



NCPH Annual Meeting  
April 12-15, 2023  
Atlanta, Georgia

## 2023 NCPH Awards

### Outstanding Public History Project Awards

*These awards are presented for work completed within the previous two calendar years that contribute to broader public reflection and appreciation of the past or that serve as a model of professional public history practice. NCPH acknowledges the generous support of Stevie and Ted Wolf that makes this award possible. Award committee members: Ashley Bouknight Claybrooks (chair), Kathleen Franz, Cathy Gudis, and Rebecca Wingo.*

#### Large Institution Award Winner

##### ***Reflections on Grief and Child Loss***

**Callie Hawkins**, President Lincoln's Cottage

The committee was incredibly moved by *Reflections on Grief and Child Loss*. The exhibit represents a wonderful example of how interdisciplinary work can look in museums. The project successfully merged the timelessness of loss with a reinterpretation of the Lincoln family. The reconstruction of the family's history with Mary Lincoln at the center added a thoughtful perspective to the narrative. The museum also managed to preserve their role as a meeting place for the grieving, even throughout the pandemic. The impact of *Reflections on Grief and Child Loss* was both immediate and long term. Along with viewing the exhibit, visitors were encouraged to add the names and stories of their loved ones to the leaves of a memorial tree in the center of the room. The leaves will later be planted as seed paper in the outside memorial garden. The committee found this level of engagement with museum visitors in various phases of the project to be commendable.

#### Small Institution Award Winner

##### ***The Peabody Ballroom Experience***

**Joseph Plaster**, Winston Tabb Special Collections Research Center, Sheridan Libraries

The committee was impressed by *The Peabody Ballroom Experience* as it proved to be a refreshing take on public history. The project is a great example of how to co-create with surrounding communities. The occupation of a traditionally white space with culturally significant concepts from "gay, lesbian, transgender, and gender non-conforming people of color" was outstanding and thought-provoking. The blending of performance, oral history, and archival research was particularly innovative. *The Peabody Ballroom Experience's* unique program composition brings to life an important part of Baltimore's subculture, yet at the same time, transcends the typical local history narrative to truly convey a national story.

#### Honorable Mention

##### ***La Florida: The Interactive Digital Archive of the Americas***

**J. Michael Francis**, University of South Florida, St. Petersburg Campus, and **Rachel L. Sanderson**, University of South Florida, Tampa Campus

## NCPH Book Award

*The NCPH Book Award recognizes outstanding scholarship that addresses the theory and/or practice of public history or that includes the products of public history work. Award committee members: Michelle Delaney (chair), Martin Blatt, and Charlene Fletcher.*

### Award Winner

***All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack, A Black Family Keepsake***

(Random House, 2021)

**Tiya Miles**, Harvard University

Tiya Miles' *All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack, A Black Family Keepsake*, is an elegantly written reflection on intergenerational relationships and a study in extracting and amplifying Black women's voices when the archive demands their silence.

In the 1850s, Ashley, a nine-year-old enslaved girl, was sold away from her mother, Rose, in South Carolina. Rose gave Ashley a hand-sewn sack filled with objects, including pecans, a dress, and a hair braid to aid in her survival and to serve as Ashley's reminder of her mother's love. The book tells a story of love and resilience that survived the horrors of enslavement by centering material culture: Ashley's sack. Miles skillfully unpacks the importance of these objects, thus weaving a powerful account of Black women's history. The archive is all too often shallow in the experiences and triumphs of Black women, yet Miles eloquently turns to art and material culture to illuminate generational love and resilience.

In *All That She Carried*, Miles writes with conviction, sorrow, anger, and love. This is a work of history that is poetic and majestic. Miles follows an object, a sack, through multiple generations of Black women. In doing so, she has produced a meditation on slavery and freedom and the indomitable spirit and will of Black women. Miles's work demonstrates the political choices of what artifacts and documents in history are deemed worthy of preservation and which fall outside the scope of museums and archives. In that sense, her book is a profound critique of the ways public historians have functioned in the past and a deep expression of gratitude to the National Museum of African American History and Culture for the role of curators there in preserving and interpreting the sack.

## Grassroots Public History Award – Atlanta

*This award recognizes an individual or community organization doing important public history work in their community. For the 2022-2023 awards cycle, the Grassroots Public History Award – Atlanta was open to any project completed within the state of Georgia. Award committee members: Liz Ševcenko (co-chair), Romeo Guzmán (co-chair), Brittani Orona, and Mayela Caro.*

### Award Winner

**Chattahoochee Brick Company Descendants Coalition**

The Chattahoochee Brick Company Descendants Coalition (<https://cbcdescendants.org/>) are committed to restoring and preserving the Chattahoochee Brick Company Site (CBC) for its uniquely sacred historical and educational value with an environmental approach. From its founding in 1878, the CBC depended heavily on convict leasing, forced labor of incarcerated people that effectively re-enslaved Black Americans. The Chattahoochee Brick Company Descendants Coalition is driven by dedicated local community leaders and volunteers, not trained as public historians, who are harnessing the memory of the site for healing, education, and reparations. Their work is particularly salient in the context of the flowering of local reparations initiatives around the country, and the new possibilities they represent for public history. The Chattahoochee Brick Company Descendants Coalition's integrated approach to public

history—to remember, repair, and redress—defined around the priorities and perspectives of community leaders, presents a model of public history practice the entire field should learn from.

### **Excellence in Consulting Awards**

*These awards recognize outstanding contributions to the field of public history through consulting or contract work. Award committee members: Lisa Zevorich Susner (chair), Kayla Blackman, Donna Graves, and Melody Hunter-Pillion.*

#### Group Award Winner

#### **Georgia B. Williams Nursing Home Preservation Plan Ethos Preservation and Landmark Preservation**

In their preservation plan for the Georgia B. Williams Nursing Home, Ethos Preservation and subconsultant Landmark Preservation analyze a rare and important structure, a birthing center for African American women, operated by Beatrice Borders from ca. 1941 to 1971 in Camilla, Georgia. The consultants' report provides historical context, a conditions assessment, and recommendations for four phases of preservation, rehabilitation, and interpretation. Ethos Preservation and Landmark Preservation's work highlights the crucial task of preserving the physical remains of a structure, before interpreting for audiences can begin. The consultants' report contains thorough documentation of the building, as well as priorities for preservation work, but they also, crucially, place it and its history in its broader context and highlight it as one of few surviving historical resources related to African American midwifery. The report reveals how the Georgia B. Williams Nursing Home board and stakeholders directed both the visioning and scope of the project with the guidance and tools the consultants provided. The final product provides an excellent introduction to the building and its significance and likely will be invaluable to board members as they seek to raise funds and develop community investment in a museum devoted to Borders' work and the history of African American midwifery more broadly.

#### Group Award Honorable Mention

#### **Connecticut Landmarks Portfolio Assessment**

**Guy Hermann, Sara Zarrelli, and Jacques Brunswick, Museum Insights**

#### Individual Award Winner

#### **Black Montana's Heritage Places**

**Delia Hagen, Hagen Historical Consulting**

With a thorough analysis of Montana's African American history over two centuries, Delia Hagen's multiple property documentation project, *Black Montana's Heritage Places*, provides the Montana Historical Society with a rich tapestry of Montana history that integrates previously under-documented communities. Calling the work "unparalleled in completeness, exactitude, and intellectual rigor," the Montana Historical Society applauds Hagen's work for the manner in which it "ties Montana places with our many human experiences in compelling and exciting new ways." Hagen's research reveals under-represented populations in the American West and incorporates their history into the larger context of Montana and the nation. This examination of Black communities and their histories in Montana breaks new ground, debunking the myth of the West as historically white or a region with conflicts restricted to whites and Indigenous peoples. Hagen provides a framework that complicates Montana history. Although the displacement of African American communities in Montana makes research and interpretation more challenging, Hagen's innovative and exhaustive work reveals what had been hidden for too long. Hagen's project both exhibits exhaustive intellectual rigor and assists the public in understanding not only Montana's Black history, but also state and national history contextually.

## Michael C. Robinson Prize for Historical Analysis

*This biennial award, named for a pioneering public works historian who tirelessly promoted historical research as a component of policy formation, recognizes historical studies that contribute to the formation of public policy. Award committee members: Christine Lamberson (chair), Kenneth Cohen, and Chris Haley.*

### Award Winner

**Idaho's Response to the 1918 Influenza Pandemic: ISHS Briefing Paper No. 1**

**HannaLore Hein**, Idaho State Historical Society

This year's Michael C. Robinson Prize for Historical Analysis is awarded to *Idaho's Response to the 1918 Influenza Pandemic: ISHS Briefing Paper No. 1* by HannaLore Hein. The paper is a shining example of the important role historical research can play in informing policymakers. Written in the summer of 2020 at the request of Idaho's Governor Brad Little, this paper provided the governor and his Coronavirus Working Group with key historical information about the development of Idaho's public health system and the state's response to the 1918 influenza pandemic. As the governor explained, it both informed their decisions and "gave us necessary perspective" about past infrastructure and challenges. Hein highlighted how and why the state's public health system operated as it did, the role of volunteers in fighting the pandemic, and some key areas of struggle for the state in 1918. This information helped policymakers better understand the system they had inherited and to be more aware of potential challenges they could face, such as the consequences of healthcare worker shortages. Further, as the director of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare said, the paper showed the importance of "statewide action" in responding to a pandemic, which was encouraging to their work at hand. This briefing paper itself had a clear and direct influence on public policy. HannaLore Hein and the Idaho Historical Society have gone further, however, as the paper was the first in a new program by the Idaho State Historical Society aimed at providing contextual policy assistance services to the state's executive branch.

## G. Wesley Johnson Award

*Named in honor of the founding editor of The Public Historian, this award recognizes the most outstanding article appearing in the journal during the previous volume year. NCPH acknowledges the generous support of Stan Hordes of HMS Associates in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and many of his friends for underwriting this award. Award committee members: Kaiti Hannah (chair), Sarah Fling, and Steven Mooradian.*

### Award Winner

**"Public History in the Age of Insurrection: Confronting White Rage in Red States,"**

*The Public Historian* Vol 44, No 3

**Brian Murphy**, Pope's Tavern Museum and the Florence Indian Mound Museum, and **Katie Owens-Murphy**, University of North Alabama

This article was chosen by the committee to win the G. Wesley Johnson Award because of the importance of its message and its accessibility and relevance to a broad audience. Not only is the writing engaging, it is also timely and relevant, not just to the specific topic of the January 6, 2021 insurrection but to public historians across the world who are struggling to share histories that have previously been deliberately ignored or obscured. The discussion of the real-world consequences of telling these stories, such as harassment and threats, both in-person and virtually through social media, is eye-opening and perhaps intimidating, but the call to action—inviting public historians (and others) to tell these stories despite potential backlash—ensures that this article does not inspire despair. Instead, it asks for hope

and offers encouragement that these issues can be overcome. This article is a timely reminder of what's at stake for the field of history in these days of extreme political divides.

### **Student Project Award**

*This award is given to an outstanding public history student project initiated as academic coursework and implemented and recognized beyond the classroom for its contribution to the field of public history. Award committee members: Claire Du Laney (chair), Ari Green, Shannon Haltiwanger, Porchia Moore, and Harvee White.*

There were no nominations and no winner, and the funds were reallocated to provide additional student travel awards. Please consider submitting your or your student's project for the 2024 award cycle.

### **New Professional Travel Awards**

*New Professional Travel Awards are for individuals who are new to the field and practice of public history. These two grants assist new professionals in attending the NCPH conference, helping them connect 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. Award committee members: Morgen Young (chair), Bob Carriker, and Taylor Voltz.*

#### HRA Travel Award Winner

**Onyx Montes**, Define American

Onyx Montes earned an MA in Museum & Exhibition Studies from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2021. She works as the Storyteller Support & Advocacy Coordinator at Define American, a culture change organization that "uses the power of narrative to humanize conversations about immigrants." In Montes' role as a museum professional and an art historian, much of her practice centers around advocacy for pay transparency. She seeks to work collectively with others in the field of public history to produce tools and resources that are useful to workers and scholars alike and that shatter any limitations the field may have around pay secrecy.

#### NCPH Travel Award Winner

**Hannah Fradkin**, The Claremont Colleges Library

Hannah Fradkin began her public history career in January 2022, as an archival intern at the Drucker Institute in Claremont, California. In August of that year, she was promoted to lead archivist. In that capacity, she managed existing holdings and processed and cataloged new acquisitions. Fradkin is simultaneously working toward her MA in Cultural Studies and Archival Studies at Claremont Graduate University. In both her professional and academic capacities, she has been proactive in implementing inclusive metadata and highlighting histories that have been silenced.

### **Graduate Student Travel Awards**

*The Graduate Student Travel Awards provide assistance for conference travel costs for five graduate students who will present a session or poster or will participate in a working group at the NCPH annual meeting. Award committee members: Claire Du Laney (chair), Ari Green, Shannon Haltiwanger, Porchia Moore, and Harvee White. This year there are seven recipients, as funds were reallocated from the Student Project Award.*

Congratulations this year go to the following:

**Emma Awe**, Carleton University  
**Natalie Coté**, George Washington University  
**Paige Figanbaum**, University of Nevada Las Vegas  
**Hannah LeComte**, Duquesne University  
**JoCora Moore**, North Carolina State University  
**Kristyn Scorsone**, Rutgers University-Newark  
**Abigail Thomsen**, University of Massachusetts Amherst

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**Congratulations to the 2023 award recipients, and thank you award selection committees!**

**Submissions for the 2024 NCPH Book and Robert Kelley Memorial awards are due November 1, 2023, and all other award submissions are due December 1, 2023. Please see [www.ncph.org](http://www.ncph.org) for details.**

NCPH relies on its endowment to support the awards program and a variety of other programs and projects that fulfill the organization's mission. A primary goal of our *2020 Vision Endowment Campaign* was to "expand travel grants and award offerings to increase diversity and inclusion in the organization and field" and enabled the creation of the Grassroots Public History Award first awarded in 2022. To help continue to grow our future award and travel grant offerings, please consider giving to the NCPH Endowment: <http://ncph.org/giving/endowment>.