

## BUILDING *THE INCLUSIVE HISTORIAN'S HANDBOOK*

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In September 2016, early in the process of developing *The Inclusive Historian's Handbook*, the editors convened a brainstorming session at the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) annual meeting in Detroit. Prior to the meeting, we circulated some of the existing reference models we were examining and asked the following questions of a group of AASLH members: Which audiences would such a work reach? Which audiences would be excluded? Which format

would have the most potent effect on the field of public history, in your opinion? And, is there a better model that we have not considered? Their responses, as well as the feedback we received from the audience at the session, set in motion the project's transition

from a print "encyclopedia" to a digital *Handbook* that would center equity, inclusion, diversity, and service.

From the beginning, the editors and advisory committee strived to model an open, collaborative, and responsive process. From that initial conference session to now, we have consistently asked how we can best create a resource that will be both accessible and useful to the widest range of history practitioners. Rather than hewing to a rigid vision of what a reference source is supposed to look like, we have tried to be flexible, listen to many voices, and imagine a resource that will be relevant and responsive in ways that traditional resources have often struggled to be. With the guidance and support of the *Handbook's* co-sponsors, AASLH and NCPH, we have been able to develop a digital platform that we hope will serve as a locus for inclusive history practice for years to come.

One of the key suggestions we received at the session in Detroit came from advisory committee member Chris Taylor. Taylor is an alumnus of the Cooperstown Graduate Program, SUNY Oneonta, who at the time was chief inclusion officer for the Minnesota



Freedom Crossing Monument, Lewiston, New York. Photo credit: Cordell Reeves.

Historical Society and now holds the same role for the State of Minnesota. Taylor said that we had an opportunity with this resource to "center diversity and inclusion and to put D&I at the core of public history." For the editors and advisory committee, this suggestion became a vision statement. The as-yet-unnamed resource went from being a print "encyclopedia" to, after much discussion and consultation, an open digital resource titled *The Inclusive Historian's Handbook*.

Even after settling on the title, however, the *Handbook's* editors and advisory committee did not attempt to craft a singular definition of "inclusion" or "inclusivity" for the whole resource; rather, we allowed authors to define

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## MEMBER HIGHLIGHT: THE ROCKEFELLER ARCHIVE CENTER

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The Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC) is a repository and research center with holdings spanning over a century of individual and institutional giving. It opened

in 1974 to allow public access to the records of the Rockefeller family and the many philanthropic and nonprofit institutions they founded. The RAC has since grown, gathering the records of some four dozen foundations and organizations. An independent operating foundation, the RAC is the largest privately endowed archive in the United States.

The collections at the RAC together offer an unparalleled view of third-sector activity

both in the United States and worldwide.

Today, among several dozen RAC collections are the archives of major grantmaking organizations such as the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations and the Commonwealth Fund, as well as several independent not-for-profit organizations including the Asia Society, Social Science Research Council, Bureau of Social Hygiene, Agricultural Development Council, the Trilateral Commission, the Population Council, as well as Rockefeller University. The RAC also preserves and makes available the papers of over one hundred individuals associated with these institutions and endeavors.

The RAC is located in an expanded historic house twenty-five miles north of New

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## PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: THINKING SEMIQUINCENTENNIALLY

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This summer, I found my inbox suddenly alight with queries from journalists. As the author

of a biography of Betsy Ross, I often get questions about the supposed making of the first flag around Flag Day and July 4th, so I wasn't surprised to see subject lines like "Media query: Betsy Ross" and prepared for the usual "did she or didn't she" questions. I was startled when the caller instead asked, "Can you comment on the allegation that the so-called 'Betsy Ross flag' (that is, the flag with thirteen stars encircled on a blue canton)

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## NOTICE OF FALL BOARD MEETING



NCPH Board of Directors members Krista McCracken, Kimberly Springle, and Nicole Moore prepare for the Spring 2019 Board Meeting in Hartford, Connecticut. Photo courtesy Emma Falcon.

On October 25-26, the NCPH Board of Directors will be convening on the IUPUI campus in Indianapolis, IN where NCPH is headquartered. The board welcomes comments, questions, and suggestions from NCPH members throughout the year, and especially for the fall agenda. Please contact

the executive director ([rowes@iupui.edu](mailto:rowes@iupui.edu)) or the board at large ([board@ncph.org](mailto:board@ncph.org)). Individual board members are listed at <http://bit.ly/ncphcommittees>.

### Welcome New Members!

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is racist?" I listened as journalists explained the issue prompting their messages: Nike placed the early flag on a new sneaker, and Colin Kaepernick and others objected that the symbol represented an era when enslavement was enshrined in our society and economy. I also learned that some white supremacist groups have embraced the image as part of their own abhorrent visual lexicon.<sup>1</sup>



Colonial Flag at Betsy Ross House (2013). Flickr user Jim, the Photographer.

Two separate issues were afoot: the hijacking, by white supremacists, of the early flag as a symbol of fealty to their odious world view, and the larger objection to Nike's decision to celebrate an era in which so many US residents were not free. The first is plainly repugnant. The latter is more complicated. How do we honor the nation's origins while also acknowledging those excluded from the freedoms those symbols represent?

Now, with the approach of the US Semiquincentennial (the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Declaration of Independence), public historians around the nation will be grappling with difficult issues raised by the commemorative moment.

Historians well know the power of anniversaries, and particularly the US Bicentennial, as a driver of events beyond the strictly commemorative.<sup>2</sup> To be sure, there was an incalculable personal impact: how many family albums contain (as mine does) photos of the Bicentennial Wagon Train? How many kitchens hold commemorative (pewter!) mugs? How many young people became smitten with history through Bicentennial activities? "Bicentennial Minutes" aired on



NCPH President Marla Miller celebrates a Bicentennial birthday as a child. Photo courtesy of author.

TV, and children sang along with *Schoolhouse Rock*. Stacks of publications appeared. On an institutional level, many history programs exist today because of the bicentennial boost. Historic sites saw large infusions of financial and other resources. Communities of color pressed issues of equity, inequity, and inclusion, launching new pastkeeping enterprises and transforming established ones.

Anniversaries matter.

With the 250<sup>th</sup> on the horizon, public historians hope to ensure that this occasion, likewise, has positive and enduring effects. The US Congress has created the United States Semiquincentennial Commission to steer planning. Four senators, four representatives, sixteen private citizens, and nine ex-officio members have accepted the ambitious charge of developing a commemorative agenda that encompasses "not only the Revolution, but also the full history of the United States leading into our 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary." The American Battlefield Trust, as secretariat, is tasked with implementing the commission's vision.

Our partners at the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) have convened a 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Task Force (<https://aaslh.org/250th/>) to support that work, and to serve as a clearinghouse for information while "helping to align the various commemorative efforts for the benefit of the historical community." To guide planning, the Task Force has developed a series of goals (and associated working groups) which emphasize history relevance and inclusion, public engagement and history education, and increased resources for history work. The Task Force is also generating both immediate and "moonshot" aspirations that could—just as the Bicentennial did—transform public history practice for generations.

This work represents another way that NCPH and AASLH will be working together to help guide interpretation of the nation's origin, joining the just-launched *Inclusive History Handbook*, which includes entries on the Founders and other relevant topics. Read more starting on page one of this newsletter.

The NCPH Board had the opportunity to comment on the initiative's goals, priorities, and processes in 2018, and our 2019 annual meeting hosted a listening session which Executive Director Stephanie Rowe and I had the privilege of attending. There, a diverse

group of public historians discussed overall goals; considered whether "guiding themes" could ensure that a broad mix of subjects surfaced; and contemplated the form such prompts might take.

NCPH has asked University of Minnesota historian Jean O'Brien (author of *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (2010) and *Memory and Mobility: The Memory Work of Massasoit* (2018)), and a contributor to the Humanities Action Lab's "Climate of Inequality" initiative) to join the Task Force as our representative, and happily she agreed; she succeeds Brian Martin (historian and business leader) in that role. Jean will be a terrific asset to these weighty conversations.

The 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary observance holds tremendous potential, and—as the fraught conversations around Nike's shoes reminds us—presents significant challenges. Just as in the 1970s, these commemorative efforts unfold as we confront urgent questions grounded in the founding moment, from the meaning of citizenship to the purpose of the census. Debates over the intent of the so-called (and fractious and mutable) "founders;" the difficulty of mounting celebrations of "freedom" in a nation still unable to confront its deep roots in slavery; the challenges to historical expertise that permeate public conversation and the entangled draining of funds for public education and history resources: these and other thorny issues will shape this moment, which may be, as one of my own Revolutionary-era subjects would phrase it, "big with everlasting consequences." The broad and diverse group of stakeholders convening for these important conversations will help ensure that the marking of this moment involves contemplation alongside celebration, and the anniversary is embedded in advocacy and analysis, aspiration, and remembrance.

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

<sup>1</sup> Hsu, Tiffany, Kevin Draper, Sandra E. Garcia, and Niraj Chokshi. "Nike Drops 'Betsy Ross Flag' Sneaker After Kaepernick Criticizes It." *The New York Times*, July 2, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/02/business/betsy-ross-shoe-kaepernick-nike.html>

<sup>2</sup> Tammy Gordon's terrific study of the marketing of the US Bicentennial (*The Spirit of 1976: Commerce, Community, and the Politics of Commemoration*, University of Massachusetts Press, 2013), M.J. Rymysz-Pawlowska's thoughtful book *History Comes Alive: Public History and Popular Culture in the 1970s* (University of North Carolina Press, 2017), and other scholarship has explored the wide range of institutions and programs that flowed from the nation's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

## CHANGES AT NCPH

This summer and fall brings a time of great transition to the small staff at NCPH. Please join remaining staff Stephanie Rowe (executive director) and Meghan Hillman (program manager) and the board of directors in saying welcome to our new colleagues and farewell and thanks to those moving on.



**Christine Crosby** will be leaving the position of NCPH Membership Manager on September 20 to become an onboarding specialist at MemberClicks, an association management software system. Christine came to NCPH in 2015 as membership coordinator after completing her MA in public history at IUPUI. Christine was the first in this

newly professionalized position, bringing another much-needed professional public history perspective to the small staff and quickly growing membership in size, but also growing the member benefits program, developing and professionalizing our social media presences, and developing our Mini-Con program that was then just beginning to launch. All of us at NCPH wish Christine the best in her new position and thank her for the incredible service she has provided to our growing network of members. She will be missed in so many ways!



**Emma Falcon** will be joining the NCPH staff as a temporary part-time membership assistant as the Board works with IUPUI to determine a plan for a more permanent re-hire of a membership coordinator. Those of you who attended the Hartford conference will recognize Emma's calm,

capable presence. Emma worked with NCPH staff as a conference assistant this past spring and we're thrilled to welcome her back in this new capacity. Emma graduated from IUPUI in May with her Museum Studies MA. Emma has previously worked at the Indianapolis Children's Museum, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum, and the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields.



**Kirbie Sondreal** spent this past summer working in the NCPH office and archives as a special projects assistant, helping us develop a commemoration plan for next year's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of NCPH. Kirbie is now in her second year at the Cooperstown Graduate Program and we wish her well as she finishes up her History Museum Studies MA. Kirbie was a real asset to the office and we're sure you'll be hearing more from her soon.



**David Sye** joined NCPH in August as the new graduate assistant for the 2019-2020 academic year. Originally from Illinois, David is now a second-year graduate student here at IUPUI pursuing a Public History/Library Science dual degree. David previously attended the University of Illinois at Springfield and has worked at the Indiana University Health Archives, in several public libraries in Indiana and Illinois, the Peoria PlayHouse Children's Museum, and as a middle school teacher.

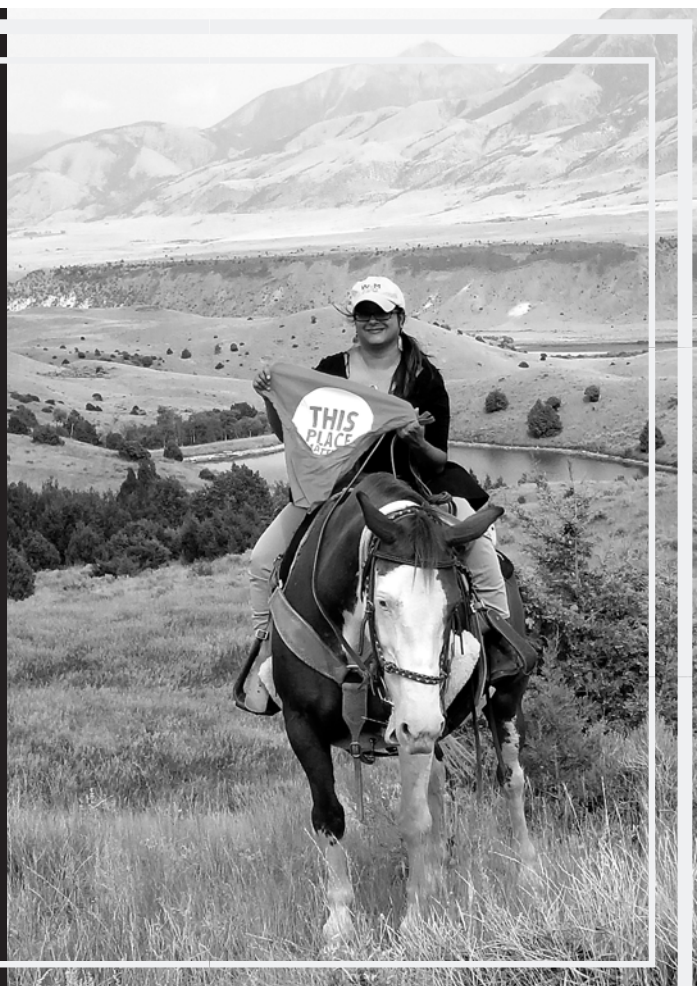
"I am proud to have donated to the NCPH Endowment Campaign. Throughout the years my involvement with the organization has brought me to a community of peers, colleagues, and friends that provide at times guidance and support in my work as a public historian. My experience with NCPH provided a constant source of inspiration and has allowed me to thrive in my career."

-Priya Chhaya



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# “FEDERAL HISTORY AS PUBLIC HISTORY:” THE SOCIETY FOR HISTORY IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT’S 2019 MEETING AND NCPH MINI-CON

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*The views expressed in this article are our own and not necessarily those of the US Department of State or the United States Government.*



SOCIETY FOR  
**HISTORY IN THE  
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

The Society for History in the Federal Government (SHFG) held its annual meeting at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Archives I building in Washington, DC, on April 25 and 26. “Federal History as Public History” served as this year’s theme, and the meeting was cross-promoted as an NCPH Mini-Con, further building on connections made during the 2016 joint NCPH-SHFG Annual Meeting in Baltimore and following the formal establishment of NCPH’s Committee for Government Historians in 2015.

SHFG, like NCPH, will celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Both organizations remember our shared foundations, past presidents, and members as we strive to promote public and federal history to broader audiences. The SHFG annual meeting served as the first commemoration of our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary milestone. We are in the process of planning several events during 2019 and 2020 that will celebrate the Society and the contributions federal historians and those historians who study federal history have made to the historical profession.



Attendees at the SHFG 2019 Meeting. Photo courtesy Elizabeth Charles.

Panelists and attendees at the annual meeting explored the ways in which federal historians and federal history programs communicate and interact with diverse public audiences. Two workshops focused on federal jobs and professional development, respectively. Organizers provided practical information about the federal hiring process, as well as successful strategies for pursuing training and new opportunities within the federal workplace.

Thursday afternoon sessions included an oral history roundtable, which offered attendees the opportunity to discuss challenges and opportunities posed by oral history projects in various federal history offices. The long-range goal of this particular session is to create a new best practices document for federal oral history practitioners. During one of the afternoon panels, participants provided information and insights into their internships at the National Park Service (NPS), NARA, and the Department of State. A companion panel also took place concerning the experiences of young professionals embarking on careers in the federal government and the ways in which they used their public history training.



Attendees at the SHFG 2019 Meeting. Photo courtesy Elizabeth Charles.

During the first Friday morning session, US House of Representatives panelists discussed the ways in which their programs use artifacts, exhibits, and digital programs to illustrate institutional histories. The second panel placed a similar emphasis on objects, with presentations from the staff of the Smithsonian National Postal Museum on the importance of historical meaning through research in objects. In another panel, historians from the Marine Corps History Division and the National Museum of the Marine Corps used General Clifton B. Cates as a case study to explore issues of public engagement. Historians from the Smithsonian Institution, NARA, and the Library of Congress explored the issues of citizen engagement and digitization in their panel. Participants, including historians from the US National Library of Medicine, the University of Maryland Libraries, and the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, discussed the challenges and opportunities for informing audiences through the use of popular literature, tape recordings, and government documents.

During the Friday afternoon sessions, NPS historians discussed how their respective NPS units utilize administrative and legislative histories in their work. The last panel focused on the concepts of shared authority and shared experiences. Historians

from West Virginia University, American University, the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, and the US Department of State addressed issues of community and institutional partnerships over contested histories, land use and government management of resources, and Americanization in the classroom via mass-marketed educational materials.

The annual meeting concluded with Past President Wilske presenting the annual Roger R. Trask Award to Marian L. Smith, the former historian of the USCIS, who joined the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in 1988 as the agency’s first historian. Smith’s contributions to federal history are numerous, especially in the area of preservation of and access to INS records. In delivering her Trask Lecture, Smith drew upon the meeting’s 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary theme by recalling her initial participation in the Society and acknowledging the important and necessary changes that have taken place within the federal history community, in terms of the inclusion of new or previously ignored voices.

Next year’s annual meeting will take the form of a joint meeting with the Oral History of the Mid-Atlantic Region (OHMAR), at the Robert C. Byrd Center for Congressional History and Education at Shepherdstown University in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. We encourage anyone with an interest in federal history and oral history to look for the call for papers this fall and to consider attending the 2020 meeting. We are also eager to deepen the connections between NCPH and SHFG; the two organizations have shared considerable membership and a close relationship since their foundings forty years ago, and we’re looking forward to the next forty.

*Kristin Ahlberg and Elizabeth Charles are historians in the Office of the Historian, US Department of State, where they compile the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series. Ahlberg is SHFG President and serves on the NCPH Membership and Governance Committees. Charles is SHFG Vice President and serves on the NCPH Curriculum and Training and Government Historians Committees. They would like to thank SHFG Treasurer Mandy Chalou, Chief of the Editing and Publishing Division of the Office of the Historian, US Department of State and past chair of the NCPH Michael C. Robinson Prize for Historical Analysis, for her editorial suggestions.*

# A MOMENT TO TAKE STOCK (AND KEEP ADVOCATING)

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For three years in a row, the Trump administration has called for the elimination of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and other humanities funding streams. In both 2017 and 2018, thanks to robust advocacy from the humanities community, the Republican-controlled Congress rejected the administration's efforts and passed increases for the NEH and several other humanities programs. This year, we are seeing support on Capitol Hill for even greater increases for the NEH and other humanities programs. The possibility of these increases is partly a result of the Democratic takeover of the House, but that isn't the whole story—a Democratic majority has not always meant proposed increases for the humanities. Support for the NEH has grown on both sides of the aisle, largely as a result of our collective efforts to showcase just how valuable the humanities are to communities around the country.

In March, Humanities Advocacy Day participants urged Members of Congress to sign on to letters requesting increased funding for humanities programs, resulting in significant bipartisan support. In the House, a record-breaking 175 representatives, including eleven Republicans, endorsed a \$12.5 million increase for the NEH, significantly higher than the incremental increases of \$2 or \$3 million over the past four years. A letter in the Senate, asking for the same increase, also received a record-breaking 44 signers (all Democrats). A record-breaking 106 Members of Congress, including seven Republicans, signed another letter requesting a \$44 million increase for the Department of Education's international education programs (Title VI and Fulbright-Hays). This was a particularly ambitious request for programs that have not received increases for years.

More recently, the House passed funding bills that included significant increases for our priorities. In addition to passing the \$12.5 million increase for the NEH and a nearly \$17 million increase for the Department of Education's international education programs, the House has passed increases for the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the Smithsonian, the National Park Service's historic preservation programs, and the National Historical Publications and Records Administration (NHPRC), the grant-giving arm of the National Archives.



Humanities Advocacy Day, March 2019. Photo courtesy Morrison Photography.

The Senate has yet to release its appropriations bills. While we know there is bipartisan support for humanities programs there as well, we are less likely to see increases of the same magnitude in the Senate's bills. The House, Senate, and White House recently reached a deal to raise the budget caps for FY 2020, but the increase in the deal is somewhat smaller than increase the House appropriations committee assumed when drafting its bills. Senate bills will conform to these new caps, and in the end, the House might adjust the amount for humanities programs down to help it conform with the new caps.

While much remains to be seen, this is a moment to recognize the success of the humanities community's efforts. In recent years, advocates have sent hundreds of thousands of messages to Members of Congress on behalf of the NEH, IMLS, NHPRC, and Title VI and Fulbright-Hays. We have also deepened research into the impact of federal funding and supported grantees in communicating their impact to local and national policymakers. We have organized in-district meetings that bring Members of Congress together with grantees from their districts so that they can hear first-hand about the impact of the humanities in their communities. (Interested in working with us on one of these meetings? Let us know.) And we have hosted briefings for Members of Congress and their staff that bring grantees to Capitol Hill to showcase their work. In June, for example, we were joined by the hosts of the *BackStory* podcast, who held a live show in the Russell Senate Office Building on "The Divided

States of America," which offered staffers a look at the importance of humanities research to understanding our contemporary moment.

This is also a prime moment to think about ways in which you can engage Members of Congress when they are home for August recess. Our district advocacy guide offers tips on scheduling a meeting with Members of Congress and for inviting them to events in the district. Offering a Member of Congress or their district staffer a behind the scenes tour of a special collection, a new exhibition on campus, or inviting them to visit an NEH-funded summer program are just a few examples of the efforts that have been successful in engaging Members of Congress across the country. Campus government relations officers are great partners for this kind of outreach, and we are always happy to help and brainstorm as well.

The past few years have been a testament to the power of relationship building. And now is a great time to keep building them.

*Beatrice Gurwitz is deputy director of the National Humanities Alliance (NHA).*



these ideas in multiple ways. We recognized, as well, that “inclusion” can be a problematic concept, especially for those communities of color that have experienced a great deal of exclusion by traditionally white institutions in US society and elsewhere. With this in mind, we hope that the *Handbook* will catalyze productive conversations about equity and inclusion. Many of the authors address issues of power, privilege, and inequality, both past and present, and demonstrate how historians might confront these issues. The entries provide a wide range of methods and recommendations for historians to consider, reflect upon, and incorporate into their work.

Although today many of our history organizations claim to be more inclusive, diverse, equitable, and service-oriented, we have observed they have often failed to change their practices in ways that would fundamentally open up the field and fully recognize and acknowledge the multiplicity of voices that are already engaged in doing history. Frequently, well-intentioned individuals and organizations do not have the tools or knowledge to bring new practitioners and audiences into their institutions, develop new interpretations, and ensure the full inclusion of all people in history-based projects. It is our hope that this resource contributes to ongoing efforts to meet this pressing need.



President Barack Obama on the bus Rosa Parks rode that sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott, on exhibit in *With Liberty and Justice for All*, at the Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan. Photo credit: Official White House Photo by Pete Souza, April 18, 2012.

Our main objective for the *Handbook* is to support inclusive and equity-focused historical work in public settings by:

- Sharing a knowledge base that invites more people to engage in history projects.
- Providing concrete examples of how to make history work more relevant.
- Centering equity, inclusivity, diversity, and public service.
- Offering accessible windows into the many ways public historians work.

The *Handbook* is for individuals and groups engaged in historical work in a wide range of settings—not just paid professionals or academic scholars. It is intended to provide community groups, educators, museum professionals (paid and unpaid), students, scholars, activists, historical societies, preservationists, archivists, and others with easy-to-find information that is directly applicable to inclusive history practice. We hope that the content is accessible to all people who are doing historical work, including those who may not identify as historians.

Authored by field experts, the *Handbook's* entries on topics ranging from “Accessibility” and “Civic Engagement” to “Outdoor History Museums” and “U.S. Founders” combine practical advice with critical reflections and telling examples. Because it is a multi-authored project, it does not speak with a single, authoritative voice. Rather, contributors offer their perspectives and share ideas and recommendations drawn from experiences in the field. It is our hope that the *Handbook* will serve as an entry point for many different types of history practitioners who are looking to center equity, inclusion, diversity, and service in their work. To this end, each entry offers multiple links to resources as well as suggested readings, such as articles in *History News* and *The Public Historian*, blog posts on *History@Work*, technical leaflets, books, and websites. The entries differ from more traditional encyclopedia entries. Instead of finding a comprehensive introduction to a topic, readers will encounter discussions concerning approaches that will help directors, curators, researchers, community advocates, students, and others think about the topic in a way that puts diversity and inclusion on the agenda. An entry on “Heritage Tourism,” for example, provides readers with an overview of what inclusive practice at historical organizations may look like. This entry complements other publications on the same topic and provides provocative questions and resources to develop readers’ thinking and influence their practices.

The process of creating the *Handbook* is ongoing. As a digital resource, it is a living document. After the initial roll-out of approximately twenty entries in August 2019, we will be regularly adding content throughout 2019 and 2020 until there are approximately 100 entries in total. By the end of 2020, the “first edition” will be complete. Future “editions,” however, will follow as content is updated and the field continues to shift. The editors and advisory committee



have intentionally built flexibility into the project’s design. Although the basic structure will remain in place, we have the opportunity to augment the number of entries and easily revise the content. The advantage of a digital resource is that the *Handbook* can be both iterative and responsive. As the field evolves and more practitioners contribute to the *Handbook*, it will grow and change. Over the next two years, we look forward to sharing this new resource with readers and discussing how its content can be tailored and refined to best support historical work that is equitable, inclusive, and service-oriented.

One of the things we are most excited about is seeing how individuals and organizations utilize the *Handbook* in their practice. Here are some ideas for how readers might think about using it:

- Share it with community partners and use the readings to shape collaborations.
- Discuss it with administrators, collaborators, colleagues, or boards of trustees who may have questions about the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in historical work or who may be unsure about how to approach these issues.
- Assign selections to students or interns. Discuss ways they can implement the ideas and recommendations in their careers.
- Engage in personal reflection on one’s own work. Note areas for improvement or ideas to bring to current or future projects.
- Select specific essays for a team to read together as they embark on a new project.
- Include it as part of professional development/continuing education initiatives with staff and volunteers.
- Mine it for additional resources. Follow the links and read the suggested books and articles.
- Contribute by writing an essay that fills gaps in content.

Several of these ideas came from a well-attended panel at the AASLH annual meeting in Kansas City in September 2018 and a lively working group we facilitated at the NCPH annual meeting in Hartford, Connecticut in March 2019. The editors, along with advisory





Each year, Mount Vernon collaborates with the local group Black Women United for Action to hold a commemoration ceremony at the burial site for Mount Vernon's enslaved people. Photo credit: Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

committee members, led the sessions, which offered participants a sneak peek at the *Handbook* and asked them how they might utilize its content. They reported that they planned to share it with students, interns, colleagues, board members, and collaborators and to use it as an important resource for project planning, pedagogy, employee training, diversity & inclusion initiatives, and community engagement. They also made suggestions for possible additional entries and offered recommendations, such as to include “View from the Field” essays, which would provide more personal accounts and individual perspectives to complement the other more general, encyclopedia-like entries—a suggestion we eagerly adopted. These kinds of suggestions have been invaluable in shaping the final product.

It is exactly this type of feedback we are hoping to receive more of now that the *Handbook* is publicly available. One of the key advantages of creating a digital resource is that we can easily make changes and additions to the content and respond in a timely fashion to reader recommendations as well as new developments in the field.

For the next two years, the *Handbook* will grow, with new entries added each month. The initial release includes entries on: Accessibility, Civic Engagement, Collaborative Practice, Digital History, Diversity & Inclusion, Food History, Heritage Tourism, Historic House Museums, Historic Preservation, Humanities Councils, Material Culture, Memorials and Monuments, Outdoor History Museums, Plantations, Public Folklore, Reconstruction, Sexuality, Urban Renewal, U.S. Bicentennial 1976, U.S. Founders, and U.S. Presidents, as well as an incisive “View from the Field”

essay from author and museum professional Marian Carpenter which examines “the challenges of being inclusive in museum collections.”

Entries that are in-progress and should be available in the coming months include: Asian Pacific American History, Curation, Exhibitions, Intersectionality,

Holocaust History, Leadership, Museum Education, Oral History, and “View from the Field.” Dialogues on Civil Rights at the Nashville Public Library.

In addition, the list of planned entries includes: Activism, Advisory Boards, African American History, Anniversaries, Arab American History, Architecture, Archives, Black Lives Matter, Black Museum Movement, Boards and Governance, Budgets, Citizenship, Civil War, Cold War History, Colleges and Universities, Constitutional History, Construction Projects, Controversy, Culturally Specific Museums, Decolonizing Museums, Dialogue Methods, Difficult History, Disability History, Documentary Films, Empowerment, Environmental History, Federal Government History, Funding, Gender, Genealogy, Genocide, Gentrification, Hiring, Historical Markers, Historical Societies, Human Remains, Immigration and Migration History, Indigenous History, Industrial History, Interactives, International Public History, Interpretation, Jewish History, K-12 History Education, Labor History, Latinx History, LGBTQ+ History, Libraries, Living History, Local History, Maps and Mapping, Maritime History, Military History, Mission and Vision, Multilingualism, Municipal History, Muslim Communities, National Historic Landmarks, National Parks, Non-Profit Management, Photography, Pop-Up Museums, Prisons and Mass Incarceration, Professional Associations, Project Management, Public Archeology, Public Art, Public Health, Public Policy, Racism and Anti-racism, Re-enactments, Regional History, Relevance, Religious History, Repatriation, Science and Technology, Segregation, Sharing Authority, Slavery and Resistance, Social History, Social

Media, Social Services, State History, Suburbs, Training, Urban History, Violence, Visitor Studies, Women's History, and Whiteness.

If readers wish to write an entry or propose a topic, share your ideas with the editors and advisory committee by emailing us at [inclusivehistorian@aaslh.org](mailto:inclusivehistorian@aaslh.org). Include a possible title or topic (generally one word or phrase), one-paragraph summary, and brief bio. While we cannot guarantee that we will accept all proposals, we will discuss them collaboratively and provide feedback. In addition to inviting proposals, we welcome general feedback and suggestions to improve the *Handbook*.

We are excited to share this resource with the widest possible range of history practitioners. Please help by spreading the word, letting us know how you are using (or plan to use) it, and offering feedback on what we could do better. From the project's inception, we have tried to focus squarely on the interests and needs of the *Handbook's* audience, so your voice is important to us. Over the past three years, we have benefited immensely from the generous contributions of many public historians, especially members of AASLH and NCPH. If this project is to succeed and realize fully its potential, however, we need more individuals and organizations to share their insights, experiences, and perspectives with us.

We look forward to hearing from you. The *Handbook* can be found online at: [inclusivehistorian.com](http://inclusivehistorian.com)

*Modupe Labode is a curator of African American social justice history at the National Museum of American History. For twelve years, she taught history, museum studies, and Africana studies at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. She serves on NCPH's board of directors and as lead copy editor of History@Work.*

*Will Walker is associate professor of history at the Cooperstown Graduate Program in Museum Studies, SUNY Oneonta and a lead editor of History@Work.*

*Robert Weible is currently the president of the Schenectady County Historical Society in New York. He served previously as the State Historian of New York and is a past president of the National Council on Public History.*

York City. Twelve on-site vaults store approximately fifty-six thousand cubic feet of archival materials, including hundreds of audio-visual items and two million photographs (the RAC also uses three off-site storage facilities). Each year, four hundred researchers from over two dozen countries travel to Sleepy Hollow, New York, to conduct research at the RAC. More than two thousand others access RAC holdings through remote reference requests. A competitive travel stipend program enables approximately fifty researchers annually to offset their expenses in conducting their work at the RAC.

The idea for a Research & Education division at the RAC emerged a decade ago, bringing together an in-house team of historians, educators, and archivists to carry out public history projects, cultivate new audiences, and work more intensively with the staffs and boards of select depositing organizations. The team's work furthers the RAC mission of access by providing a narrative entry into RAC archival collections. Its newest website, *RE:source*, examines the role philanthropy has played in shaping the non-profit sector and the world we live in today. From the civil rights movement to the environmental movement, from underwriting dance and theater to overseas agricultural development, private money has shaped myriad aspects of social,

political, economic, and cultural life both in the U.S. and globally. The aim of *RE:source* is to bring stories from the history of philanthropy to the general public as well as to a foundation practitioner audience.

One *RE:source* piece delves into how \$35 million from the Ford Foundation created the MBA as we know it today. Another story unveils how the Rockefeller Foundation helped create the Social Security Administration. Philanthropic funds were behind the founding of Lincoln Center, and some of the nation's most renowned regional arts institutions, such as the Guthrie Theater, the Walker Arts Center, Dance Theater of Harlem, and Arena Stage. Fellowships have supported thousands of individuals, including physicist Niels Bohr, economist Milton Friedman, geneticist Barbara McClintock, and author James Baldwin.

*RE:source* aims to tell relevant stories in a journalistic style, using archival images, long-form essays, timelines, and sharable content, revealing the impact of philanthropic giving has had on effecting change—big or small, for better or worse—over the last century.

The RAC has a staff of forty-eight. In addition to its Research & Education division and its facilities and finance teams, its Archival



From our holdings: A teaching "field day" in the Mexican Agriculture Program, launched by the Rockefeller Foundation in the 1940s, signals the beginning of the Green Revolution in agriculture. Rockefeller Foundation records, RAC.

division contains departments dedicated to preservation and collections management, intake and processing, reference services, and digital innovation. By becoming a patron of NCPH, the RAC hopes to connect more vigorously with the public history community. Not only is our work similar to the work of other public history practitioners, but we hope to spread word of our holdings more widely to public history practitioners, in hopes that they may contribute to public discourse and understanding.

*Rachel Wimpee is historian and project director in the Research & Education division at the RAC. She earned her PhD from New York University and initially came to the Archive Center in 2013 as a Mellon/ACLS Public Fellow.*

## 2020 NCPH AWARDS



Help us honor the best in public history!

Submission details at <http://ncph.org/about/awards>

### DUE NOVEMBER 1



#### Book Award

Best public history book of 2018 or 2019



#### Robert Kelley Memorial Award

Distinguished achievement in making history relevant outside of academia



#### Outstanding Public History Project Award

A model of professional public history practice

#### Excellence in Consulting Awards

Outstanding work by consultants and contractors



#### New Professional Travel Awards

2 travel grants to attend #NCPH2020

#### Student Travel Awards

5 travel grants for graduate students to attend #NCPH2020



#### Student Project Award

Travel grant to attend #NCPH2020 recognizing student contribution to the field



# INTRODUCING NCPH'S GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING A MORE ACCESSIBLE MEETING

MEGHAN HILLMAN / MEGHILLM@IUPUI.EDU

Last month the NCPH Board of Directors voted to approve and implement our organization's first conference accessibility plan. This plan, called for as part of our 2017-2022 Long Range Plan, has been in the works for some time. In July, the executive office submitted a draft for review to the Board and the NCPH Diversity and Inclusion Task Force (soon to be a full-standing committee), and now we are excited to share it with all of you: <http://ncph.org/about/governance-committees/ncph-accessibility-guidelines>.

As our annual meeting grows, we seek to ensure that NCPH conferences are accessible to everyone who wants to take advantage of the professional development and networking opportunities that an in-person conference provides. Accessibility is one of the pillars of ethical public history work, and we want to practice what we preach at our own events. We also genuinely believe that making space for all voices is one of the key strengths of NCPH, and that a diversity of perspectives—representing the full spectrum of the human experience—is one of the biggest assets any humanities organization could ever hope for or cultivate.

In short: attending conferences should not be a privilege reserved for the few. Rather, it is the organization's privilege—by which I mean both honor and mandate—to bring public historians of all stripes together, and our imperative to create a conference environment where everyone is welcome and given equal access to the tools for professional success.

Our 2019 conference in Hartford, Connecticut was our largest stand-alone meeting to date. Because our capacity (both in terms of staff time and financial resources) is quite small relative to the impact of the conference, we are

always wrestling with the question of how to grow purposefully and gracefully. There are two phrases in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the United States' landmark civil rights law prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of disability, that I have been thinking about a lot over the last year: "reasonable accommodation" and "undue hardship." They both go right to the crux of this dilemma: how do we enact institutional, wide-sweeping changes in areas we need to improve without scaling back in other critical areas—or endangering our ability to exist at all? What does "reasonable" look like for NCPH, and what's the path forward when we think that still isn't good enough?

It's common to think of these phrases as weasel words that organizations and businesses use to get out of doing more in the way of accessibility. However, I wanted to use them to begin some real institutional soul-searching about what *specifically* NCPH can do better. What money can we allocate for conference accessibility? What staff-time can we pledge to this effort? What are we missing, in terms of how we communicate with presenters, attendees, and volunteers, that might make a big impact on the accessibility and culture of our conferences? Tackling these questions was an opportunity to systematically reconsider our approach to access.

This conference accessibility plan is the result of that soul-searching, but it's not a finished product. It's the starting line, designed to be updated as accessibility standards and our capacity evolve. It's our attempt to lay out for NCPH members and conference attendees exactly what we can and will do in terms of accessibility at all stages of the conference-planning process, from our first site visit to the conference itself: the process for requesting



American Sign Language interpreter translates then-NCPH president Alexandra Lord's welcome at the 2017 NCPH Annual Meeting. Photo courtesy Grace Evers.

accommodations, the timeline, the points of contact, the communications strategy. Many of these things we were doing; we just weren't great at being visible about doing them or talking about why, and that visibility is itself critical advocacy work. Some of these things we did inconsistently when we remembered to do them in the mad rush of conference planning. Codifying them in writing will help make accessibility planning and universal design second-nature to us. A few of these commitments are brand-new, like our intent to provide American Sign Language interpretation at *every* public plenary event going forward.

Another purpose of laying out what we can do now is figuring out how to do more—the aforementioned path forward. This accessibility plan highlights some target areas for future work. NCPH is currently in year two of our 2020 Vision Campaign to grow our endowment to \$1 million by the time of our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary; thanks to donations received since we launched, additional interest from our endowment has allowed us to grow the accessibility line of the budget. The fundraising campaign is already having a tangible impact on our ability to do more for our community of public historians, and we couldn't be more grateful for your support as we grow.

*Meghan Hillman is the NCPH Program Manager.*

## CELEBRATE 40 YEARS OF NCPH IN ATLANTA



Over 900 public historians are expected to attend the 2020 Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. We invite you to raise your institution's

profile by reserving exhibit space, advertising in the conference *Program*, or sponsoring an event. Reach potential customers, partners, or students; promote the latest scholarship, forthcoming titles, and journals from your press; and celebrate the accomplishments of

your organization. For more information, visit: <http://ncph.org/conference/2020-annual-meeting>.

### IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO GET WITH THE PROGRAM

Now that the Program Committee has worked through the session, workshop, and working group proposals for #NCPH2020, we have opened the calls for poster submissions and working group discussants. Check out these calls and their submission forms via <http://bit.ly/NCPH2020CFPs>.

**CALL FOR POSTERS** The poster session is a format for presenters eager to share

their work through one-on-one discussion, and is particularly appropriate where visual or material evidence represents a central component of the project. Poster proposals are due October 7.

### CALL FOR WORKING GROUP

**DISCUSSANTS** Each working group will be led by facilitators who have already proposed the topic. They're looking for 8-12 individuals to join them in preconference online discussion, to exchange brief case statements, and to meet in session during the conference. Submissions to join a working group are due October 1.

# PUBLIC HISTORY NEWS

## National Council on Public History

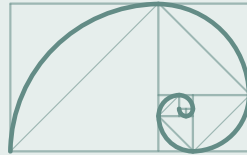
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