



## ***Reframing History***

Episode 1: When I Say History...

### **Series Description:**

As the public debates around history grow louder, it seems there's a gap between how history practitioners understand their work and what the public thinks history is. We need a more productive public conversation about history. But how do we get on the same page? How do we promote an understanding of history that is inclusive and builds trust in the process of nuanced historical research? Over the course of this series, we'll be speaking to historians, history communicators, and educators from around the country about the language we use to communicate history to the public. Hosted by Christy Coleman and Jason Steinhauer, this six-part series delves deep into a new, research-backed communication framework developed by FrameWorks Institute in partnership with the American Association for State and Local History, the National Council on Public History, and the Organization for American History. *Reframing History* is produced by Better Lemon Creative Audio for AASLH.

### **Episode Description:**

We need a more productive public conversation about history. But how do we get on the same page? How do we promote an understanding of history that is inclusive and builds trust in the process of nuanced historical research? In this episode, hosts Christy Coleman and Jason Steinhauer break down the research and strategies in the Making History Matter report. Public historian Lacey Wilson shares her experiences developing a not-so-traditional historic house



tour and how visitors reacted. AASLH President & CEO John Dichtl and FrameWorks Institute Lead Researcher Theresa Miller go through the research and recommendations step by step. You can learn more about the Reframing History initiative, download the report, and access transcripts for this podcast at [AASLH.org/reframing history](https://www.aaslh.org/reframing-history). *Reframing History* is produced by Better Lemon Creative Audio for the American Association for State and Local History.

### **Episode Transcript:**

[Intro music plays]

**John Dichtl:** The thing that all historians really want and need, even if they don't recognize it, is a way to make an argument about why history is important. And rather than having to make that argument, it would be even more effective if you could just talk about history in a way that immediately connected to the needs and understanding of the average person who is not involved in history.

**Lacey Wilson:** I think if you think about history as something that is stagnant then you miss out on—definitely a lot of the interesting stories—but then you miss out on the fact that these things are still affecting us today.

**Theresa Miller:** This issue, as we know, is a hot-button issue right now in the US: thinking about the past and how we're going to make sense of it and reckoning with racial injustices of the past. And so we really hope these framing recommendations can change the way that people



are thinking and talking about the past, so that it is more inclusive and shared and actually accounting for all of the diversity of the US.

**Christy Coleman:** History has been in the news a lot over the last few years, most notably in debates around the 1619 Project and Critical Race Theory.

Scholars and activists are championing a more complete history of our nation and its injustices—past and still present. Politicians and pundits are taking sides in debates about what histories and founding stories we should be telling and how they make us feel.

**Jason Steinhauer:** Thanks to the accessibility of social media, it can seem like everyone is talking about history and how we understand the past. But the reality is that most people aren't following all of this closely and tend to think of history as a set of fixed facts, a hobby, or something done by academics in an ivory tower.

So the question is this: Can we, as historians and history communicators, change the conversation? And if so, how do we do it?

**Christy Coleman:**

This is Reframing History: A limited series from the American Association for State and Local History.

I'm Christy Coleman, Executive Director at the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation.

**Jason Steinhauer:** And I'm Jason Steinhauer, Global Fellow at The Wilson Center and author of History, Disrupted: How Social Media and the World Wide Web Have Changed the Past.

[Music ends]



As the public debates around history grow louder, it seems there's a gap between how history practitioners understand their work and what the public thinks history is.

**Christy Coleman:** We need a more productive public conversation about history. But how do we get on the same page? How do we promote an understanding of history that is inclusive and builds trust in the process of nuanced historical research? This is the guiding question for a three-year research project conducted by the Frameworks Institute in partnership with AASLH, the National Council on Public History, and the Organization of American Historians.

The result of that research is a report called "Making History Matter; it offers a research-backed framework for communicating about history and specific recommendations on how to implement this framework. You can download the report for free at [aaslh.org/reframinghistory](https://aaslh.org/reframinghistory)

**Jason Steinhauer:** Over the course of this series, we'll be digging into the report's findings with help from history professionals and practitioners around the country.

This is episode 1: "When I Say History..."

Coming up, we'll chat with AASLH President & CEO John Dichtl about the goals of this Reframing History project. Then we'll speak to Theresa L. Miller at FrameWorks Institute, who was the Principal Researcher on the Reframing History Report.

**Christy Coleman:** But first, I want to start with history on the ground...at work. So to kick off this series, we've interviewed public historian Lacey Wilson about her time developing and leading tours at the Owens-Thomas House & Slave Quarters in Savannah, Georgia.

Lacey's two years at the site began in 2018, just as the site wrapped up a decades-long project to restore and reveal spaces in the house that better illustrated the stories of the many enslaved people who lived and worked on the property.



**Lacey Wilson:** The tour I developed was very focused on political history and as much about the people that existed on the property as possible. And how that differed from the way people would normally expect a historic house tour is people would often ask more questions and be more interested in furnishings: whether there were balls here, tell me about who designed the house—not really as much about who lived in this space, and who's working in this space primarily. One of the sections I was very proud of is when we bring people into the formal dining room. It's a very elaborate space, a gorgeous dining room, all this fancy stuff. And I go down the line naming all these things and what they are. But the real meat of my tour in that space is the fact that enslaved people would have to clean all of this, and that they're cleaning all of this to impress the people that the owners of the house are bringing into that space. Because the owner, George Owens, was a politician and it's about him making those connections in the space like that. It's all very performative, but it's all based on the labor of people that he is enslaving at that time.

I would really watch people's faces go like, "Oh, this is a gorgeous dining room. Tell me everything about all of these individual things," and then really take in and account [for] the fact that people were being enslaved to keep all of this clean at that time. And you can really watch people's mind[s] change in terms of the way that labor would have [been] used in that space.

George Owens was a politician, and really I tried to hammer home as much as I could; that him and his three sons—that's four people on this property—were the only ones who were allowed to vote at the time. That always felt to me very present in Georgia in 2018 when an election was just about to happen or just happening that brought a lot of attention to the many voting issues that exist in Georgia.



**Jason Steinhauer:** We asked Lacey what responses visitors had to this less-traditional historic house tour and what—if anything—surprised her when it came to their reactions.

**Lacey Wilson:** It's definitely like all across the spectrum in terms of the way visitors would react. Some people I really could win over with the fact that I was delving into something that they weren't expecting, and they would have questions and they could get more into it. I'd really sum up at the end with something like, "The story is not over." After the Civil War, there's still Black people living in this space. They're not enslaved, but they're definitely not free in a real sense in a lot of ways. So people would often have questions, "Okay, well, then what happens?" And I'm like, "A lot of things." [laughs] I think there's an opportunity there to delve far into other things that came afterward in American history.

But we also had people who wanted a typical historic house tour; they really wanted what we call a decorative arts tour that focused on the things but not necessarily the people behind it. Actually, let me clarify; it's specifically like a very surface-level decorative arts tour, that just talks about the surface level of this. Not who makes the things, not who cares for the things... just this is what it is and this is what this meant in a very surface-level way. People who were expecting to go in and out and just see the house, that was their main thing. And there were people who definitely were like that coming on those tours. Sometimes I could win them over with what I was talking about and sometimes I could not.

**Christy Coleman:** Lacey also addresses the backlash historians and educators often face when revisiting the nostalgic version of American history many people learned growing up.

**Lacey Wilson:** I think for adults who think they know what history is based on the fact that they've already gone through K-12, the fact that someone's pushing back on this idea that there were good guys and bad guys, and the good guys were perfect and had no problems—if



someone pushes back on that it can be a little troubling for them. People think that history is something that is researched once and forget that that's something that people research all the time. People are always doing research in history. There are books coming out all the time, but people don't think of humanities in the same way that they think about science and updates in technology. People are always doing research in history. More stories are coming out all the time because there's always more people looking at something with more nuance, with more research, talking to other people. There's always more updates happening with that.

I think that there are a lot of people who think that history is stagnant. That it happened and that was it. I really do think that the way that we teach it definitely comes across, like there are a lot of people who think that they hate history because they hated having to learn dates. The reason I even got into history is because I always liked to read as a kid and history is just stories with different perspectives and consequences that we're always feeling no matter how far or close away we are.

**Christy Coleman:** I think what Lacey is saying here about what people miss out on when they see history as a fixed set of dates, I think that starts to answer a question that a lot of non-historians might ask: why does it matter if historians and the public don't have the same understanding of history?

**Lacey Wilson:** I think it matters, and I think there's always a gap. Because like, the public is so broad and there's so many different kinds of historians that just the conversation that happens around this is where the real history is even happening. I think it matters that there's a gap. I think it matters that there's two different definitions. But I think—this is a weird metaphor—when we learned about geometry and it's like the line is going to get as close to the Y-axis as possible but not actually touch it; I think that's where we're headed. I think we're gonna get closer. I think the more historians are doing interesting work, are telling interesting stories and telling



stories that matter and affect so many more people, I think the public is going to be forced inch by inch to get closer to what we say history is.

[Musical transition]

**Christy Coleman:** I guess what I would say is this: this is not new, right? We know that the public has never had the depth of understanding that a historian, an academic historian—or even a public historian—has around these things. I mean, they come to our historic sites, sometimes looking for confirmation with their particular biases. Sometimes they're coming to us because they're really interested in a subject and, you know, they've dug in on that particular subject, but they have somehow missed the bigger...the context of that, right? So, you know, as we think about the challenges that Lacey and that site and other sites have, I think, you know, one of the things that we have to remember, this is not a new problem. I think the question is, how do we begin to, as she says, how do we bridge the gap? How do we close the gap? And you've looked at this a lot, especially the way it plays out in social media. What do you think?

**Jason Steinhauer:** Having worked in museums for many years and looked at visitor studies of what people learn when they go through an exhibit—or don't learn—it's always, it always reveals that people did not take from the exhibit, what you thought you were putting in [laughs]. So it's kind of like, okay, maybe we need to rethink our approach here.

**Christy Coleman:** So instead what we're talking about is rather than trying to get that, that one moment in time at the one site, what we're really talking about is figuring out a way to encourage historical learning on an ongoing basis.





And I think that for some, particularly depending on the generation, there's this expectation that history is a solid confirmed thing. And there isn't as deep of an understanding about the impact of research on our understanding. And I have used this reference when I'm doing public presentations. And inevitably someone will ask that question of me, well, why did it change? Why did history change so much? And, why does that happen? And, and why are you, you know, doing what you do? So I give two examples, usually. The first reference that I give is about 9/11. I say "Probably every person over a certain age in this room remembers exactly what they, where they were, what they were doing and what they thought and the day of, and the weeks after the September 11th, 2001 attacks. Now, what happens if I choose one of you to write a story about what happened to you on that particular day? If I do that and I put it out there that this is what happened on September 11th, my work is flawed, absolutely flawed. Why? Because the person next to you has a story and the person next to her has a story and so forth and so on. And it's the compilation of that that gives us a much broader understanding of what happened that particular day."

The second example that I give is about finding new material. And the example that I give is science coming into play. DNA. Lord have mercy, the LaNier families, and the Hemings families' descendants have been saying for generations because they knew [from] their oral history, they knew that they were descended from Thomas Jefferson. And there was a whole lot of other folks who were like, oh no, that couldn't be and da, da, da, da. And then the science came into play and made it very clear with the other evidence, right? It wasn't just the one thing, but all the other evidence that for so long people said was simply circumstantial. The reality is that DNA with that evidence makes an extraordinary argument that says, yeah. Mm, yeah, he is. Right?

If we help visitors understand that history is evolving in that same way, either because of the new questions that are being asked, the new sciences and techniques that are coming into play,



new materials that are being found, that's how we frame our work. And I don't think that the public really gets that. You know, I am probably far too much of an optimist, but I believe at least if we can close the gap on what our process is that helps visitors be far more to what's happening and the opportunities to learn in new ways.

**Jason Steinhauer:** My hope is always in people. So I think the more amazing public historians we train and get into the field and place at these historic sites or other institutions across the country, the better we'll be at engaging and liaising with the different audiences that we wanna reach. I've been fortunate to meet some really incredible, smart, energetic, dynamic people coming up through the field, and I'm excited for their future and what they're gonna do for public history.

[Musical transition]

**Jason Steinhauer:** We spoke to AASLH President & CEO John Dichtl about the need AASLH saw in the field for this research and why they decided to start the Reframing History project.

**John Dichtl:** The need has always been there. People working in history museums, historical societies— especially larger institutions—from time to time will hire consultants or do some kind of surveying work to figure out how better to communicate what it is they're doing. So we approached this as part of a group of what we called The History Relevance Campaign. It was a group of people who got started about seven or eight years ago kind of looking around and saying, "Wow, museums and educators who work with STEM, like wow, they're getting all the attention, they're getting all this funding. What can we do for history?" So this whole effort



started as a rebranding effort and so we were kind of thinking of it as a marketing problem, I guess. We then tried to kind of articulate five to seven reasons why history was valuable. That was really, really useful and really important. We got over 350 organizations in the country to sign on to that and to start using that language, what we ended up calling the “Seven Values of History. But it didn't go far enough because we realized we had generated those internally among history experts and museum folk. We had taken these values around to conferences and talked to people in meetings and got a lot of input from history experts, but we didn't have any input from members of the general public. So we realized we weren't really capable of doing that ourselves and so like a lot of these larger museums and historical societies that from time to time have hired consultants to help them, we realized we needed someone like Frameworks. So we put together this grant proposal through the Mellon Foundation and found Frameworks.

**John Dichtl:** Once we got the grant from the Mellon Foundation, we brought in the Organization of American Historians and the National Council for Public History.

**Jason Steinhauer:** So as John explained, they realized starting from what history experts wanted to communicate would only get us so far. The solution to the problem had to take into consideration both what historians want to say and what the public expects to hear.

**John Dichtl:** The thing that all historians really want and need—even if they don't recognize it—is a way to make an argument about why history is important. And rather than having to make that argument, it would be even more effective if you could just talk about history in a way that immediately connected to the needs and understanding of the average person who is not involved in history. And so that's what this project is about. It's trying to find a common path, I guess I called it a common language before, but find a common path that history practitioners and the general public could share.



So it's not so much about trying to come up with wording or language that convinces people to be interested in history or to understand it, but to find language and wording that helps them realize that they're already interested in it, they're already seeing history that's relevant in their lives, and have probably already shown in some way that they are very interested in history. And that the work that you're doing at your museum historical society, or the book that you're writing or teaching in the classroom is absolutely relevant to them and helps them think in a critical way about the world.

[Musical transition]

**Jason Steinhauer:** I appreciate John sort of going through the history of how this report came to be. I remember the History Relevance Campaign meetings. I went to a few of them, but I think it's instructive because it shows us how these various initiatives are iterative and build on each other. So even if History Relevance didn't achieve all the things that stood out to achieve—even though it did achieve quite a bit—it then paved the way for this next phase, which is this Reframing History project.

**Christy Coleman:** I like the public starting point, frankly. But I do think once we understand that we have an opportunity to collaborate and find ways to take what the public is telling us that they need and turn it into practice. And I think that we do that probably better than we think we do. We just don't have the—what's the word I'm looking for—we may not always have the vernacular to sit the same way. And so, you know, as we think about this idea of pushing forward the importance of history education, as we think about this idea of getting more students to historic sites and schools and partnering—whether it's digital learning or all of the different things that at institutions are doing and trying—I would say that the time is ripe for continued experimentation in these ways.



**Jason Steinhauer:** Well, for people that know me, uh, you'll know that I've been championing history communication as a serious endeavor for quite a few years. So I'm really excited that AASLH is now thinking about this more critically and analytically. The communications landscape has changed dramatically. It's important to understand it and get a sense of what's happening in the world. And it's also important that we train future public historians to be communicators in all these various spaces where they will need to operate.

[Musical transition]

**Jason Steinhauer:** So far in this episode, we've talked to Lacey Wilson about her experiences engaging visitors in inclusive, nuanced historical research....

And we've gotten some insights from AASLH President & CEO John Dichtl on the strategic thinking behind the REframing History Report...

**Christy Coleman:** Now let's get to the report itself:

**Theresa L. Miller:** So my name is Theresa Miller. I'm an anthropologist and a principal researcher at FrameWorks Institute, and I have been the lead researcher on the reframing history project. So I've been there working on it since its inception in July of 2019.

**Christy Coleman:** Theresa walked us through FrameWorks' research process for this report:

**Theresa L. Miller:** So we talk about this as a 'you say, they think problem. And in order to identify these gaps and overlaps, we conducted interviews with members of the field, so with historians working in more traditional academic spaces, but also public historians working in museums, historical societies, and that sort of thing. And that helped us identify how the field wanted to communicate about history and public engagement in history. And then we



compared that with interviews that we conducted with members of the public from across the US.

In total, over 4700 people were involved in the research from across the US. And this was a diverse sample in terms of age, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographical location, education level. From that sample, we identified these main shared patterns of thinking that the public has about history, and we call these cultural models. When we say that—a cultural model— what we're really talking about is these shared ways of thinking, these common assumptions that are often implicit or taken for granted ways of thinking about an issue. So in this case, about history and why it's important, why it should be valued in society. Then we compared those interviews against each other, the interviews with the field and with members of the public, to see where there were those gaps in understanding and the overlaps. Then from there is where we developed the framing strategies. So that was additional research that we did to identify the specific framing recommendations.

**Jason Steinhauer:** At this point, I think it's important we clarify what the report means by "the public" and how we can confidently say anything about the thinking of a group as large and diverse as everyone in America.

**Theresa L. Miller:** So when we talk about the public, we really are thinking about these shared common assumptions. And we are in some cases, talking about the dominant or you could say mainstream assumptions about history and its value in society. It is important to note, and we have made this clear in this report and in our previous report that this dominant way of thinking about history is informed by our history of being an unjust and white supremacist nation. And we do see that in our research.



At the same time, because we are sampling from the diverse spectrum of the US population, we also are hearing about how that dominant narrative impacts different communities. So, we identify how the members of the public that we interviewed that were white versus the members of the public that we interviewed that were people of color had different interpretations, actually, about how these mainstream ways of talking or thinking about the past affected them, and how they felt the need to have to participate in them or how they were trying to push back or think of alternative ways of making sense of the past.

So this issue, as we know, is a hot-button issue right now in the US: thinking about the past, and how we're going to make sense of it, and reckoning with racial injustices of the past. And so we really hope these framing recommendations can change the way that people are thinking and talking about the past so that it is more inclusive and shared and actually accounts for all of the diversity of the US.

[Musical Transition]

**Jason Steinhauer:** So Christy, what do you think about that?

**Christy Coleman:** So I like, I like all of these directions. One thing is for sure, is that we have to be really mindful as a field that what we do really is for public consumption. At the end of the day, the work that we're here to do is about public enrichment. Right? And I think that that's really the underlying goal of the Reframing History project as a whole.

**Jason Steinhauer:** Now let's get into the actual findings of the report: the challenges FrameWorks identified and the Framing Strategy they developed and tested, which hopefully will help close that communication gap.

**Theresa L. Miller:** So we found that the public mainly assumes that making sense of the past is about finding out one objective truth about what happened in the past, and recording and



documenting just the facts. The public's understanding of the past as being about finding one truth makes it very hard for people to recognize the importance of historical interpretation because when people assume that there's one truth about the past that's out there waiting to be found, it's very difficult for them to recognize what historical interpretation involves and they assume that any interpretation about the past is necessarily biased and suspicious.

So what we recommend to overcome that significant challenge of that focus on finding one truth about the past is to talk about history as a process of critical engagement. So instead of thinking about how do we talk about the truth of what really happened in the past, it's more about how do we make sense of what happened in the past, and how do we redress those wrongs and make progress as a society, to deepen our understanding of the past and really critically engage with it. What does that look like?

So that is our overarching framing strategy, that we really suggest that communicators shift that conversation around history from being about an abstract truth to being about critical engagement with the past.

**Christy Coleman:** The next two shifts proposed by the report support the “abstract truth to critical engagement” move, so ideally you can combine these three elements to meet audiences with different needs.

**Theresa L. Miller:** Another main point of this framing strategy is to go from abstract debate to concrete engagement. If we get stuck in these culture wars of “what is critical race theory, and how is it destroying our schools” and that sort of approach, and we get stuck on what “really” happened in the past, we're just going to be mired in these debates about an abstract truth.

But if we focus instead on critical engagement with the past, we can still very much center, maybe even more so center these conversations about past injustices. But we can approach





them from the point of “How do we critically engage with our past? What does it mean for us to look at our past and understand the process of making sense of the past in order to then make progress and build a more just world?” That's another main point of this framing strategy.

And then related to that is shifting the focus from winning the debate to progress toward justice. So again, focusing instead on how learning from the past can move us toward a more just world. This strategy can help people understand why history should matter to them, and relatedly why an inclusive shared history of the US that includes all of these different perspectives, especially perspectives of historically oppressed groups, is important and why it matters to all of us.

I will say that one of the main findings we found about how the public currently thinks about history is that people have this understanding that everyone needs to learn a mainstream history of the US. And by mainstream, people believe that's [the] white, male, wealthy history of our so-called Founding Fathers. That sort of approach. People believe that everyone needs to learn that. But people think that anything else, you know, the history of enslaved people, the history of immigrants that have come to this country over the centuries, the history of Indigenous peoples who obviously were here much longer than the Founding Fathers...that these are extras that only people from those marginalized those identities, those historically oppressed groups, that only they need to learn them. So we really need to build an understanding of a shared inclusive history where everyone understands the need to include and learn about these diverse groups and their histories as part of our American history. That's our shared story.

[Musical transition]



**Jason Steinhauer:** I totally agree with moving away from the abstract. One thing I've heard consistently from people I talk to—whether it be in my history club or in my research—is the more abstract and theoretical the arguments get, the more people tune out. And so I really appreciate the call to bring it back down to earth, understanding—of course—that there is a space for those more abstract, theoretical conversations to happen, whether it be in academic circles or among scholars, but on the ground, people do seek that connection to physical time and place and communities that they know and understand. And I think that's a smart recommendation.

**Christy Coleman:** Well, I have to say that I love the idea of moving to progress towards justice, because that's when you're making history a usable functional thing after you learn those facts after you bring it back to the ground. After you get it to that point, it becomes more usable. And ultimately one would hope that what we're after is justice, uh, as a whole, that that would be the thing that we as Americans would be after. I would say, I hope that the majority of the public does want that, but we have to be prepared for those who do not.

**Jason Steinhauer:** So that's the overarching critical engagement frame recommended by the report. But then it goes into a lot more detail with four specific recommendations that we can use to put the frame into practice.

**Christy Coleman:** One: Talk about critical thinking to shift perceptions about what history involves.



**Theresa L. Miller:** This is a way of talking about validity and evaluation of historical evidence that allows a place for interpretation without triggering worries about bias that often come up when history is talked about as finding the one truth about the past.

**Christy Coleman:** Two: Compare historical interpretation to detective work to deepen understanding of historical practice

**Theresa L. Miller:** And the reason why we suggest a metaphor is that a metaphor can be a powerful tool for shifting people's understanding of concepts and helping them understand and helping to explain a concept.

And so in this sense, we're recommending that historians or communicators about history talk about the process of historical interpretation as the process of doing detective work. It's important to note that we're not recommending that historians talk about themselves as detectives.

However, just that minor shift of focusing on the process of historical interpretation as doing detective work can actually be quite productive.

**Christy Coleman:** Three: Emphasize how history helps us make progress towards justice to increase recognition of history's importance.

**Theresa L. Miller:** We found that the public does understand that learning about the past can help people make sense of the past and learn from past mistakes and make progress as a society. However, they often believe that history is doomed to repeat itself and that we don't do that, that we can't. So there's a sense of fatalism around this—whether it's possible to learn from past mistakes. So what we recommend is that communicators don't just talk about the importance of history in terms of making progress, but that it's specifically linked to discussions



around making a more just world; discussions around justice as a value. It's really linking these two values of progress and justice together.

**Christy Coleman:** And finally...four: use concrete, location-specific, solutions-focused examples to build support for inclusive history

**Theresa L. Miller:** So there are many ways and combinations that communicators can put these framing strategies together. This is not meant to be one-size-fits-all. What we talk about when we're talking about a framing strategy is we have an overarching approach that we're suggesting is consistently applied. But within that approach, there's a lot of different ways that communicators can take that up and use that and still have a unified narrative that they can use together to shift the conversation [in] more productive directions.

**Jason Steinhauer:** I totally agree that critical thinking is imperative both to society at large and to history. What I have found in my research—which is the asterisk next to this that I wanna think about more critically—is that a lot of disinformation campaigns, which are successful, begin with phrases like critical thinking, or think for yourself, or do your own research. And that becomes a rabbit hole by which they bring people down, get them to distrust or not trust either institutions or experts, and then feed them disinformation. So while I totally agree with critical thinking as a principle in life that one should adhere to, I am also a little bit questioning how do we marry that with some of the campaigns—disinformation and propaganda campaigns—that are out there—that actually rely on that same language in order to bring people down the rabbit hole. So I'm super excited to dig into this with Sam Weinberg in the next episode Because I think he'll have some interesting things to say about this.

**Christy Coleman:** Well, I think you're absolutely right. That is the concern there is—this not just in history, but in all things, right? The internet has made people think that they are experts or



can become experts in something in a weekend. And that is problematic. So if the question is how do we as historic sites take these four recommendations and make sure that, as we understand them, that we are not also deploying language that it can get lost in the quagmire of what's already out there. I think there's some validity to that. Absolutely. There's validity to that. I think what we're asking for is building a relationship with our communities, which is something that we as institutions have not always done. When relationships are built, trust is sustained.

[Outro music begins, plays through end]

**Christy Coleman:** So there's a lot more we could say about these recommendations, but I think we are out of time for now.

**Jason Steinhauer:** Thanks to those of you who have stuck with us so far.

**Christy Coleman:** Over the next five episodes, we'll be digging deeper into the framing strategy and the four recommendations, so please subscribe and make sure to join us for our next episode, where we'll be joined by the Minnesota Historical Society's Dr. William Convery, History Professor Stacey Watson, and Professor and author Sam Wineburg.

**Jason Steinhauer:** "Reframing History" is brought to you by the American Association for State and Local History. It is made possible through support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. To learn more about the project and read the report, please visit [AASLH.org/research](https://aaslh.org/research)

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to all our advisory committee and guests. Our guests on this episode were: Lacey Wilson, John Dichtl, and Theresa Miller.

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Again, I'm Jason Steinhauer...

**Christy Coleman:** And I'm Christy Coleman.

If you enjoyed this episode or learned something you'll apply to your history communication toolkit, please let your friends and colleagues know so that this research gets shared as widely as possible.