIGURE OUT WHAT DIRECTION THIS NEEDS TO GO IN. WE HAVE TO CHANGE THE WAY PEOPLE SEE THE PAST AND THE WAY THEY THINK ABOUT IT.

>> I AGREE WITH TODD. FIRST OF ALL, THE FACTS ARE THE FACTS. I TELL STUDENTS THIS ALL THE TIME IN THE CLASSROOM. I'M JUST LIKE THERE ARE SOME HISTORICAL FACTS. THEY ARE THERE AND YOU CAN DEBATE WHETHER OR NOT YOU WANT TO BELIEVE THEM, BUT THAT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT THIS HAPPENED AND THEY ARE REAL. UNFORTUNATELY, HISTORY IS POLITICIZED AND WHAT PEOPLE CHOOSE TO BELIEVE, I THINK YOU MENTIONED THE CIVIL WAR AND THE CAUSES OF THE CIVIL WAR, IT'S POLITICAL. I GREW UP IN SOUTH CAROLINA SO I'M FAMILIAR WITH THE BREAK BETWEEN THE FACTS OF WHY SOUTH CAROLINA SUCCEEDED AND WHAT PEOPLE TELL THEMSELVES ABOUT IT AND IT'S NOT LIKE THE LOGICAL RATIONAL LIKE FACTS ORIENTED DISCUSSIONS OFTEN THAT WE WANT TO HAVE. THEY ARE SOMETIMES ROOTED IN POLITICS AND EMOTION, AND ALL OF THESE OTHER THINGS, AND I THINK WORKING OUR WAY THROUGH THAT IS DIFFICULT. I MEAN IT'S DIFFICULT FOR ME IN THE CLASSROOM SOMETIMES WITH THESE ISSUES. I IMAGINE FOR YOU ALL THAT ARE PUBLIC HISTORIAN OR MUSEUM PROFESSIONALS THAT DEAL WITH THIS ISSUE, IT'S ALSO DIFFICULT THAT IT'S NOT CRAZY TO SAY THAT HISTORY HAS BEEN POLITICIZED. WE KNOW THAT BECAUSE THE LOST CAUSE WAS A POLITICAL MOVEMENT AND A SOCIAL MOVEMENT AS WELL AND A MOVEMENT THAT WAS STEEPED IN ENTRENCHING THESE IDEAS OF HISTORY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORKS THAT ESTABLISHED ARCHIVES AND STATUES AND MONUMENTS AND THESE THINGS AS WELL. LIKE I SAID, THIS IS NOT A NEW THING THAT WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE POLITICS OF HISTORY WHEN WE DEAL WITH THE POLITICS OF MEMORY AS WELL. AND AS FRUSTRATING AS IT IS TO ME, AND AS MUCH AS I WANT TO PULL MY HAIR OUT WHEN PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO LISTEN TO FACTS, I THINK FIGURING OUT WAYS OF STANDING YOUR GROUND, YOU MAY NOT WANT TO BELIEVE THIS, BUT THIS IS WHAT IT IS. AS A PERSON WHO DOES THIS HISTORY WE HAVE TO DECIDE THAT WE'RE GOING TO STAND ON THE GROUND OF WHAT THE FACTS SAY, AND THAT CAN'T MEAN SIDING WITH PEOPLE WHO DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE THE FACTS BECAUSE IT DOESN'T SUIT THEIR POLITICAL OR SOCIAL WORLD VIEW, AND I KNOW THAT'S PROBABLY INCREDIBLY DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE WHO WORK IN TOWNS WHERE OVERWHELMING THEY SEEM TO BE AGAINST THEM. I READ ABOUT FORT MILL, CAROLINA. THERE WAS A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE THERE TRYING TO GET A STATUTE TAKEN DOWN OF SLAVES, AND THEY WILL FACE A HUGE POLITICAL UPHILL BATTLE BECAUSE OF THE MAKEUP OF THAT TOWN AND THE QUESTION IS, AS HISTORY PROFESSIONALS, WHAT SIDE DO WE COME DOWN ON WHEN THAT HAPPENED? ARE WE GOING TO TAKE THE STAND THAT MAY BE SEEN AS A POLITICAL STAND TO STAND WITH THE FACTS, WHY THAT STATUE WAS ERECTED IN THE

FIRST PLACE? SAYING SOMETHING THAT IS OFFENSIVE SHOULD NOT BE A POLITICAL THING. IT SHOULD BE A FACT BASED ON WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT IT

>> THE TRUTH DON'T CARE WHO IT HURTS.

>> THIS IS SOMETHING I CONTEND WITH MUCH OF MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE SO I COMPLETELY EMPATHIZE WITH THE PERSON WHO ASKED THE QUESTION, I'M AFRAID OF LOSING MY JOB, SHOULD I SPEAK OUT AROUND THESE THINGS? AND INDEED THESE ARE POLITICAL QUESTIONS, BUT SO IS THE WORK OF DOING HISTORY. SO I EMPATHIZE WITH THAT. I KNOW PEOPLE IN THE INDUSTRY WHO HAVE BEEN MUZZLED, WHO HAVE BEEN ASKED NOT TO SPEAK TO EITHER BLACK LIVES MOVEMENT OR TO THE ISSUE OF THE STATUE WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITY AND NOT TO SPEAK TO THAT. BUT THIS IS WHERE WE ACTUALLY NEED LEADERSHIP, WHETHER THE DIRECTORS OR THE BOARD, BUT THE CHALLENGE IS, AND I WAS THINKING OF WHAT YOU WERE SAYING, TODD, THE CHALLENGES, WHEN I SAID THAT ORGANIZATIONS ACTUALLY HAVE TO LOOK AT WHO IS ON THEIR BOARD AND STAFF, THAT'S PART OF THE CHALLENGE. IN MANY CASES THEY HAVE TO BEGIN THERE TO LOOK AT THOSE MORE SYSTEMIC ISSUES THAT ARE WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION. YOU KNOW, PROVIDING SPACE FOR YOUNGER OR MORE PROGRESSIVE OR JUST MORE COURAGEOUS STAFF MEMBERS TO ACTUALLY SPEAK UP IS HARD WITHIN THOSE SITUATIONS WHERE THEY KNOW THAT THEY ARE NOT GOING TO HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE DIRECTORS OR THE BOARD. SO I COMPLETELY EMPATHIZE AND THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT A LITTLE BIT MORE CHALLENGING. AND I'M NOT PROVIDING ANSWERS FOR THAT, BU THE LEADERSHIP COMES FROM THE TOP BUT THE LEADERSHIP HA TO ASSESS IT'S PLACE IN THIS AS WELL.

>> WE HAVE ABOUT FIVE MINUTES LEFT. I IMAGINE WE ARE GOING TO GO OVER BY A LITTLE BIT IF THAT'S ALRIGHT WITH OUR PANELISTS, BUT I THINK WE'RE GOING TO MOVE INTO THE LIGHTENING ROUND.

>> I THOUGHT WE HAD ANOTHER HOUR.

>> IF ONLY. IF ONLY. SO I'M GOING TO -- THERE'S A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS HERE THAT I'M GOING TO TRY TO PUT TOGETHER INTO ONE IDEA, AND I'LL READ TWO QUESTIONS, BUT THEY AR ALL ADDRESSING HOW COMMUNITIES AND HISTORY PROFESSIONAL AND PRACTITIONERS SHOULD DEAL WITH DIFFERENT KINDS OF MONUMENTS. I THINK THERE IS MUCH MORE CONSENSUS AROUND MONUMENTS TO CONFEDERATE LEADERS THAN THERE ARE AROUND MONUMENTS THAT ARE MAYBE COMMEMORATING INDIVIDUAL SOLDIERS FROM A COMMUNITY WHO WENT OFF TO WAR OR MONUMENTS THAT ARE NOT IN PUBLIC SPACES BUT INSTEAD ARE IN CEMETERIES. THE FIRST QUESTION IS I UNDERSTAND ABOUT

MONUMENTS IN COMMUNITIES AND THE COSTS, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE STATUES AND MONUMENTS IN CEMETERIES? I FEEL THEY SHOULD BE PRESERVED AND PERHAPS EDUCATE US. THE SECOND QUESTION FROM WILLIAM HOSELY, HO DOES YOUR TYPICAL CIVIL WAR MONUMENT, BOYS AND YOUNG ME WHO SERVED OPPRESS ANYONE? THEY OUTNUMBERED GENERALS ON HORSES.

>> WHAT IDEOLOGY? IF THEY ARE CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS THERE'S A CONFEDERATE IDEOLOGY BEHIND THEM PERIOD. THIS HAS BEEN A DEBATE ON THE GENERIC CONFEDERATE SOLDIER VERSES OFFICER. I DON'T THINK PEOPLE SEE MUCH OF A DIFFERENCE, AND I THINK WE NEED TO LOOK BACK AT WHAT DOES CONFEDERATE STAND FOR? DOCUMENTS, YOU CAN READ THEM. THAT'S WHAT THE WAR WAS ABOUT, PERIOD FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE END. THAT'S WHERE SOUTH CAROLINA SUCCEEDED. THEY WANTED TO PRESERVE AND EXPAND SLAVERY. THAT'S WHAT THE WAR WAS FOUGHT OVER SO THAT'S WHAT THE CONFEDERATE FLAG STOOD FOR. THE CEMETERY IS A DICEY ONE. THEY THINK OF IT AS SACRED GROUND AND DON'T WANT TO DISTURB THE MONUMENTS, BUT THERE ARE PROBLEMATIC MONUMENTS IN CEMETERIES AS WELL. ARLINGTON CEMETERY, THE DEPICTION OF A FIGURE CRADLING A CHILD WHILE THE OFFICER GOES OFF TO WAR, THAT'S SITTING IN A CEMETERY AND FRANKLY, THAT'S INCREDIBLY BAD. DO WE WANT TO PRESERVE THAT JUST BECAUSE IT'S AT A CEMETERY IN ONE OF THE MOST ESTEEMED CEMETERIES WE HAVE IN THIS COUNTRY? DO WE SEE CEMETERIES AS A MORE SACRED GROUND THAN COURTHOUSE LAWNS? CEMETERIES ARE OFTEN PRESERVED BY PUBLIC SPACE. STATES HAVE SUBSIDIZED CEMETERIES BY GIVING MONEY TO LOCAL CHAPTERS OVER THE YEARS WHILE CEMETERIES OF ENSLAVED CEMETERIES BASICALLY HAVE BEEN GROWN OVER IN A LOT OF THE SAME PLACES. THAT IS POLITICAL. CEMETERIES ARE ALSO POLITICIZED, AND WHO'S BODIES AFTER DEATH ARE RESPECTED WHO'S BODIES AFTER DEATH? WHO'S UPKEEP, WHO'S GRAVES ARE SUBSIDIZED? I WANT TO BREAK US OUT OF THE SACRED MOLD OF CEMETERY AND HAVE US TALK A LITTLE BIT MORE ABOUT WHAT WE CAN BREAK DOWN BY UNDERSTANDING THAT CEMETERIES AREN'T JUST THESE NEUTRAL SPACES THEMSELVES BECAUSE IN THE CIVIL WAR, IN PARTICULAR, THE ACT OF MOURNING WAS SO IMPORTANT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LOST CAUSE. AND WAS THE ENTRANCE WAY INTO THE LOST CAUSE BECAUSE THE FIRST MONUMENTS THAT HAD BEEN PUT UP, AFTER THE WAR, IT WASN'T ABOUT CELEBRATING BUT COMING TO TERMS WITH THAT GRIEF. I THINK THAT'S REALLY PROBLEMATIC IN THE END THOUGH BECAUSE PRIVATE VERSUS PUBLIC CEMETERIES. IT'S A PUBLIC CEMETERY, BUT DO YOU OWN THE PLOT? WHAT KIND OF MESSAGE? CAN I GO IN AND PUT UP ANYTHING I WANT ON A GRAVE? THOSE ARE ALL QUESTIONS THAT I THINK WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GRAPPLE WITH AS WE BEGIN TO MOVE. I THINK THE FIRST PLACE THOUGH IS TO FIGURE OUT ARE THESE PUBLIC SPACES AROUND THESE COURTHOUSES AND CAPITALS, ARE THEY CLASSROOMS OR PLACES OF INTERACTION? IF THE PURPOSE OF THE MONUMENT IS NOT TO TEACH HISTORY BUT TO CHOOSE WHO THE HEROES

ARE AND TO PRESENT A VISION OF THE PAST THAT WE DON'T ACCEPT ANYMORE OR REJECT TODAY AS A WHOLE, AS A SOCIETY, THEN THINK THE ANSWERS TO THOSE QUESTIONS WILL COME A LITTLE BIT EASIER TO US. THEN WE CAN BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT WELL BEYON THAT, WHERE DO WE GO? BUT THAT IMMEDIATE QUESTION I THINK IS THE ONE THAT WE'RE DEALING WITH AND WHEN THAT DEBATE GETS CLOSED OFF WE DECIDE WE'RE GOING TO CONTEXTUALIZE THIS AND THE DEBATE IS OVER OR WE HAVE A STATE LAW THAT SAYS YOU CAN'T MOVE IT, PEOPLE TAKE THINGS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS BECAUSE THERE'S NO ROOM FOR DEBATE AT THAT POINT.

>> IT'S NOT EXACTLY ANSWERING THOSE QUESTIONS, BUT IT MADE ME THINK AS WE'RE TALKING ABOUT ANY OF THESE SACRED SPACES, AND OTHERWISE, OF COURSE, I'M THINKING OF THE BLACK HILLS AND MOUNT RUSHMORE AND IN THESE DEBATES THE QUESTION HAS BEEN RAISED ABOUT A SLIPPERY SLOPE IN TERMS OF WHAT IS OFF LIMITS AND WHAT IS NOT OFF LIMITS. I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT FOR US TO INTERROGATE THESE NOTIONS. I LOVE THE WAY TODD FRAMED IT IN TERMS OF THE MEMORY AND THE HISTORY AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE TWO, AND I WOULD ALSO ADD HOW HE GETS MYTHOLOGY WITHIN THAT. ALL FOUR PRESIDENTS UP ON THAT MOUNTAIN, WHATEVER YOU THINK OF THOSE PARTICULAR PRESIDENTS WAS A DESECRATION TO THAT LAND AND A TAKING AND WE SHOULD BE HAVING A CONVERSATION ABOUT A BROKEN TREATY. AND THAT'S ONE AND IT SHOULD OPEN UP THE CONVERSATION TO MANY BROKEN TREATIES AND STOLEN LAND. AND IN THAT PARTICULAR CASE, WHAT THAT MEAN IS THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, THAT ANY COMMUNITY WANTED TO CREATE A MONUMENT ON LAND LIKE THAT, AND I THINK THAT GOES NOT ONLY FOR THE BLACK HILLS BUT ANY PLACE, ANY SPACE THAT I THINK SHOULD BE OPEN FOR DEBATE FOR US TO ACTUALLY HAVE A MORE CRITICAL CONVERSATION ABOUT HOW THESE MONUMENTS GET PLACED IN THE FIRST PLACE AND HOW THEY REMAIN LONG AFTER THEY ARE PLACED THERE. AND BECAUSE THE MONUMENTS LAG BEHIND THE HISTORY, I MEAN WE HAD A DISCUSSION THREE MONTHS BEFORE WE HAD A WEBINAR TODAY AND ONE OF THE THINGS WE TALKED ABOUT WAS MAYBE THE WHOLE ISSUE OF MONUMENTS. MAYBE WE'RE LIVING IN A POST HEROIC AGE AND WE NEED TO GROW UP AND REALIZE THAT IF WE WANT TO LEARN HISTORY WE NEED TO PICK UP A BOOK OR ATTEND A WEBINAR LIKE THIS AS OPPOSED TO TRYING TO PROJECT AN IMAGE OF THE PAST THAT SENDS A POLITICAL MESSAGE, AND ULTIMATELY AT SOME POINT IN THE FUTURE WILL NO LONGER BE CREDIBLE WITH THE COMMUNITY. MAYBE THERE'S A BETTER WAY OF TEACHING THAT EFFECTS THE DECISIONS WE MAKE EVERYDAY GOING FORWARD AS A SOCIETY.

>> GREAT. I WANT TO TRY TO GET TWO MORE QUICK QUESTIONS IN SINCE I FEEL LIKE WE'RE ON A ROLL HERE. THERE'S ONE THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE KIND OF UPVOTED HERE. THAT REGARDS PUTTING UP NEW MONUMENTS IN THIS MOMENT. I WORK AND LIVE IN A SMALL

COASTAL TOWN IN THE COUNTY WHERE THE ONLY DOCUMENTED ACCOUNT OF THE LYNCHING OF A BLACK MAN IN OREGON OCCURRED. THE TOPIC OF RACISM IN OUR COUNTY IN OREGON AND THE U.S., THE COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDABLY WANTS MORE. MANY PEOPLE WANT A STATUE ERECTED IN HIS NAME. WHAT ADVICE COULD YOU PROVIDE AROUND THIS AREA?

>> WELL JUST A QUICK COMMENT. WE HAVE GEORG HISTORICAL SOCIETY, WE HAD ONE OF THE FIRST ONES IN THE COUNTRY. WE PUT UP A HISTORICAL MARKER ABOUT THE INFAMOUS LYNCHING, THE LAST ONE THAT TOOK PLACE IN THE 1940S. THE PEOPLE MAKING THE APPLICATION FOR THE HISTORICAL MARKER WANT THE LANGUAGE TO BE MORE OF A MEMORIAL THAT THE PRESENTATION THAT WE TYPICALLY HAVE OF A HISTORICAL MARKER WHICH TELLS THE FULL STORY, MENTION EVERYONE THAT PARTICIPATED, BUT ONE OF THE THINGS WE FOUND WAS THAT HISTORICAL MARKERS ON THESE SITES THAT TELL THE FULL STORY CAN BE VERY POWERFUL. BUT WE DO HAVE TO FIND OURSELVES OFTEN IN A PLACE WHERE WE SAY, YES, WE HEAR WHAT YOU ARE SAYING. IT'S NOT THAT WE DON'T SYMPATHIZE WITH WHAT YOU ARE TRYING TO DO BUT IF YOU WANT A MONUMENT THAT'S A DIFFERENT THING THAN THE HISTORICAL MARKER, WHICH IS HERE TO HELP THE PUBLIC WHEN THEY READ THAT TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND THE FULL STORY OF WHY THAT HAPPENED AND WHY IT AFFECTS US TODAY. WHY SHOULD I CARE? I'M THE AVERAGE PERSON GOING DOWN THE STREET. WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT THIS EVENT AND WHY IT HAPPENED? SO WE'LL WRAP IT UP AT THE END AND SAY THIS IS WHY IT MATTERS.

>> TO SPEAK TO THIS SPECIFIC QUESTION, IT'S IN OREGON ON THE COAST. I THINK GIVEN THE HISTORY OF A LOT OF TOWNS AND BEING SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR WITH OREGON, PARTICULAR, A LOT OF THESE TOWNS THAT HAD LYNCHINGS WERE KNOWN AS SUNDOWN TOWNS AS WELL BECAUSE OF THE LYNCHING HAPPENING. AND I THINK, YOU KNOW, THE QUESTION OF A STATUE OR A MONUMENT TO THE VICTIM OF THE LYNCHING SHOULD COME SECONDARY TO THESE KIND OF COMMUNITY-WIDE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE HISTORY, THE HONEST HISTORY OF THE TOWN AND HOW IT AFFECTS HOW THE TOWN MAY LOOK IN THE PRESENT. YOU KNOW, I'VE SEEN A FEW TOWNS THAT HAVE HAD MASSACRES THAT LATER BECAME SUNDOWN TOWNS, AND NOW THE TOWNS ARE LIKE 98% WHITE. AND IT'S LIKE THERE'S A REASON. IT'S NOT JUST THAT ALL OF A SUDDEN NO BLACK PEOPLE WANTED TO LIVE HERE. IT'S THAT THERE WAS A HISTORY OF RACIAL VIOLENCE HERE. SO HOW ARE WE DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE TODAY IN OUR PARTICULAR LOCAL COMMUNITY? HOW IS RACE ADDRESSED TODAY? YOU CAN PROBABLY SEE A DIRECT LINEAGE BACK TO RACIAL VIOLENCE IN THIS PARTICULAR COMMUNITY TO HOW RACE MAY OR MAY NOT BE ADDRESSED IN YOUR COMMUNITIES. I'M FAIRLY NEUTRAL ON MONUMENTS AND STATUES TOO, BUT I'M GOING TO LEAVE THAT TO THE PUBLIC HISTORIANS. I THINK THAT FOR ME THE WORK OF LIKE REVEALING THIS HISTORY HAS TO BE DONE FIRST. LIKE PEOPLE HAVE TO UNDERSTAND AND UNDERSTAND

HOW IT RELATES TO WHAT YOUR TOWN LOOKS LIKE TODAY, HOW IT'S GOVERNED TODAY, HOW PEOPLE VIEW YOUR TOWN TODAY, HOW LOCAL BLACK COMMUNITIES ARE TREATED. I KNOW IN THE SOUTH THERE ARE TOWNS YOU WOULD NEVER BE CAUGHT IN IN SOUTH CAROLINA THAT ARE NOT THAT FAR FROM BLACK TOWNS. WE WERE JUST TOLD NOT TO GO THERE BUT THERE WAS ALWAYS A HISTORY OF RACIAL VIOLENCE IN THAT TOWN. CONVERSATIONS AROUND OUR ENTIRE RACISM AND VIOLENCE IS CONNECTED TO THAT HISTORY, AND I THINK THAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN LONG BEFORE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT A MONUMENT OR STATUE HAPPEN.

>> LET ME START OUT BY SAYING, ASHLEIGH, IF YOU DIDN'T THINK OF YOURSELF AS A PUBLIC HISTORIAN BEFORE, YOU SHOULD. YES. I DIDN'T START OUT THAT WAY, BUT NOW HERE WE ARE. I THINK HEARING ALL OF THE VOICES AS WE THINK ABOUT THE CRITICAL THINKING IN THE PUBLIC DEBATE IS REALLY, REALLY IMPORTANT, INCLUDING WHAT YOU'VE SHARED. SO YOU ARE A PUBLIC HISTORIAN NOW AS WELL AS AN ACADEMIC HISTORIAN.

>> THANKS.

>> I DON'T BELIEVE IN MONUMENTS PARTICULARLY THOSE THAT HONOR SINGLE INDIVIDUALS, GOOD OR BAD. I JUST THINK THAT IT DOESN'T -- PART OF THAT MAY COME FROM A CORE BELIEF THAT I COME FROM COMMUNITIES WHO WE DON'T RECOGNIZE SINGLE INDIVIDUALS. EVERYTHING IS DONE COLLECTIVELY. AND I CERTAINLY DON'T BELIEVE BUILDINGS OR ANYTHING SHOULD BE NAMED FOR POLITICIANS WHO ARE DOING THEIR JOBS. THAT'S ONE THING, FOR SURE. LET ME JUST PUT THAT LITTLE STAKE IN THE GROUND. BUT I THINK IT REQUIRES CRITICAL, NOT ONLY CRITICAL THINKING BUT CREATIVITY, AND I'M GOING TO USE THE WORD CONSENT AND ENGAGEMENT JUST BECAUSE I WAS INSPIRED WHEN ASHLEIGH STARTED OUT. THE FACT THAT COMMUNITIES WERE NOT ENGAGED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOW THEY REMEMBER THE PAST IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES IS REALLY IMPORTANT. SO THAT WORK IS THE WORK THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE. AS ASHLEIGH JUST SAID BEFORE WE EVEN START THINKING OF MONUMENTS, AND THERE MAY BE BETTER WAYS. STEEL, STONE, BRONZE IS THE WAY THAT THESE HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED, BUT I'M INSPIRED BY SOME OF THE WORK IN NEW ORLEANS AROUND PAPER MONUMENTS AND OTHER INITIATIVES WHERE WE'RE ACTUALLY THINKING BEYOND THESE MEMORIALS. THINKING OF A LARGER COLLECTIVE. AGAIN, IT TAKES WORK TO GET TO THAT COLLECTIVE AND THINKING ABOUT THAT, BUT THESE PAPER MONUMENTS DOES RECOGNIZE INDIVIDUALS BUT IT'S MORE FORMAL BECAUSE THESE ARE LITERALLY POSTERS IMPLORING YOUNG GRAPHIC DESIGNERS WHO ARE ARTISTS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT AND IT IS FORMAL. IT CAN GO AWAY, NOT JUST THE CRITICAL THINKING BUT THE CREATIVITY IN OUR COMMUNITY TO THINK HARDER ABOUT HOW WE REMEMBER THE PAST.

>> OKAY I'M GOING TO TRY TO SQUEEZE ONE LAST QUESTION HERE BECAUSE I THINK IT WILL

OFFER A NICE CLOSING NOTE FOR US. THIS QUESTION COMES FROM MACKENZIE AND SHE ASKS, HOW DO YOU SEE HISTORY BOOKS TELLING THE STORY OF THE DESTRUCTION DEFACING AND REMOVAL OF MONUMENTS DURING A PANDEMIC? HOW DO YOU THINK WE'LL INTERPRET IT AND TELL THIS STORY?

>> IT'S DEFINITELY GOING TO BE SOMEWHAT BAB IN THE EPILOGUE OF MY CURRENT BOOK PROJECTS IF MORE DOESN'T HAPPEN. I KNOW THERE ARE A COUPLE OF HISTORIANS THAT ARE WRITING INTERESTING COLLECTIONS ABOUT THIS MOMENT IN PARTICULAR. THERE SHOULD BE A COLLECTION. I WAS NOT ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO IT BUT THERE WILL BE A COLLECTION ABOUT THE MOMENT DURING THE PANDEMIC IN PARTICULAR. I THINK KAREN COX IS WRITING A BOOK ABOUT MONUMENTS, AND I KNOW SHE'LL DEFINITELY BE TALKING ABOUT THIS. AS A HISTORIAN WE'RE TAUGHT TO SHY AWAY FROM DEALING WITH THE PRESENT TOO MUCH. EVEN THE RECENT PAST. WHEN I WAS IN GRAD SCHOOL THEY USED TO TELL US WHEN THEY WERE IN GRAD SCHOOL THEY HEARD THAT YOU COULDN'T DO ANY HISTORY THAT WAS LESS THAN 30 YEARS AGO BECAUSE THEN SOMEHOW IT WASN'T HISTORY. THIS CONFRONTED ME IN THE FACE WHEN I WAS IN THE GRAD SCHOOL, FINISHING MY DISSERTATION AND THEN CHARLESTON HAPPENED AND ALL TH MONUMENTS CAME DOWN. IN A WAY, I REMOVED MYSELF FROM IT BUT REALIZED THAT THIS FITS PERFECT. WHEN YOU LOOK AT LONG HISTORY OF WHAT'S HAPPENED FROM PROTEST AGAINST POLICE VIOLENCE, THE MOMENT OF THE PANDEMIC, THE COMPLETE DISTRUST THAT PEOPLE ARE FEELING IN THIS MOMENT AND FEAR AND ANXIETY AND ALL OF THESE THINGS HAVE LENT THEMSELVE TO SO MANY DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. I THINK IT'S GOING TO BE A RICH STORY TO TELL, BUT I HOPE IT'S TOLD WELL AND CENTERS THE PEOPLE ON THE GROUND WHO HAVE BEEN DOING THIS WORK FOR A VERY LONG TIME, AND I HOPE IT ALSO REFERS TO THE PAST. THESE THINGS DO NOT SPRING OUT OF NOWHERE. BLACK AMERICANS HAVE BEEN VANDALIZING MONUMENTS SINCE THE 19TH CENTURY. THESE AREN'T NEW MOMENTS. I HOPE WE CAN RESPECT THAT THIS IS INTERESTING TIMES, EXCITING TIMES, YOU KNOW, FEARFUL TIMES SOMETIMES AND WHAT HAPPENS IN THIS MOMENT HAS BEE EXCITING AND ANXIETY INDUCING IN A LOT OF WAYS, BUT ALSO, THAT THERE'S A LONG TRAJECTORY OF JUST PUSHBACK AGAINST POWER IN THIS COUNTRY FROM MANY DIFFERENT GROUPS, FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE IMMIGRANTS, PEOPLE WHO ARE POOR, INDIGENOUS, BLACK, YOU KNOW, WE'VE SEEN THIS PUSHBACK. THIS MOMENT IS A REPRESENTATION OF THIS PUSHBACK SO I HOPE HISTORIANS ARE ENGAGING WITH THE CENTERS OF ACTIVISM, WITH ACTIVISTS WHO ARE ACTUALLY DOING THIS AND DELVING INTO THEIR MOTIVATIONS AND NOT THE TONE THAT WE CAN SOMETIMES HAVE OF TRYING TO ASSUME THE MOTIVATIONS OF PEOPLE, BUT LISTEN TO THEM WHEN THEY TELL YOU ABOUT WHAT THEY KNOW ABOUT THIS MOMENT.

>> I'M ACTUALLY AN INTERDISCIPLINARY SCHOLAR.



Closed Captioning Transcript

>> WE GOT SO CLOSE TO MAKING IT TO THE END WITHOUT ANY KIND OF ISSUES. TODD IS HAVING SOME ISSUES WITH HIS AUDIO, IT SOUNDS LIKE.

>> OKAY. I'LL PAUSE.

>> WE ALMOST MADE IT.

>> I WAS LIKE, IS THAT ME?

>> OKAY, GO AHEAD.

>> I BELIEVE IN INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND SO DARN.

>> DID WE LOSE TODD? HE MAY BE BACK THOUGH.

>> SO, THE REASON I SAY THAT IS AS AN ANTHROPOLOGIST IT'S A GREAT MOMENT TO BE CAPTURING ORAL HISTORIES IN EVERY SINGLE COMMUNITY, AND I BELIEVE IT'S NOT JUST PUBLIC HISTORIANS OR PUBLIC SCHOLARS, BUT THERE ARE PEOPLE ON THE GROUND WHO HOLD THIS WISDOM WHO HAVE BEEN ARTICULATING AS ASHLEIGH SAID THAT LONG ARC OF ACTIVISM FOR A VERY, VERY LONG TIME. AND THEY TOO SHOULD BE EMPOWERED TO WRITE WHETHER IT COMES UP IN ACADEMIC BOOKS OR WEBSITE OR BLOG OR WHATEVER. WE LIVE IN AN ERA NOW THAT WE SHOULD BE RETHINKING THE DISCIPLINES AND HOW THEY HAVE RECORDED PARTICULAR MOMENTS IN TIME. I WANT TO BE ABLE TO RETHINK THIS IN A MORE CRITICAL WAY AS WELL. THERE'S TODD.

>> LET'S SEE IF WE CAN HEAR.

>> OKAY HERE'S WHAT TODD WAS ABOUT TO SAY. NO, I'M KIDDING, [LAUGHING].

>> IT LOOKS LIKE THE WEBINAR POWERS THAT BE ARE TELLING US THAT WE HAVE RUN BEYOND THE 15 MINUTES OVER TIME. SO THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH TO THE THREE OF YOU FOR HELPING US WITH THIS CONVERSATION AND FOR YOUR INSIGHT INTO THIS. WE WILL HAVE THE RECORDING OF THIS CONVERSATION UP IN THE AASLH RESOURCE CENTER IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS. JUST WANTED TO THANK YOU ALL FOR JOINING US TODAY, AND I HOPE YOU GOT A LOT OUT OF IT. I KNOW I DID AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO TALKING TO YOU AGAIN IN THE FUTURE. THANK YOU, EVERYONE.



Closed Captioning Transcript

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH.

>> BYE.

>> BYE.

END OF WEBINAR