

ANNUAL MEETING WRAP-UP

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From March 27-30, 2019, NCPH joined over 950 public historians in Hartford, Connecticut for our annual meeting. This was our biggest stand-alone conference to date. We attribute the high attendance to the East Coast location, but also to the particularly strong theme of “Repair Work,” the growing prominence of the public history field, and the robust promotion and support of the conference locally by the Local Arrangements Committee.

This theme, “Repair Work,” called on public historians to consider the work we have done and the work we have yet to accomplish to repair ourselves, our networks, and our communities. As it was explicitly designed to do, the theme prompted conversations about inclusion and intersectionality, accessibility, activism, and self-care, yielding a great many sessions on these topics. My sense is that most of us who organize conferences feel ambivalent about the nature of “the theme” (see, for example, the American Historical Association’s decision not to have a theme for its 2020 annual meeting). However, I emerged from this conference cycle with a renewed belief that a timely theme, passionately and clearly articulated, can play a powerful role in sharing a program committee’s priorities and result in sessions that tackle those priorities. This year,

the message was clear: we came to Hartford to push ourselves. We came to work.



Elon Cook presents to a packed house for session 36, You Can’t Handle the Truth! at the 2019 conference.

NCPH’s own necessary work is not comfortable, seamless, or anywhere near finished. As you can read about in the piece written by members of the NCPH Board on page 4, the Hartford conference made it clear that NCPH as an organization must do more to provide support, training, and guidance to those at risk for sexual harassment or gender discrimination in the workplace. There remain ongoing organizational challenges about managing the growth of the annual meeting while ensuring it retains the character of an NCPH conference and remains accessible to those who are so often excluded from professional development opportunities. And on a personal level, it was also a moment of

reckoning for NCPH’s small full-time staff, all three of whom are women: how do we meet the needs of nearly a thousand conference attendees while also taking care of ourselves?



NCPH President Marla Miller thanks 2019 Local Arrangements Committee Chairs Elizabeth Shapiro and Leah Glaser and 2019 Program Committee Chairs Seth Bruggeman and Cathy Stanton. Photo by Melody Hunter-Pillion.

2019 brought a few organizational changes to the conference which grew out of a 2018 On the Fly session hosted by NCPH’s Diversity and Inclusion Task Force. That session, “Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination in Public History,” yielded a series of recommended first steps for making our annual meeting more inclusive and welcoming. We put three of these recommendations into practice in Hartford: all attendees were invited to share their pronouns with a sticker affixed to their badge or person (NCPH provided stickers to facilitate); two of the four sets of restrooms on our floor of the Connecticut Convention

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PRESIDENT’S COMMENTS: ARTISANAL PUBLIC HISTORY?



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Some of you know that I’m a fairly avid knitter. I feel most relaxed when I have needles in hand, and never seem to tire of looking at new patterns, new yarns—all promises

of creativity, productivity, and quiet contemplation yet to come. And as a crafter in the NCPH community, I am in good company. Seth Bruggeman is a skilled woodworker; silversmith Joan Zenzen makes



Marla Miller is NCPH president and an avid knitter. Photo courtesy of author.

beautiful jewelry; and Julie Davis, Ashley Bouknight, Cathy Stanton, Shirley Wajda, and many others share my love of fiber arts. There are many more “makers” across the NCPH community.

I am also a historian of craft in the early American past. When I’m not engaged in my practice as a public historian and public history educator, I research and write about gender and artisanal skill in 18th-century New England (and, increasingly, how that work is remembered in museums and historic sites). And so I find myself thinking more and more lately about intersections across those seemingly disparate arenas—about makers as public historians, and public historians as makers.

There is an easy affinity between public historians and the maker movement. After all,

“Craftsmanship is about telling a story with your hands,” as Alain Hayes explains in the digital pages of *The Craftsmanship Initiative*.¹ Sometimes craftwork is part of public history practice itself: the meticulously researched faux food that Ashley Bouknight creates with papier mâché, plaster, clay, and acrylic paint is as artful as it is powerful as an interpretive device. Other times this affinity finds expression as public historians explore historical meanings of craft. In Massachusetts, Old Sturbridge Village is an iconic example of that work; interpreters there, as they demonstrate 19th-century craftwork, help visitors understand longstanding local, regional, and global exchanges of goods and skills. Meanwhile, Michigan State University’s summer 2017 exhibit on craftivism, *Knitting the Resistance: Crafting Political Protest from the 2017 Women’s Marches*, curated by Michigan

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FROM #METOO TO PREVENTION

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One year ago this month, in this space, NCPH board, staff, and Diversity and Inclusion Task Force members wrote about NCPH's commitment to combatting issues of sexual harassment and gender discrimination in the field of public history. We shared some of the issues and opportunities coming out of an "On the Fly" session held during our 2018 annual meeting in Las Vegas—organized by the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force in response to emerging conversations both nationwide and within NCPH—and described how we anticipated framing that work moving forward.



Pop-Up - From #MeToo to Prevention - Bystander Intervention Training for Public History and Museum Professionals facilitated by Chelsea Miller (left) and Michelle Carroll (on screen). Photo courtesy of Kelly Schmidt.

After receiving the official report from the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force on their short- and long-term recommendations, NCPH staff and board began working in earnest to implement some of them in time for the 2019 Hartford conference. In August 2018, on *History@Work*, Program Manager Meghan Hillman reported on the planning and implementation of several short-term recommendations that would be put in place in Hartford (including options to indicate pronouns on conference badges and access to all-gender restrooms—read more about this on the first page of this issue). In November, the board voted to adopt a Code of Conduct for NCPH sponsored events developed by a board subcommittee. The new code can be found at <http://bit.ly/NCPHEventsCodeofConduct>.

The work continued at the 2019 meeting, exploring how the field can adopt an intersectional approach toward protecting public historians; confronting racial, ethnic,

and gender discrimination; and preventing sexual harassment. During and immediately following the conference, members of NCPH's executive committee fielded and followed up on a number of Code of Conduct violation reports to find resolutions. Diversity and Inclusion Task Force members Modupe Labode and GVGK Tang led a productive conversation during the Public History Educator's Forum about the roles and responsibilities of public history program faculty in responding to reports of sexual harassment and discrimination. Participants left that Forum with a stronger sense of specific steps they can take to improve the ways they address this topic inside the classroom and out.

We're grateful to NCPH member Chelsea Miller from the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault and their colleague Michelle Carroll from End Rape on Campus for proposing and facilitating bystander intervention training in Hartford. We're also indebted to the many brave members and attendees who—on social media, in sessions, and in committee meetings—shared their stories about sexual harassment and trauma in the field. Knowing that no one should have to endure these experiences, NCPH will work in a variety of ways so that in the future our members will not be expected to require such professional courage. We are committed to confronting these issues in the public history community, and we pledge to continue working to make NCPH a safe and responsive environment for all.

In April 2019, NCPH's board of directors convened virtual meetings to discuss next steps in this work, voting unanimously to establish a board-led subcommittee to enact more of the recommendations outlined in the report coming out of the 2018 "On the Fly" session. These recommendations include:

- a survey collecting data on sexual harassment and gender discrimination in public history;
- the development of readings and materials on these issues to help students understand our professional norms and identify problematic or illegal behavior if they encounter it in the workplace;
- training for faculty in public history programs so they are able to better support their students and alumni;
- and collaboration with other professional organizations to coordinate efforts for greater efficacy and impact.

This subcommittee will also explore hosting virtual listening sessions for members and providing additional virtual and in-person harassment and intervention training for organizational leadership (board, committee chairs, and staff) as well as the membership at large.

We're working now to appoint members to this subcommittee. We're pleased to announce that board members Kristen Baldwin Deathridge, Modupe Labode, and Joan Zenzen have volunteered to serve. Baldwin Deathridge will co-chair the group along with Mary Rizzo, a former board member who currently serves on the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force and authored the Task Force's report on sexual harassment and gender discrimination in the field last year. This subcommittee will work collaboratively with other standing committees charged with addressing pieces of this work, like the new Governance Committee, the Curriculum and Training Committee, and the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force. The subcommittee will coordinate with the new Governance Committee to review and revise our codes and policies. These include working on updates to our new Events Code of Conduct in light of its first deployment at the Hartford meeting and revisiting our Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, which was last updated in 2007.

We recognize that the steps we've taken are imperfect and preliminary, and that much work lies ahead. Patriarchal power operates in problematic ways across our organization and our fields of practice. As public history professionals, we have a responsibility to look at the power structures that NCPH as an organization both benefits from and helps to uphold through our board structure, awards programs, networking events, and other programs, and we are deeply committed to these urgent conversations.

In the meantime, if survivors of sexual assault, abuse, or harassment in the public history community would like free, confidential support regarding past or ongoing experiences:

Chelsea Miller, a public historian currently working at the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NYSCASA), can assist you with locating advocates and resources in your community. Contact Chelsea by email at cmiller@nyscasa.org or by phone at 518-482-4222 ext. 300.

The Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN), organizes the National

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Knitting the Resistance, Michigan State University Museum. Image courtesy of Pearl Yee Wong.

documenting and exploring the hows and whys of the “pussyhat” phenomenon and thus joining a long tradition of museum exhibitions exploring the political implications of handwork in the past and in the present.

In other collaborations, craft offers a means of historical inquiry and expression. The extraordinary Witness Tree Project, for instance—now in its tenth year—“arranges for fallen witness trees” (that is, trees that shaded and sheltered historical events) to be shipped from National Park Service sites to the Rhode Island School of Design, “where, in a joint history seminar and furniture studio, students interpret the history of a given tree’s site and make relevant objects from the tree’s wood.” (<https://www.witnesstreeproject.org/>). The many extraordinary examples of creative expression that have emerged from this project engage powerful and often painful moments of the American past.

Such initiatives have particular public appeal in a moment that is celebrating the handmade, and the “makers” whose skill and knowledge create beauty, functionality, and innovation. Libraries and museums have created “makerspaces” in which users develop and practice hands-on skills, and college campuses are exploring the concept as part of a larger engagement in collaborative, participatory, and project-based learning, and embrace of pedagogical demeanors that emphasize experimentation and play.

As a historian of early American labor, I tend to notice references to things “artisanal” (this—the rise of everything from artisanal bread and beers to artisanal head-hunting firms—is a whole other topic for another day). Suffice it to say that today, the term “artisanal” intends to signal high-quality or distinctive products made by hand in small quantities, but when we think about it in the 18th century, we tend to emphasize people who were “skilled in an applied art.” (The Oxford English Dictionary, by the way, cites Johnson’s 1751 *Rambler* No. 145, which read “The meanest artisan...contributes more to the accommodation of life, than the profound scholar”).

That phrase—“skilled in an applied art”—will sound familiar to public historians. So, could public history be considered artisanal? In some ways, I think yes. To be sure, there are many forms of public history, and some quite scalable;

exhibits, documentaries, or other products often reach large numbers of people. But much of public history does seem to fit definitions of artisanry that aligns with 18th-century understandings of the term, as “bespoke” work in which producers and consumers collaborate to create something, a product, that will have a fairly limited circulation.

In the past, artisans collaborated with clients to create the resulting product. Customers brought ideas to the table about what they had seen and what they needed, which craftspeople absorbed in the context of their own knowledge and skills. The garments, tables, and buildings that emerged from those conversations reflected both sets of needs, abilities, and priorities: those of the user and of the maker.

Likewise, most public historians work somehow in collaboration with the audiences and/or recipients of their efforts. When consultants prepare an administrative history or ethnographic report for the National Park Service, or a non-profit group commissions an oral history project, we might see that work as artisanal. When public historians produce environmental, land, and water use histories that are used by the courts, or they consult with municipalities to help arrange records, we might see that as akin to the “small batch” work of artisans. And public history, like artisanry, also involves specialized training in which aspiring practitioners often learn by watching more experienced workers, taking on gradually-more-complex projects as they advance in their own abilities.

Public historians, then, might also be seen as “makers.” The Maker Movement, as its many observers have explained, is about invention and creativity; functionality and resourcefulness; skill and sustainability. So too is public history. We “create” community, “build” trust, and “make” change.

The theme of our 2020 gathering in Atlanta, “Threads of Change,” developed by program co-chairs Ashley Bouknight and Brian Joyner and their committee members, nods to public

historians as makers. In many ways, it is the ideal conversation to follow our 2019 contemplation of “Repair Work.” The 2020 Call for Proposals—illustrated with Atlanta quilter Aisha Lumumba’s powerful “A Quilter’s Dream”—proposes quilts as a metaphor for public history practice, in the ways that these objects represent the active arrangement of materials that, in reconstellation, find new meanings. The threads that secure these materials join layers of fabric: some (the presentation side) are visible to all, who then observe and appreciate the choices made as the pieces are assembled; some (the backing) are visible only to the most intimate observers, who can appreciate the work of, say, the weavers whose work provides essential foundation; and still more (the batting) are visible only to the makers, who recognize the work of hands unseen in the final product. Many hands surround the frame.

Those choices resonate for me as a public historian, as we recognize the complexity of the work we do and the many makers, obvious and hidden, direct and indirect, who are all present in the final result. Threads have other purposes too. For instance, when building in other materials, particularly wood, it is the helical ridge running down the cylinder of a screw or a bolt—the threads—that fasten materials together, their power depending in part on how closely they are gathered. Threading, Seth Bruggeman has taught me, also “requires attentiveness to pitch and the qualities of the materials that the threads will bind (broad pitch in softwood, narrow in hard).” That is, achieving strength also requires an awareness of difference.

Our power depends on how closely we are gathered, and our ability to understand and appreciate difference. Collect your tools, makers: I’ll see you in Atlanta.

-Marla Miller is the President of NCPH and is professor and director of the public history program in the history department at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

¹ <https://craftsmanship.net/blog/finding-your-ikigai-in-craftsmanship/>. My thanks to Shirley Wajda and Seth Bruggeman for their invaluable help thinking through these ideas.

2020 ANNUAL MEETING CALL FOR PROPOSALS “THREADS OF CHANGE”



“A Quilter’s Dream” Quilt by Aisha Lumumba of Atlanta, Georgia. Image used courtesy of the artist. www.obaquilts.com.

Atlanta, Georgia
March 18-21, 2020
The Westin Peachtree Plaza

The raw materials of public history lay in communities, among people and their stories. As public historians, we encourage people to remember aloud, giving presence to the intangibles of cultural memory not always captured or contextualized in formal spaces. From threads, fragments, and disparate materials, public historians create multilayered quilts of historical meaning that reflect, frame, deconstruct, reassemble, and repurpose narratives. No matter the participants or where they learn their craft, the constant in this work is change.

As NCPH celebrates its 40th year, it is an ideal time to recognize the totality of practitioners across the field. Public history work lives in museums, archives, publications, and historic places—but it’s also history as activism, history as storytelling, and history as healing. Our challenge is to return to our local, activist roots, to forge new and stronger partnerships, and to incorporate new fabric into our collective endeavor, one thread at a time.

The online proposal system is open at <http://bit.ly/ncph2020>. Proposals are due July 15, 2019.

2017 END OF YEAR FINANCIAL REPORT

The 2018 fiscal year ended well, with a slight surplus. Membership numbers and subscriptions to *The Public Historian* leveled off from previous years of significant growth. The 2018 conference fell just shy of income goals and expenses were high in Las Vegas. The board was also successful in meeting its modest fundraising goal for the 2018 Annual Fund, bringing in just over \$5,000 (this goal was set lower than past years to allow the organization to focus on our 2020 Vision Endowment-building campaign).

Administrative costs for the organization came slightly over-budget. Staff line expenses have shifted due to changes with how IUPUI bills salaries and benefits and because NCPH now covers all of the Program Manager's salary and benefits. The organization took on this cost from the IU School of Liberal Arts in June 2018 in an effort to fill the partially vacated position during a school-wide staff

hiring freeze. These increased expenses related to fiscal independence from Indiana University are a motivator for our Endowment fundraising campaign.

During the Fall 2018 Board Meeting, the board voted to move \$16,191 of the 2017 surplus into the Endowment and to use the remaining \$32,000 to establish an operational reserve fund with the goal of eventually growing that fund to one-third of the annual operating budget. Maintaining such a fund is a recommended best practice for non-profit organizations. During the Spring 2019 Board Meeting, the board approved moving the modest 2018 surplus into the organization's Endowment. Moving into 2019, the board has already begun to commit funds raised towards the Endowment campaign to increase budget lines for Diversity and Inclusion support at the annual meeting and to establish a new "accessibility" line item for NCPH events.



Secretary/Treasurer Sharon Leon, Executive Director Stephanie Rowe, President Marla Miller, and *The Public Historian* Editor James Brooks addressed the membership Thursday afternoon of the Hartford conference. Photo by Jess Lamar Reece Holler.

NCPH 2018 Operating Budget

January-December

	2017 Budget	2017 Actual	2018 Budget	2018 Actual
Income				
Memberships & Partners/Patrons	\$118,300	\$125,989	\$121,000	\$124,476
TPH Institutional Subscriptions	\$16,500	\$22,396	\$19,500	\$20,827
Annual Meetings & Mini Cons	\$146,000	\$150,774	\$158,000	\$156,987
IUPUI Projects & O'Brien Lecture	\$9,500	\$0	\$9,500	\$19,000
Interfund Transfer from DIF & Endowment Earnings	\$38,100	\$34,578	\$37,450	\$33,995
Miscellaneous	\$1,050	\$1,821	\$2,450	\$3,299
Grant Projects	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12,500
Contributions to Annual Fund	\$7,000	\$9,229	\$5,000	\$5,068
Encumbered 2017 Surplus	\$0	\$0	\$7,500	\$7,500
Total Operating Budget Income	\$336,450	\$344,787	\$360,400	\$383,652
Expenses				
Membership	\$21,700	\$17,368	\$21,654	\$21,381
Annual Meeting	\$99,625	\$78,557	\$124,764	\$126,908
Publications	\$27,750	\$26,074	\$28,250	\$29,509
Awards	\$8,100	\$8,289	\$7,850	\$6,892
Administration	\$152,224	\$147,246	\$163,431	\$168,845
Board & Committees	\$5,250	\$6,532	\$4,800	\$6,261
Biennial Audit/Review	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$0	\$0
Advocacy & Participation in Other Associations	\$7,855	\$8,530	\$8,530	\$8,530
Grant Projects	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12,500
Total Operating Budget Expenses	\$326,504	\$296,596	\$359,279	\$380,826
Net Operating (Deficit)/Surplus	\$9,946	\$48,191	\$1,121	\$2,826

ACTIONS OF THE NCPH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

After the October 26 and 27, 2018 meeting of the NCPH Board of Directors in Atlanta, Georgia, and prior to the spring meeting in Hartford, Connecticut, the board convened electronically and by telephone and took the following actions:



NCPH Board members hard at work during the Spring meeting. Photo by Emma Falcon.

- Voted to endorse (with 97 additional signers) a letter from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to the chairs and ranking members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Commission and the House Natural Resources Commission supporting expanded use of leasing historic buildings in our national parks.
- Voted to approve a social media plan and guidelines for the organization.
- Voted to adopt a Code of Conduct for the Annual Meeting and other NCPH programs.
- Decided on reporting procedures for Code of Conduct violations for the 2019 NCPH Annual Meeting in Hartford.
- Voted to write a letter of support for involvement in an American Association for State and Local History grant applications to work with the FrameWorks Institute.
- Voted to issue a statement on the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill Board of Trustees' Recommendation for the Disposition and Preservation of the Confederate Monument.

- Voted (with one abstention) to endorse a statement in opposition to Article 6 of the European Parliament's proposed Revised Copyright Directive.
- Voted to work with leadership of the Society for United States Intellectual History, Inc. to enter into a fiscal sponsorship agreement to support their work.
- Voted (with one abstention) to endorse a letter from 30+ scholarly societies to government officials in Alaska regarding proposed budget cuts for higher education.
- Voted to extend the terms of four international consulting editors for *The Public Historian*.
- Approved the minutes of the Fall 2018 Board Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia; the November 2018 Virtual Board Meeting, the December 2018 Virtual Board Meeting; a December 2018 virtual meeting of the executive committee; and the February 2019 Virtual Board Meeting.
- Voted to adopt a Best Practices in Public History document for Job Postings.

On Thursday, March 28, the NCPH Board of Directors convened at the 2019 Annual Meeting in Hartford, Connecticut and took the following actions:

- Recognized departing board members Vanessa Macias Camacho and Valerie Paley and welcomed incoming board members Caridad de la Vega and Nicole Moore along with renewing board member Modupe Labode.
- Elected board member Joan Zenzen to the executive committee to succeed board member Modupe Labode, whose term on the executive committee was ending.
- Reviewed 2018 FY financials and discussed the potential use of the 2018 surplus.

- Voted to move the 2018 surplus into the Endowment.
- Approved the Finance Committee's recommendation to invest the portion of the 2017 surplus dedicated to seeding a new Operational Reserve Fund into a Vanguard Money Market account.
- Voted to pursue hosting the 2022 Annual Meeting in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- Reviewed reports from NCPH committees and task forces.
- Heard a report from Development Committee co-chairs Bill Bryans and Dee Harris on the 2020 Vision campaign to raise funds for the Endowment.



Development Committee Co-Chairs Bill Bryans and Dee Harris update the Board and membership on the status of NCPH's 2020 Vision Endowment Campaign. Photo by Melody Hunter-Pillion.

- Heard reports from *The Public Historian* (TPH) Editor James Brooks and Managing Editor Sarah Case, as well as a report from TPH co-editor and NCPH Digital Media Editor Nicole Belolan.
- Voted to adopt a recommended change to the bylaws to create a new Governance Committee for the organization.
- Heard a report from a partnerships subcommittee of the board and adopted their recommended guidelines for NCPH partnerships 2017-2022.

FROM #METOO TO PREVENTION // CONT'D. FROM PAGE 4

Sexual Assault Telephone Hotline. The Hotline is a referral service that can put you in contact with your local rape crisis/sexual violence program, which has trained advocates on staff who can provide free, confidential support. You can call the Hotline at 1-800-656-4673, or access RAINN's online chat service: www.rainn.org/get-help.

We look forward to working with our members as we all strive to address these

urgent issues. If you have feedback, areas of concern, ideas for how we can move forward, or experience and/or training with rapid responses to reports of sexual harassment, please reach out via board@ncph.org.

-Kristen Baldwin Deathridge is a member of the NCPH Board of Directors and the NCPH Digital Media Group and an Assistant Professor of History at Appalachian State University. Modupe Labode is a member of the NCPH Board of Directors, NCPH Digital Media Group, and @NCPHInclusion and

is Associate Professor of History and Museum Studies at IUPUI. Sharon Leon is the Secretary/Treasurer of NCPH and an Associate Professor of History at Michigan State University. Marla Miller is President of NCPH and Professor and Director of the Public History Program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Stephanie Rowe is Executive Director of NCPH. Gregory Smoak is the Vice-President of NCPH and an Associate Professor of History at the University of Utah as well as the Director of the American West Center at the University of Utah.

2019 NEW PROFESSIONAL AWARD WINNER HIGHLIGHTS

NCPH's New Professional Travel Awards are for individuals new to the field and practice of public history. These two grants assist new professionals in attending the conference, helping them become more connected with other members of the profession early in their careers. NCPH acknowledges the generous support of Historical Research Associates, Inc. (HRA) for underwriting one of these awards and award committee members Lara Kelland (chair), Cecelia Moore, James H. Williams, and Deirdre Clemente for their work selecting this year's winners: Porsha Dossie and Sonya Laney. NCPH asked our winners to share their experiences at the 2019 NCPH Annual Meeting.



Porsha Dossie accepts her award from NCPH President Marla Miller at the Awards Breakfast. Photo by Emma Falcon.

PORSHA DOSSIE /
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When I found out that I had received the Historical Research Associates' New Professional Award from NCPH, I was ecstatic. I would be able to attend NCPH's annual meeting for the first time. Admittedly I was nervous. Would I be able to meet people and make connections? Would people be interested in my work? Would I be self-conscious asking questions in sessions? By the end of the first day these feelings had all but dissipated, because I quickly learned how welcoming of an environment NCPH is.

My three days in Hartford felt like I was part of a community that was just as excited and passionate about history, social justice, and cultural institutions as I am. Meeting other new professionals was a highlight, as was running into familiar faces from my time as a graduate student at the University of Central Florida. Being able to fill my former professors in on my current work as an American

Conservation Experience (ACE) Fellow at the National Park Service, and the award I received from NCPH, was gratifying.

I also had the chance to present my work at the awards showcase. My primary project at the Park Service is the implementation of the African American Civil Rights Network. The Network was signed into law in January 2018 and recognizes both National Park Service (NPS) and non-NPS units with significant ties to the black freedom struggle in the United States during the 20th century. So many people, my fellow awardees included, had such kind and encouraging words for me after the presentation and I think that speaks to the kind of conference environment NCPH has developed. I also enjoyed hearing about the fascinating work the other awardees created. It was exciting to see the diversity of the public history field and many of the projects, panels, and presentations spoke to the promise of its future. I left Hartford energized and feeling part of a community. #NCPH2020 can't come fast enough.

-Porsha Dossie is an emerging public historian specializing in African-American history, digital humanities and historic preservation, currently on a fellowship with the National Park Service in Washington, DC.



Sonya Laney accepts her award from NCPH President Marla Miller at the Awards Breakfast. Photo by Emma Falcon.

SONYA LANEY /
SONYAJOYLANEY@GMAIL.COM

Although this was not my first time attending NCPH's annual meeting, it was one of the more impactful professional experiences I've had. The "Repair Work" theme provided meaningful, thought-provoking sessions that changed the way I approach my own repair work at the Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum. As a staff member at a small

institution comprised completely of emerging professionals, it is easy to let doubt creep in. Listening to other public historians at all career stages, hearing their struggles and victories, and learning new ways of seeing and solving challenges is part of what makes NCPH so valuable.

I found several sessions in particular fascinating, though it's always impossible to only pick one at a time. "Home Repair (S17)" pushed attendees to reimagine historic house museums and find a social justice lens in which to view the stories that are told. At the Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum, we continue to repair the idea that Canary Cottage, the home of an African American educator who started one of the first elite Black preparatory schools in the nation in the early 20th century, is more than just a house. The session filled me with inspiration and ideas on how to approach our site in a more creative way for visitors. "Complicating the Narrative/Repairing Relationships (S29)" provided insight on tackling institutional challenges like difficult interpretive decisions and problematic programs. As a small state government site with a limited budget, our museum is constantly working to provide the best interpretation and programming possible and session participants gave hopeful advice. Finally, "You Can't Handle the Truth!: Reconciling Painful Histories (S36)" discussed some examples of difficult topics and ways that public historians can approach them to engage with their community. It was empowering to hear about their successes as I work to frame a complicated narrative of segregation in the Jim Crow South.

NCPH's annual meeting has consistently proved one of the greatest resources I've encountered as an emerging museum professional. As one of the recipients of the New Professional Travel Award, I was humbled and excited to meet and learn from so many public historians in Hartford. I returned home with a rekindled fire to provide a better visitor experience and find new ways to engage our community.

-Sonya Laney is the Education Coordinator at the Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum and holds a Masters of Art in History/Museum Studies from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

DOCUMENTING THE IMPACT AND REACH OF THE NEH

CECILY HILL / CHILL@NHALLIANCE.ORG



In 2017, in response to the Trump administration's threat to cut funding to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the National Humanities Alliance launched the *NEH for All* initiative. With generous support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, *NEH for All* is documenting the impact of NEH funding and telling the story of the NEH's impact in ways that are compelling to policymakers and other stakeholders.

How do we explain the impact of a discussion program for veterans, a research project, a preservation workshop, or an archival collection? What effect does NEH funding have on communities, organizations, and individuals? Our first goal was to convey the impact of NEH funding through short, to-the-point narratives that explored both the direct and indirect benefits of humanities work. On NEHforAll.org, more than 160 profiles covering individual projects and organizations in every state showcase just how this work is being accomplished. They also showcase a broad range of humanities institutions and types of work. The site features public humanities initiatives, research projects, historical sites, digitization projects, exhibitions, community conversations, and preservation and conservation programs. It highlights the work of universities, libraries, state and local historical societies, humanities centers, museums, and living history organizations.

Importantly, we are also working to demonstrate the broad impact of humanities research by tracing its rippling effects on policy, school classrooms, museum exhibitions, and film and television—in short, on public conversations and ways of knowing. NEHforAll.org already includes many examples of humanities research that has had an impact both inside and outside of the academy, from Robert Baker and Laurence McCullough's *Cambridge World History of Medical Ethics*, to Patricia Crown's archaeological discoveries in Chaco Canyon. Our work over the next year will be to continue demonstrating this impact, producing new case studies and uncovering the

processes by which scholarly works become part of our national discourse.

We are also partnering with current NEH grantees to survey participants, collecting data about the impact of humanities programs and why people value them. And by gathering geographic data on the NEH's regranting programs and professional development programs, we are mapping the agency's national impact.

Many NEH-funded programs have impacts that extend far beyond the geographic location of the initial grantee. *NEH on the Road* exhibitions travel the country; the American Library Association's Great Stories Club provides reading and discussion programs for at-risk youth in every state; educators and conservators alike travel to participate in professional development programs. Over the last year, NHA has compiled data and created interactive maps that document this impact. Now visitors to the site can see that participants in NEH professional development programs for K-12 educators come from every region of the country. They can learn where preservation education programs, public dialogues, and *NEH on the Road* exhibitions

have taken place. And they can zoom in on their hometown to find newspapers that have been digitized by the Chronicling America initiative, which is digitizing the nation's historical newspapers in partnership with the Library of Congress. These data effectively demonstrate that NEH funding extends far beyond big cities or college towns—it reaches even the most rural areas of the country.

And while the impetus behind the project is to showcase how the NEH has an impact, in practice we are also developing methods for highlighting the humanities' contributions to our communities more broadly. We encourage you to visit NEHforAll.org, to avail yourself of its resources when communicating with policymakers and stakeholders—as well as to stay tuned to new developments. Over the next year, we will be releasing still more information about the humanities' impact as well as models for evaluating and presenting your own impact.

-Cecily Erin Hill leads NEH for All, an initiative that documents the impact of NEH funding and builds the capacity of humanities organizations to communicate that impact.

THANK YOU #NCPH2019 VOLUNTEERS!

NCPH would like to specifically acknowledge our student volunteers and volunteer photographers. The NCPH conference is planned and implemented by just three full-time and two part-time paid staff members, and without a fantastic group of passionate and motivated volunteers it would be quite literally impossible. Thanks to NCPH's graduate assistant Sam Opsahl and conference assistant Emma Falcon, both IUPUI graduate students, for their help during and in the lead-up to the conference.

Special thanks to:

Jenna Auber, IUPUI
Craig Banks, Central Connecticut State University
Erika Bentsen, New York University
Michael Bleddynn, Michigan Technological University
Anna Claspy, Loyola University Chicago
Stefon Danczuk, Central Connecticut State University
Theresa DeCicco, New York University
Georgia Exner, Central Connecticut State University
Elizabeth Gelvin, The Louisiana Abortion Stories Project, New Orleans Abortion Fund
Ari Green, California State University, Sacramento
Emily Harrington, University of West Georgia
Jess Lamar Reece Holler, Caledonia Northern Folk Studios
Melody Hunter-Pillion, North Carolina State University
Elizabeth Klopp, Central Connecticut State University



A big thank you to our volunteers who helped greet and check-in attendees throughout the conference. Photo by Jess Lamar Reece Holler.

Mollie Marlow, University of West Georgia
Morgan Miller, University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Victoria Peck, Coastal Carolina University
Jessica Petty, IUPUI
Tracy Phelps, University of West Georgia
Kate Philipson, New York University
Nathalie Picard, Carleton University
Kayla Piechowiak, University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Krista Pollett, Texas State University
Katie Radspinner, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Camilla Sandoval, University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Christine Savoie, University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Kelly Schmidt, Loyola University Chicago
Jackie Swihart, IUPUI
Stasia Tanzer, IUPUI
Sarah Wilds, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

NCPH COMMITTEE UPDATES

These updates give a sampling of what NCPH volunteers are doing for the organization and the field of public history. The committees encourage your input throughout the year; a list of committee chairs and members can be found at: <http://ncph.org/about/governance-committees/board-of-directors-and-committees/>

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Development Committee continues to keep a laser-like focus on the *2020 Vision: Endowment Campaign for a Brighter Future*. As of May 1, there remains to be raised approximately \$63,000 in donations and pledges to realize the goal of the NCPH endowment reaching \$1 million by the time we next meet in Atlanta. To put that amount into perspective, if each of the 950 attendees at the annual meeting in Hartford donated or pledged \$66, about \$6 a month between now and the 2020 conference, our goal would be achieved. We hope, of course, that you will give more if you can, an amount that is meaningful to you and one that truly reflects what NCPH means to you. A successful campaign will make possible increased professional development opportunities, additional scholarships and grants that promote diversity and inclusivity, and allow the organization greater financial independence. In other words, increasing our endowment will help NCPH expand its capacity to serve members and the entire public history community—including many of the ideas and initiatives raised in sessions, working groups, and various other meetings at Hartford. So, please, consider making a donation or pledge now. You can do so at <https://ncph.org/giving/endowment/>.

DIGITAL MEDIA GROUP

The Digital Media Group's *History@Work (H@W)* and social media teams have had a busy few months preparing for the annual meeting in Hartford, recapping 2018 blog highlights, pursuing ongoing collaborations with *The Public Historian (TPH)*, and posting *H@W* and *TPH* content to Twitter and Facebook. We continue to have a strong and growing social media presence; we recently passed 11,500 Twitter followers and posted 1,252 tweets in 2018, while on Facebook we have 7,600 "likes" and published 202 posts.

The Digital Public History Lab (formerly THATCamp) at the 2019 Annual Meeting was a great success. In response to feedback from conference-goers and lagging participation, we rebranded the workshop to better articulate its purpose. This year's workshop brought in more participants compared to last year and

included a collaboration with the Mass Gun Violence Hackathon workshop.



The Digital Media Group organized a newly named Digital Public History Lab in Hartford. Image by Emma Falcon.

The Digital Media Group met in Hartford to discuss our work for the year ahead. We will be exploring the creation of a digital public history projects directory, implementing a periodic review of digital scholarship and digital public history practices, and working with the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians to revise the 2010 Tenure & Promotion White Paper to include support for digital scholarship and digital public history.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Committee on Environmental Sustainability sponsored three sessions in Hartford. Each was engaging and well attended. We wish to thank everyone who turned out and chimed in. We also had an energetic and productive meeting there, allowing us to move forward on two core projects and bring in new members. One is the completion of "Public History Education and Environmental Sustainability: Best Principles and Selected Resources," a white paper for educators who want to integrate environmental sustainability into their public history training curricula. The second is a report and bibliography on the growing phenomenon of Green Meetings. This represents a new approach to, and practices for, academic and related meetings. There is a large and growing literature of ways to reduce the carbon footprint of large annual meetings. Our report will make recommendations to the NCPH Board, but it will also be a resource to the larger public history community. In addition, committee members are developing panels for Atlanta in 2020 and identifying proposals we can support or endorse. We are also interested in talking with the larger membership who have ideas for sessions of any type dealing with issues of climate and environmental sustainability. We are going to be reaching out to Atlanta activists working on local environmental issues from climate to urban farming to create some sort of service

project or panel that uses these issues to link the conference to the community.

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

The NCPH Long Range Planning Committee has been in a period of transition. The Committee's long term chair, Jean-Pierre Morin, who led the development and initial implementation of the Long Range Plan (LRP), has recently had to resign from the committee. Will Stoutamire, who has been on the committee since the drafting of the plan and has served as co-chair since November 2018, will serve as chair until another co-chair can be appointed.

The Committee continues to work on ensuring that the goals and activities from the LRP are met. For the past year, this process involved having individual committee members monitor the progress of specific goals and activities, reaching out to the relevant staff, board members, and/or committee chairs associated with each objective. Based on feedback from those involved, we have decided to chart a different course going forward, which we hope will simplify the process. At the spring 2019 meeting, we elected to create two subcommittees. A worksheet subcommittee will develop and disseminate worksheets for NCPH staff, board members, and committee chairs, indicating only the relevant goals and activities from the LRP. An assessment subcommittee will then review the completed worksheets prior to each meeting and evaluate the overall progress towards the LRP's primary objectives.

We are optimistic that this new process will enable us to more efficiently assist with the implementation of the LRP throughout the work of NCPH.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Membership Committee remains hard at work fostering connections among those in the profession and welcoming new NCPH members to our community.

As in past years, the Membership Committee hosted a series of events tied to the NCPH annual meeting. On March 6, we held our third annual Twitter chat aimed at generating conversation about the conference and helping new attendees make the most of their experiences in Hartford.

During the conference, committee members helped to facilitate the First Time Attendee and Conference Connection Meet-Up on Wednesday evening. We also hosted a new

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committee-sponsored session, “Shared Wisdom: NCPH from the Pros.” This interactive discussion was aimed at helping attendees network and become more involved in the work of our organization.

In addition to our work at the annual meeting, we have been working with the New Professional and Graduate Student Committee to complete our two-year pilot onboarding program. We are currently evaluating these results and gathering feedback from committee volunteers so that we can present NCPH staff with a set of onboarding recommendations.

Looking ahead, we will continue working on the goals outlined in the NCPH Long Range Plan. We are also in the process of organizing NCPH “After Work” social events aimed at building community among public historians in the same city or region, and hope to pilot some of these events in the coming year.

As always, we welcome feedback and insights. Please feel free at any time to reach out to committee co-chairs Krista McCracken and Andy Mach.

NEW PROFESSIONAL AND GRADUATE STUDENT COMMITTEE

The New Professional and Graduate Student Committee is working on multiple initiatives to empower and engage NCPH members throughout their academic careers and as they enter the professional field. We are working to promote visibility for our committee at conferences, including discussing with the 2020 program committee incorporating events that serve our constituents at the Atlanta meeting. We are also considering expanding the scope of our committee, to include not just graduate students and new professionals, but also undergraduate students. We continue to be active on Twitter (@NCPHnewgrad), we seek contributions to the *History@Work* blog, and are still working on developing a *Public History Navigator* for the job market.



Professional Development Committee Members break for a photo during the Speed networking event in Hartford. Photo by Melody Hunter-Pillion.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Professional Development Committee met during the 2019 Annual Meeting to discuss future projects, both short term and long term. Among the initiatives discussed were the following:

- **Workshops:** The content and quality of workshops in Hartford were strong. The committee collaborated with presenters to help them improve their proposals by catering them to the needs of the NCPH membership. We will continue to discuss changes to the guidelines for submitting workshops, but overall are pleased with the state of workshops.
- **NCPH Jobs Page:** We participated in a subcommittee to help NCPH develop a Best Practices for Job Postings document. Led by committee member Vanessa Camacho, we worked with the New Professional and Graduate Student Committee and NCPH staff to craft guidelines that call for more transparency from employers when creating position listings. The Board of Directors approved the document which has been published on the NCPH website and is provided to anyone posting a position to the NCPH Jobs Page.
- **Speed Networking:** The Speed Networking event in Hartford was a great success. The comments we received from both professionals and students were overwhelmingly positive, and no major changes to the session format are planned at this time.
- **External Collaborations:** The committee is interested in establishing partnerships with external collaborators such as HBCUs, tribal organizations, community colleges, and public history organizations of all sizes that would be interested in working with NCPH. These external collaborations would help NCPH become more inclusive and to meet the needs of public historians who are not currently being served by the organization. We have just begun this work, but hope to make progress over the next year.
- **Online Programming:** We are currently working with the Membership Committee and NCPH staff to promote online programming that is accessible to the membership. Among the online programs mentioned include Twitter chats and webinars on a range of public history topics for practitioners and

educations. Co-chair Jessica Knapp led a Twitter conversation earlier in the year that was successful, and we hope to build upon this sort of programming over the next few years.

NCPH 40TH ANNIVERSARY AD HOC COMMITTEE

The NCPH 40th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee met in Hartford to plan for the 2020 celebration in Atlanta. Several anniversary-related conference session proposals are in the works, hopefully yielding a retrospective and introspective track in the 2020 program as NCPH celebrates its 40th year. Discussions are also underway with *The Public Historian* to mark NCPH's 40th with a special virtual issue, followed by one or more articles in print later next year. Consultation on a range of celebratory plans are ongoing with Local Arrangements and Program Committees, Development Committee, and Council of Past Presidents.

In Hartford, 40th committee members and volunteers staffed a table in the exhibit hall. The display included a slideshow identifying individuals who participated in the first gathering of public historians at an innovative symposium held in Montecito, CA in April, 1979. Thanks to Barb Howe for her diligent work on tracking down photos and information on the 100+ Montecito attendees acknowledged in the slideshow. On the table were documents relating to that symposium, including Wes Johnson's proposal to the Rockefeller Foundation, which he had labeled “History for Public Benefit.” Thank you to Laura Miller, chair of NCPH's Digital Media Group, who located the Montecito symposium documents at the Rockefeller Archive Center, and Kathleen Leonard and Michelle Beckerman of that institution for generously providing copies of these founding documents.

Conference attendees who stopped by the NCPH 40th anniversary table in the exhibit hall were invited to leave birthday messages for the organization or wishes for the field of public history. Some of those messages were: “My wish for public history is that more of the younger generation learn about it and continue to build upon its legacy” and “for public history to be seen, heard, and experienced.” And finally: “For your 40th NCPH, my wish is that you continue to evolve and transform, and never become complacent.”

HIGHLIGHTS FROM HARTFORD WORKING GROUPS

Seven of the working groups that met during the 2019 NCPH conference in Hartford have provided summaries of their discussions. NCPH working groups are seminar-like conversations that take place before and during the conference. The groups, comprised of eight to fourteen people, explore in-depth a subject of shared concern and work toward a common purpose and outcome. If you are interested in creating a working group for the 2020 NCPH Annual Meeting, proposals are due July 15, 2019. (See the Call for Proposals at <http://ncph.org/conference/2020-annual-meeting/calls-for-proposals/>.)

WG1: REPAIRING NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATIONS: THE STRUGGLES AND CHALLENGES OF MAINTAINING ACCURATE DOCUMENTATION IN A CHANGING WORLD

While National Register nominations can seem like a dry or technical subject, our 13-member working group demonstrated the program's far-reaching impact through their diversity of experiences and perspectives, including consulting, education, non-profits, local government, heritage areas, State Historic Preservation Offices, and the National Park Service itself. Each participant contributed a case statement focusing on nomination amendments and updates, and the co-facilitators identified four major themes: overlooked resources and groups; technical concerns and logistics; public history and interpretation; and local decision-making and tax credits. These themes guided our discussions before the conference and within the working group in Hartford.

At the conference, the lively and thoughtful conversation touched on issues related to new nominations, nomination amendments, the impact nominations can have on local preservation efforts, and how educators can better use the program. Our discussions hinged on the central theme that all nominations should be considered living documents that must change periodically to best reflect the history of a community and serve its needs. The concept of "rewriting history" might feel destabilizing at first, but nomination amendments provide opportunities to address minor technical changes, make a tax credit project possible, or include underrepresented histories and groups. They also present opportunities for creative thinking, community outreach, and research, and can be approached incrementally by students and educators.

In the coming months, working group members will work collaboratively to produce

three pieces for *History@Work*. We're looking forward to helping advance the conversation and make amendments more manageable and effective for sponsors, communities, and states as we move toward the National Register's sixth decade.

-JENNIFER BETSWORTH, HEATHER CARPINI, JOANNA DOHERTY, SARAH KAUTZ, AND MICHELLE MCCLELLAN

WG2: MAKING RADICAL REPAIRS: HOW TO TELL AN INCLUSIVE STORY WHEN YOUR COLLECTIONS ARE STUCK IN THE PAST

This working group explored the ideas of how public history collections need to be shaped and transformed in order to align with the increasing focus on new, more inclusive and dynamic interpretation and storytelling. The group began working together by developing case statements that included reflections around questions of resource allocation, inclusive decision-making and collections management, communicating with stakeholders, and the benefits of being more inclusive. After sharing the case statements, the group had conversations to discuss them, which culminated in our session at NCPH in Hartford.

The group was joined by a sizeable and enthusiastic audience who we incorporated into the discussion whenever possible. The structure of our discussion focused on our desired goals and outcomes, identifying our audiences, making a case for the importance of our topic, identifying challenges, and suggesting solutions, and closed with a discussion of next steps for how to continue the discussion within the field. There was great enthusiasm for following up with blog posts or other communications and holding a second working group session at next year's conference.

-CARRIE VILLAR



A member of WG3 participates in a brainstorming activity at the 2019 conference. Photo by Jess Lamar Reece Holler.

WG3: LISTENING IS EMOTIONAL LABOR: SELF-REPAIR AND COMMUNITY CARE

The "Listening is Emotional Labor" working group became a collaborative session, with working group members acting as respondents to the ideas surfaced by audience and group members during a breakout group and collective brainstorming session. After engaging in some embodied listening and mindfulness exercises (which many participants believed ought to be incorporated more often into our work environments and conference spaces), participants considered how the field could better describe and value the emotional labor of listening through three formal mechanisms: resumes and job descriptions; project descriptions and calls for proposals; and conferences.

Many suggestions were brought forward; one recurrent theme was time. That in order to honor the durational nature of listening, the interpersonal process of community building and engagement, and the importance of self-care for listeners, projects should give serious consideration to what adequate duration is, both for ethical and intellectual (and political) reasons. A second theme was listening to the listeners: whether in internal listening sessions, community-based care, or project-funded/mandated/supported therapy, professional listeners need to have the opportunity to be listened to, both to prevent burnout and to ensure that when a listener is engaged in a community, they have their full attention. A third theme was adequate compensation, for interns and contingent workers, for long term organizational/project staff, and for collaborating "community" scholars, who many participants felt were under-compensated and essential. Suggestions for how to accomplish these goals in a conference setting were submitted to NCPH committee members; discussion of the absence of these ideas in public history coursework and internships also came up.

We hope that this conversation contributes to the ongoing discussion of labor conditions and the ethics of our work as public historians.

-DIANA LEMPEL AND SADY SULLIVAN

WG5: EARLY CAREER PUBLIC HISTORY ACADEMICS: QUESTIONS, ISSUES, RESOURCES

This working group was born out of the recognition that early career faculty face unique challenges and issues. These include navigating new places, communities, and

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institutions, continuing or reviving ongoing projects, and creating and advocating for public history curricula from scratch. In the months prior to the conference, we circulated case statements naming a number of questions and issues reflecting our experiences as early-career public history academics. The topics covered in these statements were wide-ranging, but also saw resonance across experiences. We ended up with six broad thematic areas that are of particular interest to new faculty:

- fighting assumptions about public history
- asking for resources and support for faculty and programs
- understanding and advocating for evaluation and promotion
- developing and adapting curriculum
- students and student experience



Members of WG5 address the audience in Hartford. Photo by Jess Lamar Reece Holler.

At the annual meeting, audience-participants joined breakout sessions on the above topics, each with working group members as facilitators and note-takers. We found that talking about these issues—exchanging anecdotes and resources, asking for advice—was immensely helpful. In that spirit, we have decided to create new spaces—both virtual and organizational—to continue these kinds of conversations. While some working-group members are following up with a social media group or listserv, others are drafting a white paper. Early-career academics are a distinct community, and it is our hope that, through meetings like this one, we may find spaces to strengthen it.

—TORREN GATSON, JENNIFER LE ZOTTE, MARY RIZZO, AND M.J. RYMSZA-PAWLOWSKA

WG6: BUILDING THE INCLUSIVE HISTORIAN'S HANDBOOK

This working group invited discussants to participate in the process of developing *The Inclusive Historian's Handbook*, an exciting new digital resource co-sponsored by NCPH and the American Association for State and Local

History. Discussants provided feedback on selected draft entries from the *Handbook*, such as “Accessibility,” “Civic Engagement,” “Digital History,” “Diversity and Inclusion,” and “Historic Preservation.” They also participated in brainstorming regarding future entries and offered advice on how to connect the *Handbook* to specific communities of practitioners. The editors, as well as members of the advisory committee, facilitated the conversation. Several authors also participated in the session.

Throughout the process of developing the *Handbook*, our team has strived to model open, collaborative, and inclusive practices. This working group enabled us to continue inviting a wide range of practitioners to contribute to the project and to solicit valuable feedback that will strengthen the final product. Some of the feedback we received from discussants has already been implemented and the rest will help to shape aspects that are still in development. The completed *Handbook*, which will be free and open to all users, will contain approximately 100 entries authored by a range of experienced practitioners. Each entry will include critical reflections, telling examples, and links to additional resources. By making this a freely available digital resource and designing an easily navigable website, our goal is to make the *Handbook* an accessible resource for the widest range of users possible.

—SHEILA BRENNAN, BILL BRYANS, MODUPE LABODE, KIMBERLY SPRINGLE, WILL WALKER, AND BOB WEIBLE

WG7: INTERPRETING OUR HERITAGE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

It all started with a tweet. In 2018, Nick Sacco (@NickSacco55) asked: was Freeman Tilden's work really even relevant anymore? Were folks still using these principles, or were professional interpreters merely claiming to hold the text sacred? What grew from this conversation was a working group on reinterpreting Freeman Tilden's *Interpreting Our Heritage*, a widely used text (in some public history circles) that was first published more than sixty years ago. While discussing Tilden's work in the context of repair, it became clear that, for some public historians Tilden's work was foundational, but no longer relevant; for others, the longstanding power of the principles were hard to move from the canon of interpretive practice. During the actual working group session, sub-groups focused on the past, present, and future of the work. Some evaluated Tilden's work in historical context and considered a historiography of interpretation. Another group discussed the relationships between historians and interpreters and a third focused on the tools of interpretation, including the cultivation of

empathy. A fourth group looked to the future of Tilden's principles.

One of the end products this group has created is a website, <https://interpretingourheritage.com/>, which has not only our case statements but also a landing page for future conversations and collections of resources. We also plan on writing at least one blog post for *History@Work* on our findings.

—ALLISON HORROCKS AND NICK SACCO

WG8. ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND THE ETHICS OF PUBLIC HISTORY (PART II)

For a second year, #WG8 convened to discuss economic justice and ethics in public history. Over the summer of 2018, working group facilitators and discussants broke into three cadres to 1) develop resources for public historians who encounter ethical issues while doing (or trying to do) their jobs; 2) explore alternative economic models that would make room for meaningful and ethical public history practice for all stakeholders; and 3) research potential models for organizing across public history and allied fields.

At NCPH 2019, the working group unveiled the Public History Workers Caucus (PHWC), with the mission to connect, build solidarity and increase visibility for public history workers (and those in allied fields) by holding space for discussion and organizing around creating ethical, sustainable, and just labor practices. To these ends, we strive to expand career opportunities, improve working conditions, and keep the field open to anyone interested—so as to make public history an accessible career path for all practitioners. To do so, we will meet regularly in community of practice online chat sessions to discuss concerns, share skills, and keep momentum moving forward. We have planned sessions for May, June, and July on topics such as branding, building a cooperative, and contract negotiations, respectively. To learn more, contact us at phworkerscaucus@gmail.com.

—RACHEL BOYLE, DAN OTT, AND STELLA RESS

ANNUAL MEETING WRAP-UP // CONT'D. FROM PAGE 1

Center were designated as all-gender; and the Board of Directors implemented an NCPH Events Code of Conduct last November to clarify expectations for attendee behavior and provide an avenue for reporting violations. The results of our annual meeting survey suggest that the pronoun stickers and all-gender restrooms were welcome additions that the majority of attendees appreciated (or saw value in even if they themselves did not participate). We'll be making pronoun stickers available at NCPH events going forward as a matter of course, and doing everything in our power to provide an all-gender restroom, but there will be more work to do to make sure attendees know these resources are available and to normalize their use.

At time of print, 400 attendees (or 43%) have filled out the 2019 annual meeting evaluation to let us know what you liked and where we can improve. Thank you to those who filled

out the survey! These attendees reported a high degree of overall satisfaction with the conference's content and organization. When asked about participation and satisfaction with special events and tours, attendees pointed to this year's public plenary—"Considering Coltsville: A Revolving Story"—as a standout event. The Local Arrangements and Program Committee co-chairs sought to organize a plenary that would open up lines of communication between local gun violence activists, the National Park Service, and the city of Hartford surrounding the development of the new Coltsville National Historical Park. We all hoped the event would serve as a model for dialogue that would pave the way for productive conversations long after NCPH left town, and locals report that talks have continued. Keep an eye out for a follow-up *History@Work* post about the plenary later this summer!

We'd like to extend a huge thank you to our Program and Local Arrangements committees, NCPH committee members, our sponsors, exhibitors, presenters, volunteers, and attendees. The NCPH annual meeting is a massive, collaborative effort that simply would not be possible without you. As we undertake ongoing "Repair Work" of our own, we are deeply grateful to the NCPH community for supporting these efforts, for letting us know how best to support you in your work, and for challenging us to be the best possible version of NCPH.

What's coming up for the NCPH annual meeting? Next March we are headed to Atlanta to celebrate our 40th anniversary as an organization. The Call for Proposals is open through July 15 via <http://bit.ly/ncph2020>. More changes are on the horizon for the 2020 meeting, including the implementation of a comprehensive accessibility plan—so stay tuned.

-Meghan Hillman is NCPH's Program Manager.



We were excited to welcome Maisa L. Tisdale of the Mary and Eliza Freeman Center for History and Culture to deliver the keynote, "Public History: Repair Work Revolution" on Saturday morning. Photo by Melody Hunter-Pillion.



Out to Lunch offered attendees an opportunity to meet new people over a meal at a local restaurant. Photo by Melody Hunter-Pillion.



Students and new professionals had the opportunity to network with a variety of established professionals during Thursday's popular Speed Networking event. Photo by Melody Hunter-Pillion.



In Session 1, Performing History and Enlivening Community, attendees got up out of their seats with A Broken Umbrella Theatre members. Photo by Melody Hunter-Pillion.



Always a popular event, attendees mingled at the Consultant's Speakeasy on Thursday. Photo by Todd Hoeft.



In the Exhibit Hall, attendees discussed what NCPH means to them in preparation for the organization's 40th anniversary next year. Photo by Kelly Schmidt.



The pop-up, *Becoming Community: The LGBTQ Experience in Connecticut*, was displayed in the exhibit hall on Thursday and Friday. Photo by Kelly Schmidt.



Attendees gather at the Opening Reception. Photo by Todd Hoelt.



Center Church served as the backdrop for attendees and community members to gather for Friday's public plenary "Considering Coltsville: A Revolving Story." Photo by Krista Pollett.



One tour discussed The Amistad Trail and lead attendees to the Old State House. Photo by Krista Pollett.



During Thursday's poster session, participants discussed their projects with attendees. Photo by Krista Pollett.



Attendees considered the history of soil during the Pop-Up "Repair from the Ground Up." Photo by Jess Lamar Reece Holler.



Speakers, Reverend Henry Brown, Warren Hardy, Sarah Pharaon, Thea Montanez, Iran Nazario, and Rebecca Stanfield McCown pose with Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin (standing) before Friday's public plenary. Photo by Krista Pollett.

PUBLIC HISTORY NEWS

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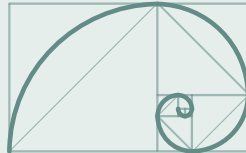
127 Cavanaugh Hall-IUPUI
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ISSN 08912610

Editor: Stephanie Rowe

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Meghan Hillman, Sam Opsahl, and Kirbie
Sondreal

Design: Brooke Hamilton
openbookstudio.com



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