

2023-2024 Board of Directors

Officers



Kristine Navarro-McElhaney
President (2022-2024)
Voces Oral History Center, University of Texas at Austin



Denise Meringolo
Vice-President (2022-2024)
University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Denise Meringolo is an Associate Professor of History and Director of Public History at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Her previous service to NCPH includes election to the Board of Directors (2013-2016), membership on the Curriculum and Training Committee (2006-2011) and the Governance Committee (since 2020), and Chair of the Local Arrangements Committee for the 2016 Annual Meeting in Baltimore. Her book, *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks: Toward a New Genealogy of Public History* (University of Massachusetts, 2012) won the 2013 NCPH Book Award. She served as the lead organizer, project editor, and a contributor to a collaborative study, *Radical Roots: Civic Engagement, Public History, and a Tradition of Social Justice Activism* (Amherst College Press, 2021). The resulting essay collection is available as an open-access digital book on the Press website. She also created *Preserve the Baltimore Uprising*, a crowd-sourced community collections project, managed in partnership with the Maryland Center for History and Culture. She won a Whiting Foundation Public Engagement Fellowship (2018-2019) to expand community-centered engagement with the collection. She is an OAH Distinguished Lecturer.



Gregory E. Smoak
Immediate Past President (2022-2024)
American West Center, University of Utah

Gregory E. Smoak is currently the Immediate Past President of the National Council on Public History. His previous service to NCPH includes election to the Board of Directors (2007-2010), Nominating Committee (2015-2017), and chairing the 2016 annual meeting Program Committee. He is director of the American West Center and Associate Professor of History at University of Utah and specializes in American Indian, American Western, Environmental, and Public History. Smoak is the author of *Ghost Dances and Identity: Prophetic Religion and American Indian Ethnogenesis in the Nineteenth Century* and a forthcoming environmental history of Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument. He is currently the principal investigator on several projects for the NPS, BLM, and Nevada Indian Commission. Smoak's association with American West Center began in 1988 and has included projects with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, the Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians, the

Navajo Nation, the Nevada Indian Commission, and the Utah State Division of Indian Affairs. He has served on numerous committees for professional organizations including NCPH, the Organization of American Historians, and the Western History Association.



Sharon M. Leon
Treasurer (2022-2027)
Michigan State University

Sharon M. Leon is an Associate Professor of History and Digital Humanities at Michigan State University, where she specializes in digital methods with a focus on public history. Her first book, *An Image of God: The Catholic Struggle with Eugenics*, was published by University of Chicago Press. Leon is currently at work on a digital project to surface and analyze the community networks and experiences of the cohort of people enslaved and sold by the Maryland Province Jesuits in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. In a related Mellon Foundation-funded project, *On These Grounds*, she is developing a linked data ontology to describe the lived experiences of enslaved people who labored for colleges and universities. Leon is also the long-time director of the software team that designs and supports the *Omeka* web publishing platform.



Ed Roach
Secretary (2022-2025)
Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park

Ed Roach is the historian and resource program manager at Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park in Ohio. Mostly originally from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania - noted as the retirement home of Dwight and Mamie Eisenhower and the early home of Thaddeus Stevens - he received bachelor's and master's degrees in history from Moravian College and Indiana University of Pennsylvania, respectively, and then taught English with the Peace Corps in Ukraine before obtaining a position with the National Park Service as historian at Prince William Forest Park in Virginia. He is the author of *The Wright Company: From Invention to Industry* (Ohio University Press, 2014), and does whatever his cats tell him to do.

Appointed Directors



Stephanie Rowe
Executive Director
National Council on Public History

Stephanie Rowe was appointed NCPH Executive Director in 2016. Stephanie began at NCPH in 2012 as Program Manager, then served as Associate Director. She came to the organization after five years with Museumwise, now the Museum Association of New York, where she served as Program Coordinator and Regional Archivist. A native of New York State, Stephanie earned her BA in Social Studies (2006) from Ithaca College and MA in History Museum Studies (2008) from the Cooperstown Graduate Program. Stephanie is a steering committee member for History Relevance and is active in the National Coalition for History.



Sarah Case
Editor, *The Public Historian*
University of California Santa Barbara

Elected Directors



Vanessa Macias Camacho
2021-2024
El Paso Community College

Vanessa Camacho is an Associate Professor of History at El Paso Community College. She has been a member of NCPH since 2007 when she first joined as a Master's student at New Mexico State University. Vanessa lives in El Paso, Texas, with her husband, Gabriel, and children, José Miguel and Lucia. You can follow her on Twitter and Instagram [@camachov_m](#).



Priya Chhaya
2021-2024
National Trust for Historic Preservation

Priya Chhaya is a public historian and associate director of content for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, where she directs digital content across the National Trust's digital platforms. Over the years, she has volunteered for NCPH in a variety of leadership roles, most recently as co-chair of the NCPH 2020 *Vision* Campaign, and as an affiliate editor for *History@Work*. Priya also sits on the steering committee for the *Inclusive Historians Handbook*, a project co-sponsored by NCPH and the American Association of State and Local History, which supports inclusive and equity-focused historical work in public settings. In addition to considering multidisciplinary storytelling as a means to tell underrepresented histories, Priya self-published a children's book called "The Heart of the River." She has an undergraduate degree in history from the College of William and Mary and an MA in History, concentrating in Public History, from American University. You can learn more at <https://priyachhaya.com/> and on Twitter/Instagram [@priyastoric](#).



Ari Kelman
2021-2024
University of California, Davis

Ari Kelman is Chancellor's Leadership Professor of History and Interim Dean of the College of Letters and Science at the University of California, Davis. He is the author, most recently, of *Battle Lines: A Graphic History of the Civil War* (Hill and Wang, 2015), as well as *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling Over the Memory of Sand Creek* (Harvard University Press, 2013), recipient of several national awards and honors, including the Bancroft Prize, and *A River and Its City: The Nature of Landscape in New Orleans* (University of California Press, 2003), which won the Abbott Lowell Cummings Prize. Kelman's essays and articles have appeared in *Slate*, *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, *The Journal of American History*, *Reviews in American History*, as well as numerous other publications. Kelman has contributed to outreach endeavors aimed at K-12 educators, and to public history projects, including documentary films for the History Channel and PBS's *American Experience* series. He has received many grants and fellowships, including from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Huntington Library; served on a variety of editorial boards, program, and prize committees; and held several administrative posts. He is now working on a book titled, *For Liberty and Empire: How the Civil War Bled into the Indian Wars* and editing the journal *Reviews in American History*.



B. Erin Cole
2022-2025
Independent Museum Professional

B. Erin Cole is an independent historian, museum professional, and artist. They have been working in the museum field for over a decade, with stints at both the Minnesota Historical Society and History Colorado. They specialize in immersive, engaging exhibits about contemporary issues and recent history. They also draw comics about history, mental health, and everyday life.



Cheryl Dong
2022-2025
University of Northern Iowa

Dr. Cheryl X. Dong is the Director of Public History at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). She is currently helping to lead a collaboration between the History Department at UNI and the Iowa Museum Association to create a digital, online encyclopedia for Iowa teachers. Her interest in public history began as an undergrad when she interned as a historical interpreter at the Eisenhower National Historic Site. Since then, she has collaborated with various organizations including the Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies, the Museum of Durham History, and Digital Innovation Lab at University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Her work centers on 20th century African

American history with a focus on Black Power studies. Her book manuscript, *Why Don't You Die for the People? Memory and Martyrdom in the Black Panther Party*, challenges established narratives of violence and the Black Panther Party by showing how the Panthers used confrontations with law enforcement to render visible police brutality and its role in perpetuating racial inequality. She is a recipient of the NCPH New Professional Award for 2021.



Laura Miller

2022-2025

Independent Historical Consultant

Laura Miller is a historical consultant based in Western Massachusetts. She specializes in research, writing, and oral history projects for public history organizations and other nonprofits. Her research interests in environmental history, travel and tourism, and the history of the National Park Service (NPS) have led to several consulting projects for the NPS, including co-authoring a study of the War on Poverty-era Job Corps Conservation Center at Acadia National Park (2021), and writing an administrative history of Adams National Historical Park in Quincy, Massachusetts (2020). She is currently writing an administrative history of Eisenhower National Historic Site in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Before starting her consulting business in 2017, Laura was a historian at the Rockefeller Archive Center in Sleepy Hollow, New York. She earned her PhD in History and MA in Public History from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and is a longtime member of NCPH. She has served in several roles for the organization, including chair of the Digital Media Group (2017-2020), affiliate editor of *History@Work*, and presently, a member of the Professional Development Committee.



Kirsten Delegard

2023-2026

Mapping Prejudice Project, University of Minnesota Libraries

Dr. Kirsten Delegard is one of the co-founders of the award-winning Mapping Prejudice Project. The team behind this effort was inspired by a desire to use history to show how contemporary racial inequalities have been deliberately constructed over many decades. Rooted in public history, it grew into a cutting-edge geospatial research project that uses digital tools to open up new avenues for policy making, scholarship, and community dialogue. A third-generation Minneapolitan, Delegard trained originally as a women's historian and explored the history of women and politics in her early research. More recently she has devoted her energy to public history and unearthing the complex past of her hometown. This focus led to Mapping Prejudice and the Historyapolis Project, which Delegard also founded.

Delegard is a graduate of the Minneapolis Public Schools and Wesleyan University. She also holds a PhD in history from Duke University, where she spent her graduate school years exploring American social movements, comparative women's history, and the history of women and politics in the United States. In addition to her appointment in the University of Minnesota Libraries, Delegard holds faculty affiliations with the History Department, the Department of Geography, Environment and Society, and the Heritage Studies and Public History Program at the University of Minnesota.



Charlene Fletcher
2023-2026
IUPUI and Conner Prairie Historical Park

Dr. Charlene J. Fletcher is a historian, writer, and affiliate faculty in Africana Studies at IUPUI; she also serves as Curatorial Director at Conner Prairie. She holds a PhD in History from Indiana University, specializing in 19th century United States, African American history, and gender studies. Charlene's research and forthcoming book explore the experiences of confined African American women in Kentucky from Reconstruction to the Progressive Era, explicitly illuminating the lives of imprisoned Black women by examining places other than carceral locales as arenas of confinement, including mental health institutions and domestic spaces. Charlene's book, *Confined Femininity: Race, Gender, and Incarceration in Kentucky, 1865-1920* is expected in 2023 and is under contract with the University of North Carolina Press.



Charles Johnson
2023-2026
North Carolina Central University