

A Perfect Storm?



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To many, it looks like the perfect storm: five disturbing trends coming together to spawn a monster disaster. Here's the meteorological analysis. (1) There are now too many public history programs in colleges and universities, especially at the graduate level. (2) They are producing record numbers of new MAs, probably too many. (3) These newly minted public historians are not finding good entry-level jobs in the field. (4) Some of the new graduates aren't finding jobs because they are poorly trained—by new public history programs that are struggling to figure out what they should be doing. (5) Even graduates of long-established programs aren't getting jobs—because their stodgy curricula haven't kept up with the realities of the twenty-first-century economy and the digital revolution.



Flickr user Ben Salter.

These are observations I hear regularly from colleagues whom I respect. Some conclude that the National Council on Public History should actively discourage the creation of new programs. Let's look at some of the issues

raised by these alarming observations and consider what NCPH might do consistent with its impulse to welcome all aboard the "big ark."

Are there too many public history programs in higher education?

The NCPH Guide to Public History Programs (<http://bit.ly/NCPH-Guide>) lists a total of 221 programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels in ten countries. Two hundred of these are in North America alone, and 138 of those are graduate programs. From one perspective, this is a remarkable story of success. Just in the United States, 45 of the 50 states (plus the District of Columbia) offer some form of public history education. From another perspective, program proliferation may be a genuine problem, at least in graduate education in the United States—but who's to say what a sustainable number of programs is? Job placements are one measure of sustainability and success, and academic program reviewers in deans' offices and prospective students with multiple options are ever mindful of statistics like that. Thinking about the issue in this way, it may be a problem of quality not quantity.

Personally, I don't think that the tide can be turned back because the recent and rapid growth of programs and courses is rooted in multiple causes. Public history at the undergraduate level helps history

departments answer the question "What can I do with a history major?" Graduate and undergraduate courses in public history help university administrators show that their institutions are "civically engaged."

Digital Integration Update

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Several of the plans we shared in Ottawa to integrate the various pieces of NCPH's publications and communications are beginning to take more definite shape.



San Diego Air and Space Museum Archive on Flickr Creative Commons.

In late September, we will start work on our new Omeka-based Public History Commons Library. This will be just in time (we hope!) to house the online components of a collaborative publication with *The Public Historian* focusing on the "Slavery in New York" exhibit at the New York Historical Society. The project is part of a longer, shared

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Annual Meeting Preview on Page 10



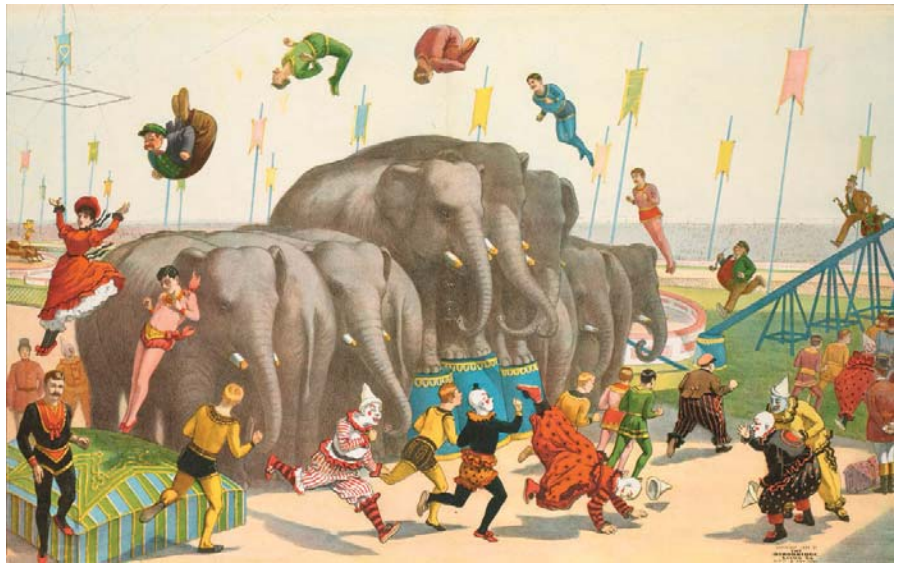
Want to Bring the NCPH Conference to Your City?

2017 Midwest

NCPH is currently accepting site proposals from Midwestern cities for the 2017 Annual Meeting. Proposals to host are submitted by NCPH members interested in serving as the chair of the Local Resource Committee and on the Program Committee for the 2017 Conference. Proposals should include the following: a statement of why the site is a great fit for a public history conference; information about local hotels and the support of local officials, institutions, organizations, and agencies who will work together to plan a successful conference; as well as an outline of potential arrangements for any offsite meeting facilities and possible tours/field trips. See <http://nph.org/cms/conferences/propose-a-meeting/> for more information. Proposals are due by January 15, 2014.

2018 Southwest

Periodically, NCPH meets jointly with other organizations to build the profile of the public history profession and strengthen the discipline of history. Following the successful joint meeting with the Organization for American Historians (OAH) in Milwaukee in 2012, NCPH is exploring the possibility of another joint conference with OAH, in the Southwest in 2018. We are seeking initial expressions of interest for hosting. Please send to nph@iupui.edu.



Barnum & Bailey poster, 1899, from Boston Public Library on Flickr Creative Commons.

New Look for the *Guide*

NCPH has simplified the entry form for schools listed in its free, online *Guide to Public History Programs* and is making a push this fall to update this important resource.

We urge faculty at graduate and undergraduate programs to complete the new, much-abbreviated questionnaire (<http://bit.ly/PHP-Guide>) for their institution. If you have an existing entry, completing the new questionnaire will take only a few minutes of cutting, pasting, and updating. If your program does not yet have an entry, now is the time to create one. If you have an introductory/welcome paragraph prepared for your program, the rest of the

entry questionnaire should only take 10-15 minutes.

Current entries in the *Guide* can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/NCPH-Guide>

The *Guide* provides students and prospective students, faculty, and others interested the shape of public history education with basic, standardized information about where and how public historians are being trained. Approximately 150 graduate and 90 undergraduate programs are currently listed. After the NCPH Jobs page, the *Guide* is the most frequented section of the NCPH website. Students have told us they use the



Guide to find programs in specific geographic areas or with other attributes that are of special interest. The *Guide* also performs a benchmarking function: it reveals similarities and differences between programs, suggests what attributes or resources are normative among programs in the field, and, over time, has helped track changes, such as the growth in number of programs and shifts in types of training.

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NCPH inspires public engagement with the past and serves the needs of practitioners in putting history to work in the world by building community among historians, expanding professional skills and tools, fostering critical reflection on historical practice, and publicly advocating for history and historians. *Public History News* is published in March, June, September, and December. NCPH reserves the right to reject material that is not consistent with the goals and purposes of the organization. Individual membership orders, changes of address, and business and editorial correspondence should be addressed to NCPH, 127 Cavanaugh Hall – IUPUI, 425 University Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46202-5140. E-mail: ncpH@iupui.edu. Tel: 317-274-2716. Join online or renew at www.ncpH.org. Headquartered on the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, NCPH is grateful for the generous support of the IU School of Liberal Arts and the Department of History.

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Graduate study in public history provides career directions for students who want to practice history but not teach, to shape public attitudes about the past, to participate in collaborative projects, to find connections to issues of social justice, to make history meaningful. For faculty, it's fun and rewarding to "do" and teach public history. Faculty, students, and alumni from all sorts of programs—undergraduate and graduate, decades-old programs and scrappy new ones, those with a local focus and those with an international reach—are doing exciting, important, and path-breaking work. From the standpoint of potential employers—everyone from museum administrators to historical consulting firms, from big federal agencies to small historical societies, from state departments of transportation to city planning offices—a wide and deep pool of applicants should be welcome news.

Are there too many programs? It's hard to say.

Is there a job crisis in public history?

Without question, the Great Recession has taken its toll, as have the slashing and sequestering of budgets at the local, state, provincial, and federal levels, where many public history jobs have traditionally been funded in the public sector. People are losing jobs, positions are going unfilled, many individuals are doing the work once done by two, three, or more colleagues. Some who were once planning to retire soon are holding onto jobs to build back retirement funds, postponing others' prospects for mid-level advancement. Entry-level jobs are scarcer, more temporary, with fewer benefits. Historical consultants are finding fewer opportunities for contract work. Cultural institutions, heritage agencies, museums

and historic sites, archives and libraries are being scrutinized as never before for their relevance to modern life, and some are being eliminated entirely or dismantled to the point of dysfunction. The Great Recession reduced positions in the museum world, but doubts about the economic and cultural viability of historic house museums and outdoor museums pre-dated the global crisis, and they continue to erode employment in the museum sector. Historians are reluctant to use the term "unprecedented," but some wonder if the grim news is perhaps the new normal. On the other hand, state and federal law continue to mandate processes of environmental and historical review, which in turn creates employment opportunities for historians and preservationists. The digital revolution is energizing and expanding opportunities in all fields of public history, perhaps no more so than in library, archival, and information science. Reducing the salaries and lowering the threshold degree requirements for some curator and local museum director jobs is part of these unfortunate trends but, ironically, the belt-tightening has opened up these positions to recent recipients of the MA eager to have the job, the title, and the pay.

The pain of friends, colleagues, and family members, as well as the numbing impact of cutbacks on close-by local institutions, give all of this a very personal feel for me. However, in all candor, I have to say that graduates of our public history program are consistently finding jobs—and good jobs—in the field, right out of school. My impression is that colleagues in similar programs at other universities say the same thing. Obviously, a desire to live in a particular part of the country or a specific city is going to reduce the odds of finding a good first job. But if one is geographically portable, I think our program and many other programs continue to have strong placement records.

Clearly this is just anecdotal evidence from programs for which I have personal knowledge. But it is suggestive. We need hard data.

For the remainder of this piece, let me focus on graduate education in public history, on the assumption

that the Master of Arts degree has replaced the Bachelor's degree as the minimal ticket of admission or union card into white collar employment.

What can NCPH do?

The alarmed observations with which I began single out the rising numbers of both programs and graduates, but it seems to me that the real issue is quality. I believe that NCPH can address the issue of quality control from two different but related angles. First, it can speak directly to public history program directors and educators about best practices, equipping them with the knowledge and insights of deep experience in administering and teaching public history. Second, it can speak directly to prospective students about being smarter consumers of their education—encouraging them to seek quality, recognize it, and gravitate to it—so they have the best chances to secure one of those good entry-level (or in some cases advanced) public history jobs. For practitioners who hire historians in the public and private sectors, this is a "pipeline" approach that will help universities supply a smart and versatile work force over the long term.

Quality Control for Programs

Credentialing. Some in NCPH and others in kindred organizations in related fields are calling for professional societies to begin "credentialing" or "certifying" programs by setting minimum standards and then enforcing them by denying admission of "sub-standard" programs to the "guild." I've been an NCPH member long enough to remember similar calls twenty years ago at the conference breakfasts that bring together public history educators and program directors at our annual meetings. Personally then, and as NCPH president now, I am very uncomfortable with this approach to the issue of quality control. One, it's hostile rather than welcoming, and a great strength of NCPH has always been the unpretentious friendliness of our organization and our conferences. Two, is logistics: who would do the policing and enforcing? NCPH has scarce resources and, in any event, probably doesn't have the interest





Ship Garthsnaid, c.1920, by Alexander Harper Turner. National Library of New Zealand on Flickr Creative Commons.

or will. Rather than trying to patrol the curricula, right now NCPH is institutionally focused on the excitement of a field that is both globalizing (which of course opens up jobs) and digitizing (which also opens up jobs, even as it raises the question of the role for technical training in public history curricula based in humanities-oriented history departments).

Best practices. Where a national and international professional organization can play a role in promoting program quality is through “best practices” documents. I think of this as a friendly alternative to credentialing—and potentially more effective. NCPH has a deep bench of experience in public history education, and over recent years it has been assembling this wisdom into a set of online resources. There are NCPH best practices documents (<http://bit.ly/NCPH-BP>) on MA programs, public history for undergraduates, internships, and certificate programs. Over the years, our curriculum and training committee has also developed lists of recommended readings (<http://bit.ly/NCPH-BP>) on provocative case studies, controversial history, and oral history. NCPH has an increasing number of new members from the academy, as well as many first-time attendees to our conferences. Many of them are brimming with questions about how to establish public history programs, how to teach public history, how to take the classroom into the field, and so forth. We want to hear these questions from our new colleagues. We need to make the expertise of our many veterans more widely available. Now in the works is an NCPH best practices document on establishing a public history program. When completed, I expect that it will have some helpful “red flags” that

will signal when a university should NOT establish a program. As NCPH moves forward to develop this and other best practice documents, it should do so mindful that “one-size-fits-all” solutions are inappropriate and that there are multiple excellent models for structuring successful programs and building upon unique local resources.

The deep bench of experience and expertise.

Another immediately available resource is the cohort of NCPH veterans who are eager to offer expert advice to universities about public history programs and curricula. NCPH maintains a list of these individuals on its website (<http://bit.ly/NCPHreviewers>). We need to expand this list to be more geographically diverse, to maximize opportunities for in-person and on-site consultation, which can be invaluable for program evaluation, even in the age of internet, e-mail, and social media.

Is there a disconnect between public history training and the skills that employers want?

This is a big question but not a new one. I've heard this complaint for almost twenty years now, particularly from the private sector. In the past, the misgivings about the training of public historians in graduate school have singled out time management skills, the ability to work against real deadlines, grant-writing experience, and knowledge of budgets and budgeting. Today, we hear complaints in a similar vein and, in addition, that newly minted MAs lack familiarity with basic business practices, with technical writing, with working as a member of a team, with imagining creative ways to meet client demands. Some employers lament the inability of their new hires to “think outside the box” to assess the intellectual contours of a specific project and to consider a range of methodologies and modes of inquiry. There are also expectations for basic (if not advanced) digital proficiency, including building spreadsheets, designing websites, working with big data, and using GIS. While some of these expectations fit comfortably into the teaching mission of history departments, others are technical skills barely known to most historians. Once upon a time employers could spend a year or so getting new hires up to speed, but the business climate facing many companies today has created an environment where new employees must hit the ground running. NCPH Vice-President Patrick Moore has already announced that he is keen to make addressing this skills issue a priority of his presidency.

Teachers who are practitioners. One trend that may be exacerbating the skills deficit in public history curricula is that more and more teachers of public history are not actually practitioners themselves. In some cases, they may have classroom learning in public history, but not the practical experience from working as a museum curator or a preservation consultant, for example. Often new faculty hires are asked to teach public history courses or even to start public history programs, on the assumption that as new PhDs they must certainly know something about public history. Equally concerning is the dismissive view that “anyone can teach public history.” And, finally, the nature of much PhD training contributes to the trend. The shortcomings of our own PhD program are instructive. Our department encourages PhD students to take advantage of the strengths of our Public History Program, which has always been determinedly focused on the MA. Although we offer a PhD in history, rather than public history, students can declare a second or third “outside” field in public history. This requires that they take (only) two or three seminars in the field, do an internship, and pass a comprehensive examination. While our PhD students get *some* exposure to public history methods and experience, they are getting far less than if they earned an MA in Public History on the way to the PhD, the preferred course of study in my opinion. Compounding the problem, our funding packages discourage PhD students from getting additional hands-on experience through working in a public history assistantship, because teaching assistantships are paid at a considerably higher stipend (by the department) than the externally funded practical assistantships (some of which we have lost to the contractions of the Great Recession). Even savvy students who know they need more experience can't afford the financial sacrifice. Going forward, the challenges for our program—and likely for others—will be to get able PhD students more deeply into the trenches of public history before they go into their own classrooms as new faculty.

While my remarks have focused on quality control in MA programs – as these supply the largest number of new public historians on the job market and their success in the job search, or lack of it, is of visible concern for all of us – the dilemma of professors who are not practitioners is a less apparent problem in the academy. This is a reminder that colleagues will want to take a long look at both MA and PhD programs.

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Quality Control from Students

Empowering students. In its own way, the *NCPH Guide to Public History Programs* (<http://bit.ly/NCPH-Guide>) is also a best practices document itself. It is an international listing of graduate, undergraduate, and “related” public history programs that can be searched by geographical location, curricular concentration, and type of degree. It also permits an apple-to-apple comparison of programs. Thus, prospective graduate students can compare curricular requirements (required internships or applied theses, for example), opportunities for intensive study and practice (specialized tracks, field schools, courses in new media and digital history), financial assistance that also provides experience (applied assistantships), the record of recent placements, existence of alumni networks, the appeal of a particular regional location, and anything else that students want. The *Guide* enables these comparisons (a) if students know the *Guide* exists and (b) if they invest the thought and time to identify core components important to them and then look for programs with these strengths.



By Chris Duval, Florida State Library and Archives on Flickr Creative Commons.

In my experience, though, many undergraduates are still trying to figure out what they want, even as they apply to multiple graduate programs and eventually matriculate in one of them. Perhaps the power of the *Guide* for comparing schools should be made more explicit on the NCPH website; this would require just a few sentences. The more general problem is that students need to be more active and critical consumers of education, as my colleague Allison Marsh points out to me regularly. They need to realize that it matters where they go to graduate school. One of the most constructive roles that history departments could play is to better advise their undergraduates on what public history is, what public history careers exist, the necessity of a graduate degree

in the field, and how to choose the right graduate program for themselves. And, it bears repeating that attending a strong program doesn't guarantee a job. Merely completing a challenging graduate program won't guarantee a job either. Ultimately each student is going to have to step up to the plate, take the initiative, go the extra mile.

A checklist of questions. NCPH should develop “a student consumer's guide to public history programs,” a sort of field guide to what every student should know about going to graduate school in public history. It would give prospective graduate students ideas for the kinds of questions they need to think about when they study websites, e-mail program directors, or visit campuses. Again, a “one-size-fits-all” perspective is not fruitful: the key is equipping students with the tools to identify their interests, abilities, and career goals and then to find programs that are a “good fit” for them personally and professionally. Here are some examples; others will have better and more insightful questions based on their own experience, but this will suggest what I have in mind generally.

- There are lots of public history programs out there. How do I decide if this program is the best fit for me?
- What is the difference between an MA in history and an MA in public history?
- I want to work in a museum. Can I study museums and material culture in this public history program? What are the advantages of training for a museums career in a public history program? Is a museums studies program a better fit for me? (If you don't know the difference, you need to find out.)
- I want to work in historic preservation. Can I study preservation in this public history program? What are the advantages of training for a preservation career in a public history program? Would I be more interested in studying preservation in a college of architecture or a school of planning? (If you don't understand the differences, you need to find out.)
- I am not ready yet to specialize in one of the subfields of public history. Is this a “generalist” program that will help me decide – but also give me the specialized training I need after I make my choice?

I don't have any experience in public history. I know many programs won't accept me without experience. Will this one? (I wonder, though, if I should get some experience, decide what I want to do, and then apply?)

What types of digital humanities and technical training are offered in this public history program?

What kind of financial support does this public history program offer its graduate students?

What placement assistance do you offer students throughout their time in the program?

It matters where you go to graduate school in public history. We had a good example of the need to help students evaluate graduate programs in order to make informed decisions in a recent posting to *History@Work* on “looking for a job in public history” (<http://bit.ly/12mwAyA>). While it inspired extensive commentary, two points are worth emphasizing from the standpoint of the discussion here. One is that an MA in history is a completely different degree from an MA in public history. There is no doubt that the latter degree would have opened up many of the closed doors that the author encountered in his job search. But he seems not to have appreciated the distinction while in school.

Second, the supposed Catch-22 conundrum that “you cannot get a job without experience and you cannot get experience without a job” is actually neither a riddle nor an obstacle for students who have chosen programs wisely. The best public history programs incorporate an enormous amount of hands-on experience into the curriculum. Thus, applied graduate assistantships at public history institutions pay students a stipend (their financial aid package) and they work 15-20 hours/week in a preservation or museum setting, for example. Courses teach real-world skills and require hands-on team projects, often working in collaboration with community partners. Thus, a course in historic preservation might require preparation of a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for a neighborhood group; a museums course might require some exhibition development for a local historical society. A field school can offer opportunities for real-world projects in distant cities or other countries. A thesis

can be an important requirement, and many programs allow “applied” theses that can be extended and engaged public history projects in the community. Good programs require an internship and encourage students to think strategically about it. Thus, most students complete an internship in the summer when they often have a large block of time and the ability to live temporarily somewhere else. If they want to move to a particular city or region after graduation, they are encouraged to do the internship there to build contacts. If they wish to work for a particular type of public history institution, sample it through the internship. If there is something they discover they need to know, and it isn’t part of the curriculum, they can use the internship to build this knowledge and skill set. Bottom line: prospective students need to actively seek out programs that maximize opportunities for public history experience. They need to know that public history cannot be taught just in the classroom. Let’s add this to our student-as-informed-consumer checklist, too.

Averting the storm

Let me conclude by reiterating that these personal reflections are offered in the spirit of “NCPH as a big tent,” open and welcoming to all public historians, old hands and new, inside and outside the academy. I have tried to report candidly, if distressingly, on the conversations I am hearing about how public history is making headway or falling short in colleges and universities today, especially at the graduate level. Clearly there is much more to be said. To my way of thinking, the fundamental issue that underpins current concerns is quality, in programs old and new, big and small, mine included. I have suggested both top-down and bottom-up solutions, from program directors to student consumers, with the NCPH membership playing a central role sharing its expertise and experience. Always in the back of my mind are those who are in positions to hire our graduates. Let’s keep talking about all of this.

To summarize and build on what I have said here, NCPH should take these immediate steps:

- Complete the *best practices document* on establishing a public history program.
- Determine what *additional best practices* documents should be developed. Suggestions are most welcome; feel free to contact me directly.
- Update the list of *program consultants* on the NCPH website. We need an

expanded list of public history educators who are willing to consult on program development and curriculum. To maximize opportunities for in-person and on-site consultation, the list should be as geographically broad as possible. Anyone wishing to offer their services and be listed should feel free to contact me directly.

guidelines. What are the strategies faculty are using to generate their own external and internal funding for programmatic needs? What can history departments do to better advise their undergraduates on public history as a career option? What can we learn from each other and how can we make the best case for public history in the academy in the coming years?



Flickr user Ben Salter.

- Develop a *student consumer’s guide to public history programs*, place it prominently on the NCPH webpage, and publicize its existence widely.

NCPH should also make a multi-year commitment to:

- *Document the big picture by assessing the state of public history in the academy today.* Questions to consider (there are certainly others): What is the nature and extent of the job crisis in public history today, beyond the anecdotal evidence? How are programs actually doing with placement of MA students within a year of their graduation? What kinds of jobs are they getting? Are there correlations between placement records and the structure and curriculum of programs? Let’s look at how public history is being taught. Let’s learn who is teaching public history and whether they are practitioners with knowledge of the skills their students will need in public history employment. Let’s look, too, at whether departments are giving their public history faculty the resources they need: staff support, release time, summer salary, eleven-month appointments, dedicated budget lines, appropriate tenure and promotion

- *Survey employers in the private and public sectors to assess whether there is a disconnect between academic training and real-world skills.* What do public history employers in the private sector, the non-profit world, and at all levels of government expect to see in people they hire? Is the MA now the entry-level degree? What are the implications for graduate education as an intellectual enterprise, as a set of inter-disciplinary explorations, and as an arena for technical training?
- *Consider establishing a joint task force as a way to implement these multi-year recommendations.* Six years ago NCPH invited the Organization of American Historians and the American Historical Association to join a “Working Group on Evaluating Public History” to assess the challenges of tenure and promotion for public historians employed by colleges and universities. The NCPH invitation brought together multiple long-standing efforts and on-going conversations in

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Flickr user Robert Montgomery.

each of these three professional organizations to address an employment problem that was affecting a growing number of their members. Over the next three years, this Working Group produced the pioneering collaborative report “Tenure, Promotion, and the Publicly Engaged Academic Historian,” which was

endorsed by the governing boards of NCPH, OAH, and AHA in 2010. Since 2010, the report (<http://bit.ly/NCPH-engaged>) and its detailed background document (<http://bit.ly/16R73k5>) have become an invaluable resource for everyone involved in the process: for public historians seeking and negotiating academic offers, for department chairs hiring public historians, for tenure-and-promotion committees evaluating public history work, and for university administrators outside history departments.

* * *

Have we reached another moment in the history of public history education that merits a similar joint task force approach? Are the issues big enough? With which other professional organizations should NCPH collaborate? Would it be more efficient for NCPH to do it alone? Is a joint task force the best way for NCPH to make the multi-year commitments to assess both the nature of public history employment today and the state of public history in the academy?

Robert Weyeneth is president of NCPH and director of the public history program at the University of South Carolina.

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Digital Integration Update

(cont. from page 1)

endeavor to expand the types of peer review and critical engagement that exist around the field. In this case, the journal and Commons editorial team is creating dossiers of material on specific public history projects and recruiting various kinds of commentary ranging from traditional double-blind peer review to online roundtables. Our goal is to foster what we're thinking of as a broader "critical dialogue" among practitioners, one in which we can all share, debate, critique, and learn from the work that our peers are doing.

A second project that's in the works for the new Library is a collection of materials focusing on issues of environmental sustainability in public history. This is a topic that's been surfacing at our conferences (and other groups) over the past few years. Our first task has been to gather together some of the materials generated in those conference discussions. We'll add materials over the coming months as we move toward our conference in Monterey, with its "Sustainable Public History" theme. Out of that collection, we will pull together a small digital publication, available to NCPH members and conference registrants. We are envisioning this special digital publication as a kind of seedbed (to use an environmental metaphor) for more formal publication down the road on this important topic in *The Public Historian* and perhaps elsewhere. If you have sustainability-related writing—anything from a conference paper to a blog post—that you'd like to have considered for this new online collection, please let us know at info@publichistorycommons.org.

And in other news, we've been doing quite a lot of thinking about the news—that is, about how much public history news we're trying to share with how many readers, how often, and in how many places. The trusty H-Public listserv, maintained by NCPH since 1995, has now become just one of many outlets by which people access news from the field rather than the central digital venue for communication it was at one time. Meanwhile, its parent organization, H-Net, has been moving toward a more interactive platform that will likely be quite similar to the multifaceted digital environment we've been building for ourselves. How might these two digital nodes intersect? Or is it time to envision a post-NCPH future for H-Public? Don't worry—we won't do anything without consulting the list's subscribers and NCPH members! So keep an eye out for opportunities to offer feedback in the coming year.

Cathy Stanton is the NCPH Digital Media Editor, chair of the Digital Media Group, and coordinates the various elements of the organization's digital communications and publications, including social media, the H-Public listserv, the History@Work blog, and NCPH's digital hub, the Public History Commons (www.publichistorycommons.org). She is also a Lecturer in Anthropology at Tufts University.

Making a DIF



1893 Montreal tramway. Musee McCord Museum on Flickr Creative Commons.

NCPH launched a Digital Integration Fund at the April 2013 Annual Meeting to raise \$85,000. This campaign directly supports the design, programming, and production costs for NCPH's growing digital publishing initiative. We need your help.

The DIF began with \$18,500 in seed funding, and now with pledges and contributions from more than seventy people, we currently have commitments totaling \$26,185.

Help us show why public history is at the leading edge of both the digital and public humanities. Give to the Digital Integration Fund today!

<http://bit.ly/NCPH-DIF>

Governance Matters

Fall Board Meeting

On October 18-19, the NCPH Board of Directors will be meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana. The board welcomes comments, questions, and suggestions from NCPH members throughout the year, and especially for the fall agenda. Please contact the executive director (jdichtl@iupui.edu) or individual board members listed at <http://bit.ly/NCPHcomm>.

Committees

NCPH's annual committee appointments are now complete, and rosters with contact information for the 2013-2014 committee members are on the NCPH website. Don't hesitate to share your ideas with committee chairs and members at <http://bit.ly/NCPHcomm>.

Gift Memberships

Looking for ways to support a budding public historian? Want to reward a graduating or new student for his or her hard work? Consider giving the gift of an NCPH membership! Available in the Student, New Professional, and Individual categories, a gift membership in NCPH offers important professional benefits and connections for new practitioners. <http://bit.ly/joinNCPH>

Introducing the NCPH Graduate Intern



Nick Sacco will be serving as the new Graduate Assistant for the 2013-2014 academic year. Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, Nick is now a second-year graduate student in the Public History program at IUPUI in downtown Indianapolis. He previously attended Lindenwood University, where he received two BA degrees in History Education and Music Performance in 2011. Nick brings several years of public history experience to this position from institutions such as the Indiana State House (Capitol Tour Office), the National Park Service (Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site), and the Missouri History Museum Library & Research Center.

The National Coalition for History recently created both Twitter and Facebook pages that provide immediate access to news from Washington. Our Twitter handle is @HistCoalition, and you can “like” us on Facebook to receive updates in your news feed. News updates will now be sent out when events warrant instead of weekly.

Fiscal Year 2014 Federal Funding

July is traditionally the time of year when the House and Senate get serious (I use that term loosely) about passing appropriations bills in anticipation of the end of the current fiscal year on September 30. Of course as we all know this legislative frenzy almost never results in Congress actually passing a budget by that deadline. However, both houses pass these fiscal year 2014 bills knowing that they will likely set the parameters for the ultimate budget deal that will be reached at the end of this year (or early next).

Once again the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) at the National Archives faced elimination in the House. However, after zeroing out NHPRC's budget at the subcommittee level, the full House Appropriations Committee approved an amendment offered by Representative David Price (D-NC) to restore \$3 million in funding. This came with the full support of the Republican majority.

In the Senate, the Appropriations Committee actually increased the NHPRC's funding from the current year's post-sequester reduction level of \$4.75 million to \$5 million. The coalition worked with the NCPH and our other membership groups to lobby appropriators hard for that number and it paid off. In the past, House conferees have acceded to the Senate number. So, optimistically, it looks as though the NHPRC will emerge with level funding for fiscal year 2014, which in the current budget environment is a major accomplishment.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the NEH. The House Appropriations

Committee has adopted a fiscal 2014 Interior and Environment bill that would slash NEH's funding by 49 percent (\$71 million) from the current year's level of \$146 million. The Smithsonian Institution is funded at \$660 million in the bill, a cut of \$155 million (19 percent) below fiscal 2013. While a comparable bill has not yet been introduced in the Senate, this kind of scorched-earth approach towards the NEH in the House is indicative of the difficulties we face in securing humanities- and history-related funding across the board.

Lee White is the executive director of the National Coalition for History.

FY2014 Budget Status for History and Archival Programs

Agency	FY2013	Request	House	Senate
National Archives & Records Administration (NARA)	374.5	367.8	366.1	370
National Historical Publications & Records Commission (NHPRC)	5	3	3	5
National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)	146	154.4	75	154.4
Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)	231.5	225.8		231.9
Library Programs	184.3	177		184.3
Museum Programs	30.9	32.9		31.3
Smithsonian Institution	815.6	869.2	660	838.7
National Museum of African-American History (construction)	74.8	55	36	55
National Park Service				
Historic Preservation Programs	56	59	45.2	66
National Recreation and Preservation	59.7	52	48.5	64.2
Library of Congress	587.4	608.7	557.8	600.9

Amounts are in millions of \$. Total reflects the furthest the bill has proceeded in House or Senate. It does not indicate the bill has passed that body.

Why Public History?

Seeking Discussants for a 2015 Roundtable in Jinan, China



As a permanent internal commission of the CISH-ICHS, the IFPH-FIHP is fostering the broadest possible international response to the Call for Papers launched by the Comité International des Sciences Historiques – International Committee of Historical Sciences, and especially for the special roundtable, “Why Public History?” Organized by Arnita Jones (USA, Secretary of the IFPH Steering Committee) and Alix Green (UK, Member of the IFPH-FIHP), the roundtable is part of the 22nd Congress of CISH-ICHS that will take place in Jinan in August 2015. Jones and Green will be writing the paper on which the three-hour roundtable is based and are seeking four discussants to join them.

Proposals are due by **November 30, 2013**. They should be a maximum of 350 words and should be sent with a short biographical note to the organizers (arnitajones@gmail.com and a.r.green@herts.ac.uk) as well as to the CISH Secretary General Robert Frank at

sgcish1@gmail.com. CISH is a bilingual organization using both French and English, however, it seeks for the widest possible language and geographic diversity at its Congress. The secretary's office will help ensure there is a balance in gender, age, countries, and languages on panels. Discussants will be chosen in early 2014, and the roundtable paper will be posted by March 15, leaving the discussants until August to digest it and to craft their responses.

See the full call for discussants, which includes an outline of the paper, “*Why Public History?*” by Green and Jones, at <http://bit.ly/IFPH-Jinan>.



Baotu Spring Park, Jinan, Shandong, China. From Wikimedia Commons.

California Dreamin'

Excitement is building for the NCPH Annual Meeting March 19-22, 2014, in historic Monterey, California. Some public historians have asked for advice on how to get to this slice of paradise along California's scenic Central Coast. So here are some options to consider, courtesy of your local arrangements committee.



Courtesy Monterey County CVB.

GETTING TO MONTEREY: Monterey Regional Airport (MRY) is served by 40 flights a day on carriers that include Allegiant, Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, United, and US Airways. Fly direct from Denver, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Diego, and San Francisco. The Monterey Regional Airport is ten minutes by taxi from the Convention Center and conference hotels. Rental cars are also available onsite. The nearest international airports are San Francisco

(SFO) approximately 2 hours by car, and San Jose (SJC) 1 ½ hour's drive away. Regular airport shuttle service is available from both airports to downtown Monterey. Amtrak's Coast Starlight train offers daily service from Los Angeles and Seattle, stopping in Salinas with a short bus connection to downtown Monterey. Our conference program will include all your travel options and complete contact information for airlines, train, or bus transportation.

STAY AND PLAY IN MONTEREY: While making your travel plans, you might want to consider extending your stay to enjoy nearby attractions of Monterey County and the natural beauty of Monterey Bay and the Big Sur coast. Go whale watching as Gray Whale moms and calves migrate north through Monterey Bay, a National Marine Sanctuary. Kayak across kelp beds and encounter sea lions, harbor seals, and sea otters. Drive south through Big Sur for mile after mile of spectacular coastal scenery. Explore the quiet majesty of a redwood forest or catch a glimpse of a rare California Condor at Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. Visit some of Monterey County's 85 wineries, and sample a few of the 42 varietals grown in Monterey's wine country. Tour William Randolph Hearst's palatial home at Hearst San Simeon State Historic Monument. Channel your inner Ansel Adams with a photo safari and hike through Point Lobos State Natural Reserve. Tee off at Pebble Beach or another of the Monterey Peninsula's world famous golf courses, or enjoy a scenic round at public courses in Pacific Grove and Monterey. Come early or stay late, and take time to enjoy all that Monterey has to offer.



Courtesy Monterey County CVB.

Be Seen in Monterey Seeking More Participants for Monterey



More than six hundred public historians are expected to attend the 2014 NCPH Annual Meeting in Monterey, California.

NCPH invites you to raise your institution's profile in this crowd by reserving exhibit space, advertising in the Conference Program, or sponsoring an event. Each is an effective way to reach potential customers, partners, or students. Promote the latest scholarship, forthcoming titles, and/or journals from your press or new services from your company. Celebrate the accomplishments of your organization at the next NCPH conference.

For more information, visit the 2014 conference page on the NCPH website: <http://ncph.org/cms/conferences/2014-annual-meeting/>

The Program Committee has already worked through the session, workshop, and working group proposals for the 2014 NCPH Annual Meeting in Monterey, but here are two additional ways for you to be a part of the program.

Call for Working Group Discussants

Each Working Group has facilitators who have already proposed the topic. They will be looking for 8-12 individuals to join them in pre-conference online discussion, to exchange brief case statements, and to meet in session during the conference. Look for the call in late September; it closes **October 15**. Information about NCPH Working Groups can be found at <http://ncph.org/cms/conferences/working-groups/>

Call for Posters

The Poster Session is a format for presenters eager to share their work through one-on-one discussion. This format can be especially useful for works-in-progress, and may be particularly appropriate where visual or material evidence represents a central component of the project. Poster proposals are due **October 1**. <http://ncph.org/cms/conferences/2014-annual-meeting/>



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Help Recognize Those Making a Difference in Our Field

NCPH awards recognize excellence in the diverse ways public historians apply their skills to the world around us. We invite you to nominate a colleague or submit your own work. Recipients will receive their awards at the 2014 Annual Meeting in Monterey, California.

Excellence in Consulting Award—Up to two \$500 awards recognize outstanding work by consultants or contractors.

Graduate Student Travel Award—Five travel grants of up to \$300 each for graduate students presenting (session, poster session, or working group) at the 2014 Annual Meeting.

Outstanding Public History Project Award—\$1,000 recognizing a project that contributes to a broader public reflection and appreciation of the past or that serves as a model of professional public history practice.

NCPH Book Award—A \$1,000 award for the best book about or “growing out of” public history published within the previous two calendar years (2012 and 2013).

New Professional Award—Two \$500 travel grants to encourage new professionals, practicing public history for no more than three years, to attend the 2014 Annual Meeting.

Robert Kelley Memorial Award—This \$500 award honors distinguished achievements by individuals, institutions, or nonprofit or corporate entities for making history relevant to individual lives of ordinary people outside of academia.

Student Project Award—A \$500 travel grant to attend the 2014 Annual Meeting, it recognizes the contributions of student work to the field of public history.

NCPH Book Award nominations must be received by November 1, 2013. All other nominations must be received by December 1, 2013. Submission guidelines are available at www.ncph.org/cms/awards

Questions? (317) 274-2716; ncph@iupui.edu



Farm Security Administration – Office of War Information, 1940. From Library of Congress.