

Reviews

BOOKS

The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism

By Adam Rome. Cambridge, UK, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001; 299 pp., photographs, notes; cloth \$55.00, paper \$20.00.

During the post-World War II era, the concept of the “suburb” came to define the American character. The mass media embraced this form of development as quintessentially American. Magazines, television, and movies popularized a fictionalized, sanitized (mostly inaccurate) conceptualization of the “burbs.” Following World War II, the Federal Government promoted home ownership through low-interest loans, implemented economic policies that created favorable conditions for the residential construction industry, and established transportation policy that encouraged highways over rail. Public policy and popular culture were the driving forces. People moved in droves to newly urbanizing communities beyond cities, leaving behind central cities and rural areas.

Over the second half of the 20th century, manifestations of large-scale development intruded upon historic land use patterns and significantly altered the country’s cultural and natural landscape. The result was the rapid, homogeneous urbanization of great swaths of the United States, forever altering their unique built and natural attributes. This is “suburban sprawl,” which started in earnest with the post-war building boom and continues today at great cost to the cultural landscape and the environment.

Many authors have studied the phenomenon of urbanization from architectural or urban history, planning, and public policy perspectives. Adam Rome takes a different tack, an academic, environmental history approach focusing on the environmental impact of subdivisions. This new awareness, Rome asserts, in turn gave rise to a new conservation movement that fights for more environmentally-sensitive development.

Bulldozer is not written for the broad audience that popularized *The Geography of Nowhere*, James Howard Kunstler’s critique of urbanization, and *City Life*, Witold Rybczynski’s commentary on the American city, or others from the body of popular work offering criticisms of urbanization. Nor is *Bulldozer* a practitioner’s or activist’s manual like *Save our Land, Save our Towns* by Thomas Hylton, or *Saving America’s Countryside* by Samuel N. Stokes et al., or other books that offer guidance on fighting sprawl and preserving communities and landscapes.¹

Bulldozer is not a historic preservation or architectural history book. But *Bulldozer* is instructive about how the most prevalent development patterns shaped our environmental and land-use ethic. Witold Rybczynski laments that “‘suburb’ is one of those words that is difficult to use in a precise discussion because it describes something that has become a stereotype. And like most stereotypes, it is composed of clichés.”² As an environmental historian, Rome could be forgiven for depending on the shorthand term “suburb.” But, in fact, Rome’s reliance on the suburb stereotype mars this otherwise thoroughly researched and precise book.

Rome is less interested in the ranch houses, split levels, and Cape Cods that populated post-war subdivisions than he is in the groundwater, habitats, and soil that these subdivisions disrupted. Similarly, *Bulldozer* focuses less on William Levitt and his colleagues than on U.S. Senator Henry Jackson of Washington State and the cadre of environmental advocates who rose up in defiance of the “bulldozer in the countryside” development ethic.

After Rome’s first chapter—which retraces well-known ground for those familiar with the themes of post-war urbanization—Rome offers readers a fresh perspective on the results of suburbanization. *Bulldozer*’s central chapters offer Rome’s greatest contributions to a new understanding of the suburbs’ impact on the environment. Construction of new housing exploded from an average annual rate of 300,000 units during the 1930s to 1 million in 1946 and 2 million in 1950. The majority of these housing starts were in new subdivisions beyond city borders. To the detriment of the environment, Rome suggests, the majority of the builders of these subdivisions were primarily concerned with the bottom line. Developers wanted to provide large quantities of housing at affordable prices while generating high profits. In controlling construction costs, developers rarely considered corollary costs to the environment.

Developers were reluctant to construct energy efficient housing because of increased costs regardless of the environmental benefits and despite advances in heating and cooling systems and insulating techniques. Further, developers acquiesced to opposition from energy producers, low energy prices, and homebuyers hesitant to embrace the nontraditional designs of new solar and energy efficient houses. Only when energy prices rose did the public demand more from developers. Similarly, developers embraced the septic tank over more expensive public sewer systems until regulation and market forces required them to change. With as many as 45 percent of the subdivisions built during the period relying on septic tanks, the widespread

failure of tanks led to more than just unpleasant complications for homeowners. Groundwater contamination and associated public health risks triggered government involvement, stricter regulations, and greater public scrutiny.

The environmental consequences of subdivisions, according to Rome, eventually came to the fore. Perhaps nothing may have been more important in launching the environmental movement in the United States than the loss attributable to subdivisions of open space, rural landscapes, and wildlife habitat. The rapid loss of countryside sounded alarms for birders, hunters, and fishermen, and raised the issue for civic groups, academia, government, and the media. New environmental concerns emerged as developers placed subdivisions on hill-sides and in flood plains and wetlands. The resulting erosion, flooding, surface and groundwater contamination, and habitat loss led to an awakening of organized environmental activists calling for stricter regulation of developers and Federal laws protecting the environment.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 was enacted at the same time that environmental advocates were agitating, with limited success, for greater environmental protections. Both movements wrestled with property rights advocates over appropriate land-use controls. Yet, neither preservationists nor environmentalists have learned enough from each other to advance their common interests. With this in mind, *Bulldozer* provides an opportunity for cross-disciplinary understanding. *Bulldozer* offers an instructive, fresh perspective on the massive post-war spread of urbanization, the origins of environmentalism and government response to it, and ongoing fights over land-use and property rights.

Scott Whipple
Maryland Historical Trust

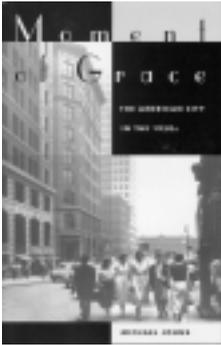
1. James Howard Kunstler, *The Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America’s Man-Made Landscape* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993); Witold Rybczynski, *City*

Life: Urban Expectations in a New World (New York: Scribner, 1995); Thomas Hylton, *Save our Land, Save our Towns: A Plan for Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, PA: RB Books, 1995); Samuel N. Stokes, et al., *Saving America's Countryside: A Guide to Rural Conservation* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

2. Rybczynski, 176.

Moment of Grace: The American City in the 1950s

By Michael Johns. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003; 148 pp., illustrations, notes, index; cloth \$29.95.



This compelling book describes American cities at mid-20th century, when downtowns were packed with throngs of people, neighborhoods offered the full range of commercial and social services, and new suburbs retained strong ties to the city. The author traces

the waves of development and demolition that caused tight-knit cities to unravel and inspired the national historic preservation movement in the 1960s. This book also describes the many attractive aspects of urban life that the preservation community attempted to revive in the past four decades.

According to Johns, a professor of geography at the University of California, Berkeley, the American city reached its consummate expression in the 1950s. Downtowns were compact and intimate places that served the cities' economic and cultural needs. Neighborhoods developed around urban manufactories and provided essential shops and services within walking distance. The suburbs relied upon cities for jobs and goods.

As described by Johns, the 1950s also marked a decade when cities began to fragment. Today, downtowns are largely populated by offices, hotels,

sports arenas, and entertainment centers as well as by empty lots and abandoned commercial buildings. Older neighborhoods provide housing but are separated from desirable shopping and employment opportunities. The suburbs are largely removed from the fortunes of the central city.

Why did we allow cities to decline in the United States? Johns contends that the post-World War II period was defined by a nearly "blind faith in progress...a forward-looking attitude that lacked nostalgia." American culture was entranced with everything that was new, modern, and efficient. And, "Americans abused nature on a colossal scale in the '50s: drivers tossed garbage from cars, engineers dammed rivers unnecessarily, scientists tested hydrogen bombs above ground, and the factories of the world's mightiest industrial power spewed untreated waste into rivers, lakes, and the air."

Other forces were also at work. People abandoned communal trains, streetcars, and trolleys and took up their individualistic automobiles. The Federal Government offered "heaps of money" for urban renewal and highway construction and subsidized the kind of suburban development that drained the central cities of people and investment. Office towers rose in outlying suburbs and exurbs. Highways became the new infrastructure for the metropolitan area and included major routes that ran through the inner city. Younger families moved away from their ethnic neighborhoods and into new suburban subdivisions that offered a "stronger blend of Americanism."

But Johns does not view the 1950s American city through rose-colored glasses. He addresses the oppressive effects of racial segregation on cities. As cities slipped into a downward spiral, poor neighborhoods became desperate ghettos that filled with rage and exploded during the race riots of the 1960s. Public housing projects that had been shaped by sensitive community planning principles during the 1930s became mass-produced during the 1950s and herded families into superblocks.

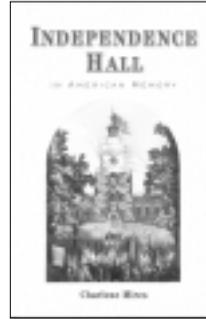
Why is this book important to heritage stewardship? First, it describes historical forces that led to passage of environmental legislation, including historic preservation laws and regulations at the Federal, State, and local levels from the 1960s to today. Second, memories of cities of the 1950s have motivated historic preservationists for the past 40 years—since passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Preservationists have tried to bring new life to otherwise abandoned central cities and older neighborhoods through incentives and advocacy programs. With these tools, preservationists transformed former industrial warehouses into residential condominiums, surplus school buildings into elderly housing, and abandoned office buildings into hotels. Older neighborhoods were revitalized through return-to-the-city programs, even if the neighborhoods rarely possessed adequate commercial and social services.

The irony is that we now experience the 1950s American city only in other countries that have broader and stronger land-use controls. Americans tour these countries to admire the kind of cities that at one time were found in the United States. The 1950s American city probably will never grace our own country again. The American city of the future will be another kind of entity. And preservation and conservation are well-established forces that will shape that future.

Antoinette J. Lee
National Park Service

Independence Hall in American Memory

By Charlene Mires. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002; 350 pp., illustrations, notes, index; cloth \$34.95.



Independence Hall in downtown Philadelphia is—without question—one of the most revered places in this country, an American icon. Site of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and scene of the Constitutional Convention,

Independence Hall was the stage *extraordinaire* for the larger-than-life personalities of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin; and is known to all Americans as the birthplace of American freedom.

In this wonderful and insightful book, Charlene Mires argues that these aspects of the building's history, while central to the history of the Nation's founding, obscure the larger and just as relevant story of Independence Hall beyond 1787. "To see Independence Hall as a place with a long history in an American city does not diminish its significance," she argues, "but rather enhances it." The complete history of the Pennsylvania State House, as the building was known throughout the 18th century, not only enhances our sense of the past but, more importantly, illuminates Independence Hall as a "place where successive generations have struggled to define the essence of American national identity."

Independence Hall is one of those books that speaks to the core of what drives preservation and interpretation not only in the National Park Service but throughout the preservation community. Preservation is fundamentally about choices—choices about what gets preserved, how buildings are preserved, what stories are told, which groups

are perceived as the primary audience, and whether the stories confirm existing beliefs or challenge visitors to think differently about what they think that they know. Many historic places, including many within the National Park System, have chosen to present a story of consensus and not of conflict. Mires believes that the complexity of the past must be reflected in these presentations to be useful to the present. In particular, she sees an Independence Hall that is “very crowded with history, memory, and the struggles of constructing and preserving a nation.”

In our desire to focus on Independence Hall as the “birthplace of freedom,” we have, according to Mires, shadowed and, in many instances, ignored stories that relate to and even enhance the grand deliberations of the Founding Fathers. However, still more and very relevant stories abound. Post-1787 United States history revolved around the issues of slavery and the growing dichotomy between the bold statements regarding freedom found in the Declaration of Independence and the recognition of slavery in the Constitution. The tension between the two documents provides rich material to examine the meanings of freedom among inheritors of the American Revolution.

For example, the 1780 session of the Pennsylvania Assembly, held in the Pennsylvania State House, passed America’s first law ordering the abolishment of slavery. Although it was a gradual emancipation law, Pennsylvania is recognized as the first of the Northern States to take this step.¹ In 1793, the United States Congress, deliberating in the State House, passed the first Fugitive Slave Law presaging the more controversial act by the same name of 1850. During the 1840s, Pennsylvania abolitionists used the contradictions represented by Independence Hall to stage an anti-slavery rally in Independence Square. At the event, the abolitionist speaker, Frederick Douglass, addressed the striking contrasts between the image of Independence Hall and the persistence of slavery in the South.

The growing issue of constitutionally defined freedom and slavery returned to Independence Hall the following decade in the U.S. District Court on the second floor. During this period, the court heard several cases resulting from the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. The most celebrated of these was the trial of the Christiana defendants. Attempting to thwart the capture of a runaway slave, a crowd of blacks and whites in Christiana, Pennsylvania, resisted and killed the pursuing slave owner. The 1851 trial of 33 blacks and 5 whites on charges of treason for interfering with the Fugitive Slave Act drew national attention and provided attorneys on both sides with opportunities to connect the offense with the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. All of the defendants were found not guilty. According to Mires, this rich history should be included in the educational presentations of Independence Hall.

All of these stories, and many more in *Independence Hall*, complement the dominant 18th-century story of independence and, more importantly, illustrate that independence and liberty, once declared, were debated and contested by post-Revolutionary generations. Indeed, this book aggressively engages the important concept of memory as a contested landscape. The idea of contesting public memory depends on the recognition that many versions of the past conflict with each other. The preservation of buildings presents preservationists not only with choices regarding treatment, but also with the stories to be told. Such decisions revolve around remembering and forgetting stories of the past. Mires reminds us that remembering and forgetting are “fundamental in the formation of individual and collective identities.”

Through complicated dynamics, societies choose which aspects of their past should be remembered and which forgotten. Independence Hall, she concludes, has powerful stories to tell—stories of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, to be sure, but stories yet untold of successive gen-

erations of Americans constructing a Nation “through the memory-work of commemoration, preservation, and dissent.” Historic buildings are places of history, but they are also, Mires observes, “places of memory where we continually interact with the past and sustain our ideas of what it means to be a nation.”

While focused on the preservation, commemoration, and interpretation of a very important remnant of the American past, *Independence Hall* is relevant to cultural resources professionals everywhere. Mires’ work creates an important framework for the business of preservation and how the choices that we make affect public perceptions of the past and the development of society. This book is required reading for all of us engaged in the work that we call historic preservation.

Dwight T. Pitcaithley
National Park Service

1. While Pennsylvania gets credit for being the first state to outlaw slavery, the territory of Vermont prohibited slavery in 1777.

Creating Colonial Williamsburg

By Anders Greenspan. Washington, DC, and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002; x + 212 pp., photographs, notes, bibliography of further reading, index; cloth \$45.00; paper \$17.95.

No other historic town in the United States has been so scrutinized as Colonial Williamsburg. Anders Greenspan gives us an assessment that is decidedly different from the one anthropologists Richard Handler and Eric Gable offered in *The New History in an Old Museum*.¹ Handler and Gable depicted Colonial Williamsburg’s modern social history interpretive strategies as corporate-controlled and ineffectively delivered to audiences by the institution’s 400 costumed interpreters. In

stark contrast, *Creating Colonial Williamsburg* presents a balanced critique, leavened with succinct, thorough historical context. Greenspan argues that the history of creating Colonial Williamsburg holds the key to understanding the powerful influences that have shaped the institution’s public presentations of the past and the ghosts of interpretation that still inhabit this cultural icon.

Rockefeller money and political ideology shaped and drove the enterprise from its inception until the mid-1970s. Rockefeller’s largesse is well known, but Greenspan emphasizes the time and personal attention that John D. Rockefeller, Jr., invested in Colonial Williamsburg from 1926 until his death in 1960. Not only did he enjoin his own ideals with the restoration process, but also by restoring a colonial town—and with it an appreciation of traditional values—Rockefeller sought to distance himself from his father’s world of industrial might. He preferred his legacy to be “a tribute to those individuals who had created a nation based on liberty, democracy, and the worth of the individual.”

Wealth combined with personal motive was a formidable force and John D. Rockefeller, III, went even further in the post-World War II years. The war itself changed the way Americans, including historians, perceived the past; and although the propagandistic use of history was more subtle during World War II than during the Great War, American history nonetheless was harnessed to serve the state. As Greenspan explains in the third chapter, Colonial Williamsburg played a prominent role in the war effort with troop education programs designed to inspire young men to fight for democratic ideals. When John D. Rockefeller, III, assumed control of Colonial Williamsburg in 1949, however, he brought with him a Cold War belief in “dynamic Americanism” and, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State, used Colonial Williamsburg to promote “the virtues of the United States rather than merely warning of the evils of communism.”

Greenspan notes that the Rockefellers could have used Colonial Williamsburg to influence desegregation in the post-war period but did not. Here Greenspan is at his best, acknowledging on the one hand that Colonial Williamsburg simply wrote African Americans out of its storyline about a Nation based on liberty, democracy, and the worth of the individual, and then ignored for nearly two decades Thad Tate's 1957 study revealing that slaves accounted for 50 percent of Williamsburg's population during the colonial era.² On the other hand, Greenspan points out that Virginia is, after all, a Southern State and that because a substantial percentage of visitors came from the South, Colonial Williamsburg gauged public opinion and "waited until there was a greater acceptance of the role of blacks in American history."

If inclusive history did not come fast enough for many of Colonial Williamsburg's critics, things changed after direct family control ended in the mid-1970s. Professional historians then began to steer toward a new thematic interpretive program infused with social history. As evidence of the change, history collided with public values and expectations in 1994 when Colonial Williamsburg presented a carefully planned slave auction re-enactment. Greenspan may indeed understate the resulting firestorm: "Such divisions over the representation of slavery revealed that Colonial Williamsburg would have a difficult time in promoting its desire to re-create the past more accurately."

Greenspan summarizes the historical ties between Colonial Williamsburg and the National Park Service, noting that the restoration of Williamsburg figured prominently in the 1930-31 effort to create Colonial National Monument in Yorktown and Jamestown, Virginia, which was designated as a unit of the National Park System in 1936. But his focus on institutional history leaves the ties between Colonial Williamsburg and the National Park Service largely unexamined.

Toward the end of the book, Greenspan suggests that Colonial Williamsburg strengthened the historic preservation movement by popularizing historic preservation. Greenspan does not develop this idea into an argument, but his suggestion raises an intriguing point about the tangled roles of public and private funding in the history of historic preservation. While popular magazine articles of the 1930s praised the unfolding restoration of Colonial Williamsburg financed by private wealth, the National Park Service quietly spent millions of New Deal dollars on preservation and played a parallel and significant role in professionalizing historic preservation.

This aside takes nothing away from Greenspan's achievement. *Creating Colonial Williamsburg* is expertly researched and beautifully written—a sympathetic yet unapologetic examination of America's most famous historic townscape.

Rebecca Conard

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1. Richard Handler and Eric Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

2. Although the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation finally published Tate's work in 1965 under the title *The Negro in Eighteenth-Century Williamsburg*, Greenspan notes on page 144 that as late as the mid-1970s, Tate's scholarship still had not been incorporated into the information provided to public audiences by front-line staff interpreters.

Benjamin Shambaugh and the Intellectual Foundations of Public History

By Rebecca Conard. Iowa City: Iowa University Press, 2002; 266 pp., photographs, index; cloth \$32.95.

Museum and cultural resource management professionals in public history can readily point to pioneers and mentors dating back at least 100 years. Yet most scholars in the steadily increasing number

of graduate programs in university-based public history programs tend to argue that public history, as it is practiced today, has roots no deeper than 1976—the year that the University of California, Santa Barbara founded what is considered the first academic public history program. This intellectual disconnect persists, in part, because the term “public history” is assigned to a broad, multidisciplinary range of activities and interpretive products from exhibits to documentaries and from cultural geography to museum studies. It rarely has been defined with any precision.

In *Benjamin Shambaugh and the Intellectual Foundations of Public History*, Rebecca Conard allows her subject to define the term. Conard makes a strong case that Shambaugh was a pioneer in the field of public history. Shambaugh was hired as a professor of political science at the University of Iowa in 1896, a position that he held through the 1930s. In 1897, he became a member of the Board of Curators of the State Historical Society of Iowa, and in 1907 he was formally named to the position of superintendent and editor. His long career placed him precisely in the intellectual space between the university and the public. As summarized by Conard, Shambaugh defined what he called first “applied history” and later “commonwealth history” as the practice of “collecting, preserving, publishing and using history for the greater good of the state.” In other words, Shambaugh viewed the “public” primarily in terms of its civic nature.

Conard’s biography of Shambaugh is framed to some degree as a response to Peter Novick’s definitive study of the professionalization of history. In *That Noble Dream*, Novick pays little attention to the careers of historians working outside of universities, except to imply that their work embodies qualities he views as “pre-professional” or amateur.¹ Conard attempts to remedy this reading by viewing Shambaugh’s work as a product of the “New Historians.”

A product of Progressive-era thinking, New History took shape among a small number of historians between 1897 and 1912. Conard summarizes the four main contributions that New Historians made to historical study. First, they were interested in everyday life and local trends. Second, they advocated a broad view of political life, focusing more on diplomacy and civic action than military history. Third, they recognized history’s potential to help cultivate broad-minded citizens. Finally, they sought to expand the scope of historical inquiry to include the life of ordinary people. While Novick argues that the New Historians were significant because they influenced a later generation of scholars, Conard demonstrates that their philosophy shaped the intellectual foundations of public history. Viewed through this lens, Benjamin Shambaugh comes into focus as a pivotal figure.

Shambaugh brought public history to the university. He made sure that the State Historical Society was housed on the University of Iowa campus and linked his work as a professor to his agenda as the director of the society. He was involved with the American Historical Association’s Archives Commission as well as the Conference of State and Local Historical Societies. Over the years, he led the State Historical Society to a new level of professionalism. He revamped the Society’s publications and insisted on the best methods for preserving the Society’s records and ensuring their accessibility to scholars.

Shambaugh’s two major contributions to public history were the Applied History Research Laboratory and the Commonwealth Conference. Through the laboratory, Shambaugh developed long-term research projects on Iowa history. He provided a select group of professional historians with research facilities and funds for travel. Between 1909 and 1930, this group published the *Applied History Series*, a collection of detailed studies of Iowa’s economic, labor, and social legislation history. These volumes embody Shambaugh’s belief that well-researched historical studies could be

practically applied toward efforts to solve social problems.

Shambaugh successfully argued that applied history was a legitimate function of State-supported universities because “it is utterly futile for us to talk about high minded citizenship and ideals in public service without seriously endeavoring to provide that special training which will make men really capable and efficient public servants.” Reflecting the same ideals, Shambaugh’s Commonwealth Conferences, held between 1923 and 1930, brought together a broad cross-section of Iowa citizens to discuss policy and governance.

During the course of her research, Conard made use of an unpublished 1940s biography written by Jacob Swisher, a Shambaugh protege. The unpublished text posed problems because it tended to gloss over difficult periods in Shambaugh’s career, and placed enormous emphasis on Shambaugh’s personal and professional relationship with his wife, Bertha Shambaugh. Wisely, Conard uses the text like a diary, placing entire sections of the Swisher biography in carefully marked sections outside of her own text. She uses these lengthy quotations to emphasize what a Shambaugh confidante would recognize as important without losing her own perspective and critical distance.

By allowing Shambaugh to speak through Swisher to, and against, the echo of Peter Novick’s historical study, Conard demonstrates in a masterful and meaningful way that public history has deep intellectual roots and a long professional trajectory. Yet her final chapter argues precisely the opposite. Why? Peter Novick’s argument is grounded in an assumption that university-based scholarship ultimately represents the highest level of professional achievement. Accepting this premise forces Conard to gauge public history’s professionalism as a product of its location in the academy. From this perspective, public history’s logical development is nearly impossible to perceive. Conard argues that Shambaugh’s career, while significant in establish-

ing the roots of public history, has no tangible connection to the profession’s fits and starts between 1930 and today.

But anyone working in the field of cultural resource management can attest that Shambaugh’s work demonstrates the persistence of the same conflicts and issues decade after decade. Shambaugh felt the need to explain the public utility of historical research and the value of his programs to the university. He faced harsh criticism from academics who found the term “applied history” too vague, and who viewed the *Applied History Series* as lacking intellectual autonomy and a truly fresh perspective.

Conard’s biography is well written and interesting, and her strategies for engaging in dialog with a variety of texts produce a fresh method for defining and assessing public history. However, Conard joins countless other scholars in viewing public history as merely a younger sibling of university-based historical scholarship. Public historians are expected to engage in a kind of heteroglossia—speaking on multiple levels, within multiple contexts—to audiences whom they can imagine and compose but never actually be certain they know. Viewing public history professionals strictly in terms of their relationship to academic history programs narrows our perspective of the field and places public history practitioners in an inherently untenable position. It measures public scholarship in terms of professional markers that only make sense in the context of the academy.

Denise Meringolo

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1. Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

*Restoring Women's History Through
Historic Preservation*

Edited by Gail Lee DuBrow and Jennifer B. Goodman. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003; 428 pp., photographs, appendices, notes, index; cloth \$49.95.



This volume amply illustrates the unruly, untidy, and occasionally undisciplined practices required to reintroduce women into their natural habitat in historic landscapes and buildings dominated by stories about great men.

The essays resemble a gathering of friends who know one another so well that they talk over each other, finish each other's sentences, and steal words from each other's mouths. Indeed, efforts to bring women's presence to the past have centered to date around a few well-connected, well-known leaders, who work diligently on their separate goals and come together every few years to learn from and support each other, and to discuss and plot new strategies and work. *Restoring Women's History Through Historic Preservation* reads like a cookbook for this first generation. It demonstrates that the time is ripe to move beyond the tight network of committed women's history preservationists, as well as to focus more carefully on what can be done in separate fields to support a "more democratic and inclusive vision" of historic preservation.

The field of historic preservation, where the relationship between disciplines contesting to document, preserve, and educate the public about history through the built environment can range from barren to very fruitful, is equally untidy. Curators, archeologists, landscape architects, and planners look for significance in physical evidence, while historians and ethnographers, familiar with oral and written tradition, use documentary evidence

within broad historical themes. Lack of familiarity with written sources can lead to judging something as significant, which document-based scholars know to be a normative feature of a historic period, or to making conclusions that are unsupported either by the archeological record or by secondary sources. Meanwhile, document-based scholars regularly overlook or misread evidence of human activity in material culture, the landscape, and the built environment. Bringing disparate disciplines to bear on the role of women further complicates already tenuous connections.

Cultural resources professionals who have challenged the methods and theories of their respective fields to include gender as a basic category of analysis have had varying degrees of success, resulting in new work on women's history from several disciplinary perspectives. Site-based staff and policymakers who rely on this work to support their efforts to incorporate women's experiences in preserved landscapes, historic sites, and educational programs, may lack training to assess what they are reading. *Restoring Women's History through Historic Preservation* documents the last decade of efforts to return women's presence to historic sites and landscapes by reaching across multiple boundaries.

Featuring presentations from three national conferences between 1994 and 2000, as well as a few essays produced for the volume, *Restoring Women's History* aims to bring "the best work together under one cover." Nineteen selections are arranged in five parts: 1) surveying the work of women in historic preservation, 2) assessing interpretive strategies, 3) using resource or building type analysis as new primary sources about women's lives, 4) showcasing "exemplary" projects, and 5) evaluating Federal policy in the United States and Canada.

The structure occasionally obscures an essay's intent, as when a piece on preserving gay and lesbian sites in general is placed in the section on "exemplary projects" rather than in the section cri-

tiquing Federal preservation policy in the United States, or when chapters on preservation practice in Georgia and West Virginia are placed in different sections. This is exacerbated by the bane of conference proceedings: many selections have appeared elsewhere, overlap significantly, or reference the same organizations, sites, programs, conferences, events, and publications. One wishes for more editorial control over repetitious references and sections, and for a single bibliography to minimize wading through footnotes for each essay.

That being said, what a glorious conversation this book reveals! It embraces the history of nurses and librarians through the built environment, the folkways of Los Angeles prostitutes through archeological evidence, issues of gender in preservation practice, and strategies for reclaiming histories whose neglected buildings have been lost. The author list reads like a “who’s who” of preservation in Canada and the United States, with essays by Carol Shull, Alan McCullough, Dolores Hayden, Page Putnam Miller, Patricia West, Edith Mayo, and more. If there is one book to have on your shelf about preserving women’s history, this is it.

Yet there is much more work to be done. To date only a few States have comprehensively surveyed properties relevant to women’s history, in spite of presidential and congressional mandates. (Leslie Sharp’s essay on the Georgia survey provides a good model.) Evidence of women’s experiences encoded in the built environment is underutilized. (Essays by Abigail Van Slyck on libraries and by Annmarie Adams on nurses’ residences point the way.)

Telling the stories of women’s lives at historic sites requires knowledge, patience, and supportive colleagues. Patricia West and Edith Mayo provide information and advice; Kim Moon discusses the project that provided a structure for statewide collaborative efforts in Pennsylvania; Allan McCullough and Carol Shull reflect on preservation policy in Canada and the United States, where

divergent commemorative strategies illustrate that process can hinder or help efforts to include women.

Interestingly, this volume appears just as the National Collaborative for Women’s History Sites gains its nonprofit status. The collaborative, fostered by several of the authors featured in *Restoring Women’s History Through Historic Preservation*, is a membership organization that supports the agenda richly canvassed by this book.

Vivien Ellen Rose
National Park Service

Polly Bemis: A Chinese American Pioneer

By Priscilla Wegars. Cambridge, ID: Backeddy Books, 2003; 24 pp., illustrations, biographical notes; cloth \$21.00.

Polly Bemis may not yet be a familiar name in American history, but in her new book for children, Priscilla Wegars creates a captivating portrait of the unmatched contributions of this Chinese immigrant. Wegars wrote her dissertation on the history and archeology of the Chinese in northern Idaho from 1880 to 1910, and this research ultimately led her to Polly Bemis. Because Wegars has selected fourth-grade students as the primary audience for this particular work, she begins her story by locating Bemis’ life within the context of United States history, and with an overview of the limited available information. Wegars writes—

Although Idaho’s Polly Bemis is the Pacific Northwest’s most famous Chinese American woman, almost nothing is known about her life or her family except that she was born in northern China, near Beijing on September 11, 1853. The same year, Abraham Lincoln and his wife Mary celebrated the

birth of their last child. Polly arrived in Idaho in 1872 age eighteen. After living there for more than sixty years, Polly Bemis died on November 6, 1933, when she was eighty years old. This is a true story.

As an educational tool, the book provides valuable insight for students on the struggles that immigrant women faced in the rural Northwest at the turn of the century. Interestingly, as Wegars points out in her biographical note at the end of the book, Bemis died in 1933, 10 years before repeal of the law barring immigrants from becoming citizens. Nonetheless, Wegars presents her as an American hero with an independent spirit and a unique concern for children.

Like a good field trip, *Polly Bemis* has a core of important educational information, as well as vivid historical details that capture the reader. After being sold into slavery in China, Bemis then traveled to the town of Warren, Idaho, and in 1872 was purchased by a Chinese man who later helped her to establish her freedom (according to Wegars there is no record of how this happened). Later, Bemis went to work for, and in 1894 married, Charlie Bemis, and the two moved to a small ranch in the Salmon River Canyon, north of Warren. For the benefit of her young readers, Wegars accentuates the richness of Polly and Charlie's life on the river, and adds interesting information such as what they grew in their garden, the strategies that they used to visit their neighbors on the river, and how for a short time the couple kept a mountain lion as a house pet. The book does not contain a map, however, which might be a useful aid for some students who are unfamiliar with the geography of the Northwest.

Given her enjoyment of life on the river as well as the initial challenges that Bemis faced in the process of establishing herself in America, it may come as a surprise to some readers that she opted to move back to Warren in 1922 after the death of her husband. According to Wegars, Bemis welcomed the change, which included her first stay at

a public hotel and her first visit to a movie. While living in Warren, Bemis became friends with Johnny Carrey and his younger sister Gay, who were both elementary students staying in town during the academic year because their family's home was too far away. Aware of the fact that girls, unlike boys, could not reside at public hotels without their parents, as well as limitations that her own lack of formal education had caused her, Bemis invited Gay to stay at her house during one school year. Once again, Wegars adds details about picnics and fishing trips that Bemis enjoyed with Gay and Johnny, which has an air of familiarity that may remind readers of their own time spent with a favorite relative.

Educators will be interested to know that in her acknowledgements, Wegars makes special mention of the "numerous Idaho fourth-graders and their teachers" who contributed to this book. Wegars painstakingly portrays Polly Bemis as a historical figure who fills a void within many American history textbooks. Wegars hopes that this book will help dispel the myth that all American pioneers came from Europe. Wegars states that "the book will help students to see Polly as a person who overcame many difficult circumstances, but whose strength of character enabled her to overcome these adverse influences and become respected and admired by everyone who knew her, even during a time when most people of Chinese ancestry faced a great deal of prejudice simply because of their race."¹

Wegars dedicates her book to Johnny Carrey who provided some insight about Bemis before he died in 2002. In addition, Wegars also includes two significant photographs: one of Polly in her wedding dress and another of Charlie. These two photographs will be of particular interest to young readers because Bemis gave them to Gay Carrey before she died. The realization that Bemis entrusted these historic documents to an individual of approximately their same age may give students an opportunity not only to consider how history is

recorded, but also the personal relevance that history has for them.

Anne Eigeman

*American Association of State Colleges
and Universities*

1. Telephone conversation with Dr. Priscilla Wegars,
June 16, 2003.

*The Unfinished Bombing: Oklahoma City
in American Memory*

By Edward T. Linenthal. New York: Oxford
University Press, 2001; ix + 304 pp., photographs,
drawings, notes, index; paper \$16.95.

Landscape, place, and memory can powerfully influence our understanding of historical reality. Historians have become fascinated with the interplay of these three forces and have analyzed the ways that Americans confront their past and shape their future beliefs or understandings. By examining, for example, battlefield memorialization, memorial statuary, and memorial landscapes, historians have explored the dynamic process of protest as individuals and groups struggle over the ownership and meaning of these special places over time. Usually, the memorial moments under consideration are positioned securely in times past. Edward Linenthal's *The Unfinished Bombing* plunges readers into the challenges associated with the memorial process related to a very recent event: the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

Linenthal's study begins with the bombing of the Murrah building on April 19, 1995, and concludes with the memorial's dedication in 2000. What intrigued him was not only the story of the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation, but also the ways in which the bombing impacted the Nation's imagination. It became a canvas upon which citizens defined as well as contemplated the

community's and the Nation's past, present, and future.

What was larger than the bombing itself, Linenthal argues, was the manner in which a number of trends within the larger world of memorialization converged. Memorialization has long been a way for groups to stake out space and make an imprint upon an area's cultural and political consciousness. Usually a significant period of time will elapse before the memorialization process begins. What was striking about Oklahoma City was that it seemed to begin in a heartbeat, with grieving, remembering, and sanctifying all entangled.

As a result, the memorial process became more democratic as a range of individuals, however far removed from the event or people involved, participated in acts of remembrance. Linenthal suggests that the interest in memorializing the bombing represented a shift in the way American culture accommodates sites of violence. Instead of following more common responses to such sites—modest remembrance or obliteration—the Oklahoma City bombing generated an intense desire to ensure that the event would not be forgotten. The outcome, he concludes, was a memorial process that drew on past efforts and took on a particular character based on family members' and survivors' desires for remembering the victims.

Linenthal identifies four primary narratives that emerged to interpret the Oklahoma City bombing. The "progressive narrative" stressed the possibility of rebuilding and renewal as the community and the Nation overcame the challenges posed by the tragedy. The "redemptive narrative" drew on religion and concentrated on the opportunity for good to triumph over evil. The "toxic narrative" reflected the anger and bitterness over lives lost, expectations shattered, and physical and emotional injuries. The fourth narrative that Linenthal suggests, "patriotic sacrifice," revolved around the decision to place the Oklahoma site among the memorials administered by the National Park

Service. This is Linenthal at his best, identifying and exploring the many stories and contested visions about an event.

The heart of Linenthal's study is his analysis of the images and symbols that surfaced to describe the impact of the bombing and its aftereffects, and the way in which the memorial process took shape and played out. He considers how the Nation confronts an act of violence and the challenges associated with the needs of families and survivors, the creation of a national bereaved community, and conflicting notions of memorialization.

Linenthal believes that the impact of the Oklahoma City bombing continues. In his conclusion, he poses the following questions: "Will the prominence of the Oklahoma City bombing be ensured by its location in the nation's official memory? Will it become an enduring part of the national landscape, a site as important as Monticello, Gettysburg, or the Vietnam Veterans Memorial? Will a future terrorist act that inflicts even more death consign Oklahoma City to a less prestigious location on the landscape of violence? Or might such an act increase its prestige as the first event in a continuing body count of domestic terrorism?" These questions remain unanswered. *The Unfinished Bombing* appeared as the Nation reeled from the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and the crash in Pennsylvania. These events may well have deflected attention from the singularity of the Oklahoma City bombing. Our lack of distance from the events clouds our ability to place them in perspective.

This is an engaging book that immerses readers in the story, feeling the emotions generated by the event as well as Linenthal's own wariness about many of the attempts of professionals to impose "mental health" on the families and survivors. Here is a framework for understanding the dynamics of such aftereffects and the choices available in developing appropriate memorialization strategies. However, the study suffers from too little contextu-

alization of the memorial process and the site's association with political terrorism rather than national sacrifice. Linenthal alludes to these issues but they remain undeveloped. Nonetheless, this study will be intriguing to anyone involved with developing, administering, and interpreting memorial sites.

Patricia Mooney-Melvin
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At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture

By James E. Young. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000; viii + 248 pp., photographs, drawings, notes, bibliography, index; paper \$18.95.

Post-Holocaust Jewish-American and European artists and architects have moved in new directions to memorialize the Holocaust with often jarring, nontraditional "counter memorials." *At Memory's Edge* treats what James E. Young, a University of Massachusetts English and Judaic studies professor, defines as "memory-work." The author recapitulates his extensive scholarly output of articles, catalog essays, informal talks, lectures, and symposia as the foundation for *At Memory's Edge*. The introductory chapter includes a standard literature survey. Young proceeds to several case studies to describe post-Holocaust artistic interpretations and memorials. The book concludes with his insider's perspective chronicling "memory-work" to select the design for the German national Holocaust memorial.

The artists' and architects' body of work cited in the book leapfrogs the traditional style of memorials found throughout Europe—statues, preserved ruins, monumental architecture, and poignant inscriptions. The book represents the author's specialized scholarship regarding the novel approach-

es that post-Holocaust generations of American and European artists and architects of Jewish heritage have employed to remember the Nazis' bitter fruit. These intellectuals have rejected typical bronze and marble Holocaust memorialization in favor of artistic approaches that draw the world's attention to what they argue resulted in an immense cultural void in late 20th-century Europe.

At a temporal distance from the Holocaust, artists and architects have produced nontraditional ethereal monuments, memorials, and museums. The artists and architects did not directly experience the Holocaust; rather their perceptions have been created and influenced by survivor accounts and by the vast outpouring of Holocaust-related books, magazines, movies, and television programs. Some of the artists returned to the neighborhoods where the Jews worked and lived, trying to recapture "what it was like" in order to educate present-day observers. Shimon Attie's large-scale slide projections of historic photos of early 20th-century Jewish life seemed to be a particularly effective medium when projected on buildings, streets, and sites in European cities. Jochen Gerz attracted public interest by commemorating the loss of 2,000 Jewish cemeteries in Germany by inserting replacement cobblestones (each inscribed with the name of a razed burial ground) in Saarbrücken's main square.

Among other artists' and architects' works, the results are startling: Art Spiegelman's cartoon art, *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*; David Levinthal's miniature figurine photography; and Horst Hoheisel's national Holocaust memorial proposal to blow up the Brandenburg Gate, a well recognized Berlin monument once incorporated in the Berlin Wall.

The artists' and architects' cutting edge "memory-work" regarding the Holocaust does not, perhaps unconsciously, intersect with what Europeans have already accomplished as remembrance of that dark story. While it is interesting, educational, and inspiring to examine old stories with unique and

often startling perspectives on the Holocaust, the emphasis on daring, novel art and architecture, what the author calls "counter monuments" seemingly dismisses traditional approaches to memorialization: statues, plaques, memorials, and preservation and interpretation of concentration camps, transit centers, ruins, cemeteries, and other terrible landmarks of Nazi tyranny. Yet these traditional memorials continue to serve as parallel and powerful reminders of the European Holocaust.

Young concludes with an insider's perspective on the intellectual angst generated during the protracted, tortured debate in Germany in the 1980s and 1990s on erecting a German national Holocaust memorial in Berlin. A talented panel sifted through some 25 proposals ranging from demolishing the Brandenburg Gate to Renata Stih's and Frieder Schnock's *Bus Stop—the Non-Monument*—a large bus terminal in Berlin from which visitors could travel to concentration camp sites throughout Europe.

The book concludes with the selection of a preferred design near the end of former Chancellor Helmut Kohl's tenure, "Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe" by American architect Peter Eisenman. Under Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's tenure, the design was further modified. The Holocaust memorial is under construction on the former "death strip" near the razed Berlin Wall within hailing distance of Hitler's demolished Chancellery and scheduled for completion in March 2005.

For students of the cultural impact and value of memorials, *At Memory's Edge* is a useful addition to the growing body of literature. While the book is geared towards an artistic and architectural academic analysis, a more balanced treatment should have at least introduced the magnitude of "memory-work" at existing historic sites. Nonetheless, the book provides useful discussion of an engaging array of artistic output that should be considered by cultural resource professionals, historians,

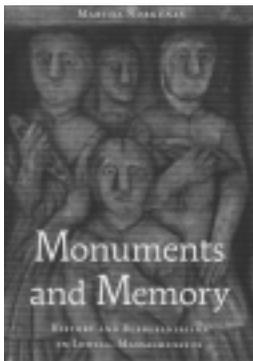
artists, architects, and academicians. Recent genocide, war, and terrorism in Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Oklahoma City, and on 9/11 remind us of our responsibility to transmit to succeeding generations our thoughts on these terrible events. Those of us engaged in commemoration and memorialization, especially those engaged in creating, preserving, managing, and interpreting memorial sites, should read this book.

Ron Johnson

National Park Service (Retired)

Monuments and Memory: History and Representation in Lowell, Massachusetts

By Martha Norkunas. Washington, DC, and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002; xi + 208 pp., illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index; cloth \$39.95; paper \$17.95.



In recent years, memory and its complex relationships to history has garnered increasing intellectual attention. Martha Norkunas's *Monuments and Memory: History and Representation in Lowell, Massachusetts* adds to our understanding of

these relationships as history, histories, and memories have been formed and re-formed in this mill-town turned national park. In a series of interrelated essays, Norkunas successfully tackles questions "about the connections between gender, ethnicity, power, space, and narrative, about the relationship between the living and the memory of the dead, and about the uncertain intersections between memory and history."

Building on her personal ethnic history and her deep connections to Lowell, Norkunas began a

systematic documentation of Lowell's 252 monuments. She sought to make sense of their origins and significance, and to contrast her female-centered family's narratives with the public memorials' "sea of maleness." In the process she describes a continuum from personal memory to national history, from her personal life to a national park. Some of the most interesting reading comes with her developing an understanding of her family's past: "I could not go in. I was afraid that my memory of the past which I had varnished over time...would be forever disturbed."

For much of the book, Norkunas wrestled with issues of significance—how it changes with generations and as direct knowledge of those being remembered fade. Norkunas shows memory not as a finished event but as an ongoing process between the people being remembered and those doing the act of remembering. Memory is process changed by those individuals and communities participating in it. Many of Lowell's memorials had become unrecognized—drained of their original meaning. Others, originally dedicated to individuals, take on different significance as ethnic neighborhood boundary markers.

In her chapter "The Gender of Memory," she particularly honors the private women's history: "It often seemed to me that these stories, the ones that were told openly and the ones that were told in hushed tones, were the real history of Lowell, the history that mattered, and that only the women knew it." She states, "For women the site of memory, the place where the living and the dead commingle, is not on the landscape but remains rooted in the narrative." She concludes that women are "rememberers of male accomplishment," but not themselves remembered. She hints that as women enter more public spheres their recognition through monuments will increase.

Norkunas raises several issues for those of us involved in cultural resources to consider. Highlighted are the competing visions between

parks created to promote local values (here, ethnic ones) or to provide a stable economy through enticing newcomers (here, white collar jobs). Patrick Mogan, Lowell's School Superintendent and "Father of Lowell NHP," used the local approach; U.S. Senator Paul Tsongas focused on economic incentives. One approach risks not being the truly national story Congress intends when it establishes such parks. The other risks creating something so gentrified as to lose its roots in reality.

According to Norkunas, the area's focus on the mill girls had not gotten "more than a passing local interest...prior to the advent of the National Park." Given the extensive historical literature on Lowell's early industrialization and its famous mill girls, Norkunas's statement reflects more local and temporal attitudes than a Nation's history. Gradually, the park's significance expanded to a larger (and longer) story of immigrant generations of mill workers, from the Irish digging the mills' canals to the post-mill era Cambodians who by 1990 made up 25 percent of Lowell's population. At Lowell, these histories—of mill girls long gone and of immigrant generations still very present—can either compete or, preferably, be seen as complementary. Her insights into the tensions between these approaches are useful to many other places.

The book assumes some knowledge about Lowell as a city and as a national park. Maps showing the succession of ethnic communities and key monuments would have been helpful. She could have pushed some of her thoughts further, particularly concerning how becoming a national park shifts local history and memory.

Monuments and Memory is recommended for those interested in better understanding relationships between communities and national parks, for those responsible for commemorative works, and for anyone interested in the interplay between memory and history. Norkunas concludes that, "History texts do not begin when memory ceases to function, as the cultural theorists suggested;

rather history coexists, side by side, with a living, functioning memory."

Heather Huyck
National Park Service

Beyond the River: The Untold Story of the Heroes of the Underground Railroad

By Ann Hagedorn. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002; 352 pp., map, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index; cloth \$25.00, paper \$14.00.

The 1858 Oberlin-Wellington Rescue: A Reappraisal

By Roland M. Baumann. Lorain, OH: The Bodnar Printing Co. with Oberlin College, 2003; 64 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index; paper \$9.95.

How prudently most men creep into nameless graves while now and then one or two forget themselves into immortality.

—Wendell Phillips, quoted in *Beyond the River*

Ann Hagedorn is an investigative reporter who tells us that *Beyond the River* results from "doing what journalists do," telling stories that challenge our assumptions. In this instance, she uses the career of abolitionist Rev. John Rankin to meticulously reconstruct one specific line of that ad hoc, opportunistic network that we now call the Underground Railroad. Operating on the north bank of the Ohio River in the small town of Ripley, Ohio, Rankin and his conspirators repeatedly violated both the sensibilities of their neighbors and Federal law by assisting freedom-seekers out of slavery. Hagedorn revives gun battles, midnight arson, kidnappings, and torch-bearing mobs faced down by pious abolitionists on the Ohio River borderlands.

Relying heavily on first-person accounts, part character study, part regional study, part grand historical context, Hagedorn calls her work “narrative non-fiction,” and it strives for popular appeal. On the first page alone, ridges sprawl, expanses are vast, thickets entangle, panthers and wolves lurk, hills are verdant, and flatboats are cumbersome. But do not be discouraged. Take a break, but please do come back to Hagedorn.

From the evidence in the endnotes, how many different books could have been written based on Ann Hagedorn’s extensive research? She could have reconstructed entire routes of the Underground Railroad, with the names of conductors and fugitives, dates of operation, locations of safe houses, and means of transport. Hagedorn could have written a history of the abolitionist movement, or the religious roots of Northern resistance to slavery, or the Southern origins of some of the abolitionist movement’s key players. Even if unintentional, Hagedorn’s chapters 14 and 22 may well become the definitive reconstruction of the true story underlying the Eliza character from *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

Occasionally the lack of deep historical perspective is frustrating. Hagedorn does not have much to say about the enslaved freedom-seekers themselves, who admittedly rarely wrote memoirs or left a paper trail of any kind. But more glaring is Hagedorn’s open condemnation of the South, slavery, and slaveholding, with no attempt at anthropological distance. The South is repeatedly described from the outside looking in, in terms used by 19th-century abolitionists. Slave catchers are always drunken louts, proslavery magistrates are always on the take, and slave owners are always brutal and too stupid to see the equality of their chattel. Of course slavery was wrong! Of course those who recognized it as wrong were heroes! But if ever we are going to understand why those few heroes were so scarce for so long, we need to be able to put aside our righteous modernity long enough to see the world as it was at the time.

But this is a book of heroes. Rev. John Rankin is set up as an archetype in order to explore why some people in the 1820s to 1860s chose a path of dissent and civil disobedience. There is a tension throughout the book between Rankin as the hero acting on his convictions and Rankin as the blind actor in a larger historical movement. As the title suggests, the hero wins. If none of us is merely a blind actor, perhaps all of us are called to be heroes.

Roland Baumann is an archivist and a history professor, bringing strong control over the source material and analytical rigor to his booklet, *The 1858 Oberlin-Wellington Rescue: A Reappraisal*. Reading Baumann’s crisp, declarative style and precise endnotes was refreshing.

In January 1856, John Price fled slavery in Mason County, Kentucky, and found refuge in the small college town of Oberlin, Ohio. By September, a professional slave catcher, accompanied by a Federal marshal and his assistant, arrived in Oberlin, arrested Price by subterfuge, and ran for the nearest train south. A rescue party was mounted before the kidnapers had traveled more than 8 miles. On the evening of September 13, 1856, over 200 people surrounded the hotel in the village of Wellington where Price was held. About 50 people entered the hotel, some of whom eventually found Price, hauled him out, and sent him back to Oberlin, thence to Canada, after which he was never heard from again.

The story of the Oberlin-Wellington Rescue is only peripherally about John Price. By November 1856, the district court in Cleveland handed down 37 indictments against the rescuers, each to be tried separately. The indicted rescuers included cobblers, clerks, carpenters, cabinetmakers, printers, farmers, grocers, harness makers, brickmakers, and five students. Two lawyers, a physician, and a teacher were the only representatives of the professional classes. The party of rescuers included free African Americans, fugitive slaves, and sympathetic

whites. Many of the rescuers were conductors on the Underground Railroad.

Baumann tells the story of the ensuing legal battle, precipitated by one of the most successful large-scale nonviolent episodes of civil disobedience in American history. According to most of the earlier literature on this episode, that success is largely due to the 19th-century equivalent of a media circus that polarized public opinion in support of the rescuers, and indirectly aided the rise of the Republican Party and the election of Abraham Lincoln. Baumann downplays the national repercussions of the rescue, while highlighting the maneuvering of both sides in what became a national spectacle.

At odds with William Lloyd Garrison's progressively more militant abolitionism, the leadership of the Congregationalist clergy in Oberlin were "committed to a protracted effort to reform society" and were, "informed by civil disobedience, moral suasion, and organizational networking." The rescue was conducted without a riot, and with no vigilance committees, no injuries, or even threat of injuries. Thanks to Baumann's clear description and documentation, the reader can reconstruct the precise route of both kidnappers and rescuers, learn the names of those involved, and read first-person accounts, newspaper stories, and court proceedings.

Baumann demonstrates the extraordinarily astute public relations practiced by the abolitionists before the trials. Public events included 6,000 people in a peaceful demonstration led by Sunday school children, a fundraising banquet for the defense called "The Felon's Feast," and a second defense fund set up by the Republican Central Committee of the Western Reserve called the "Fund for Liberty." In retaliation for the proceedings of the Cleveland Court, Lorain County Court indicted the slave catchers and the Federal marshal on kidnapping charges. In the end, charges were dropped for both rescuers and slave catchers. In

Baumann's words, "Oberlin's abolitionist leaders had successfully negotiated the boundaries between social reform, state and local politics, and religious evangelicalism."

Baumann and Hagedorn share a love of exhaustive research, using their results in dramatically different ways. The back-to-back effect of reading their works is like walking out of an overstuffed Victorian parlor into a Danish-modern law office. There is a place in the world for both tastes, and we are in debt to both authors for their fine work.

Orloff Miller

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

Houses of God: Region, Religion and Architecture in the United States

By Peter W. Williams. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000; xv + 321 pp., photographs, bibliographies, indices; cloth \$34.95; paper \$24.95.

Sanctuary

By Thomas Roma. With an introduction by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002; xii + 96 pp., 52 photographs, map; cloth \$29.95.

The writing of American religious architectural history is complicated by the many components of religious space that one must understand in order to give proper credit to these important structures. Peter W. Williams' *Houses of God* and Thomas Roma's *Sanctuary* employ an interdisciplinary approach to consider sacred space through the lenses of geography, ethnicity, religion, social issues, preservation, material culture, archeology, and architecture, enabling a solid understanding of sacred environments in the United States.

Williams, a professor of Comparative Religion and American Studies at Miami University in Ohio, began this work as a series of essays for a 1994 photographic exhibition at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis on the public expression of religion in American art. Williams cites the book's purpose as an examination of "the built environment of religion in the United States—its architecture, landscape, and other dimensions of its public physical aspect—with special attention to the importance of geographical and cultural *region* in shaping that religious expression." He centers on regionalism, religious tradition or denomination, architectural style, and social class. Williams studies each region chronologically and according to topics such as theological innovation, ethnicity, religious denominations, urbanism, modernism, and architectural style.

Williams does not, however, utilize the same themes in each chapter but instead carefully selects those most important to each region's history. In the chapter on New England, for example, he focuses on the Puritan meetinghouse and its significance as a new American building type, suitable for both sacred and secular purposes. In the chapter on the Mid-Atlantic region, Anglicanism is emphasized in its various stylistic forms, whereas colonial Anglican churches, largely completed in a neoclassical style, are the main topic of the South's religious spaces. The chapter on the Spanish Borderlands centers on the Spanish Catholic settlement of the American Southwest.

While these regions provide a focal point of "cultural hearths"—described by Williams as "the entrance of various strains of European culture into the Northern American social environment through distinctive geographical nodes"—the remaining regions, the Old Northwest, the Great Plains and Mountains, and the Pacific Rim, lose this concentration due to later settlement by a multitude of cultural groups. For example, in the Great Plains and Mountains chapter, after an introductory discussion on settlement patterns and ethnicity,

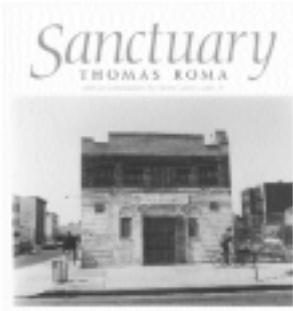
Williams discusses the entire history of the churches in this region under a general heading of "Building Patterns," moving back and forth among States and themes.

Although many buildings are included in his survey, Williams' text lacks the discussion of post-World War II religious space, particularly that influenced by modernism and liturgical reform after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Williams devotes only one paragraph to the Vatican reforms and fails to mention the importance of St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, as an international leader in liturgical reform. Many of the St. John's brethren were advisors to the council and were also closely involved in the design of St. John's Abbey church (1953-1961) by Marcel Breuer, a modern building espousing modern liturgical ideals.

The ecumenical nature of worship promoted by the Council also impacted the design of non-Catholic spaces, and Williams' work could be expanded to include these changes. Additionally, an analysis of churches now approaching their 50th anniversary would aid preservationists as they consider potential nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. A revision might also improve the quality of several of the images, and update the indices to include a topical index rather than just the name and location indices provided in the current edition.

Williams, however, has completed a daunting task and has added greatly to the historiography of the built religious environment. Most religious architectural studies are monographs and Williams' work is one of two recent books to tackle the United States in a survey format. The other, Marilyn J. Chiat's *America's Religious Architecture*, is a series of one-page entries on many lesser-known vernacular buildings, appealing to the traveler and preservationist as she encourages congregations to protect and record their heritage.¹ Both books use region as an organizing idiom but given

the diversity and mobility of people in the United States, will region remain an appropriate tool for future inquires? Even Williams is doubtful. Yet through his efforts we see the promise of completing successful religious architectural histories through a combination of ideas taken from geography, religion, architecture, cultural studies, and material studies.



Another important element of architectural history is the visual documentation of structures.

Thomas Roma's photographs of his Brooklyn, New York, neighborhood

in *Sanctuary* fulfill this vital task. Roma, whose photographs appear in museum collections as well as in many solo exhibitions, sought imagery "that dealt with the way people express their spirituality" and how sacred places fit into the lives of the immigrants who built them as well as those who now use them. These interests produce unexpected juxtapositions. In one photograph Roma fills the foreground with abandoned cars on a vacant gravel lot, the middle ground with three-story apartment buildings, and the background with a church steeple prominently centered within the image.

For Roma, life and faith are intertwined and the term "sanctuary" moves beyond its traditional description as the most sacred part of a Christian church. It becomes a "state of mind" as noted by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., in the introduction. Roma's photographs are captivating and force the viewer to reconsider the sacred nature of their own environment.

Roma and Williams encourage researchers to take a multifaceted approach when documenting the sacred built environment. With thousands of the best religious spaces yet to be explored, work on sacred space will continue to come from collabora-

tion among scholars and researchers in various fields.

Victoria M. Young

University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN

1. Marilyn J. Chiat, *America's Religious Architecture: Sacred Places for Every Community* (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1997).

Archaeological Perspectives on the American Civil War

Edited by Clarence R. Geier and Stephen R. Potter. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003; 363 pp., illustrations, notes; cloth \$59.95, paper \$27.95.

Rather than focusing on "great men," the focus should shift to include the men and women of both sides who fought and feared, died or survived, benefited or lost everything as they participated, often through no choice of their own, in an event which they did not necessarily understand or support.

—From *Archaeological Perspectives*

The American Civil War is one of the most extensively studied and debated subjects among both academics and the public. Interest in the Civil War has soared due to a number of factors, including Ken Burns' documentary series, the increasing numbers of battle reenactments, and increased visitation to Civil War sites across the country. Despite such popularity, many scholars in the field of archeology have ignored the Civil War, passing it over as having "no intellectual future."

Archaeological Perspectives on the American Civil War smashes this myth with a powerful collection of 18 original and insightful essays that illustrate that the archeology of the Civil War is not just about finding bullets and buttons; it is about real people. The essays collected by Geier and Potter

are highly relevant to all fields associated with heritage stewardship.

Archaeological Perspectives is divided into three sections: Tactics and the Conduct of Battles, The Home Front and Military Life, and New Methods and Techniques. The five essays in the first section include work on battles such as Second Manassas, Antietam, and Cool Spring; research on the recently discovered Confederate submarine *H. L. Hunley*; and surveys of extant fortifications surrounding the city of Atlanta.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing essays is a joint effort between Potter and Smithsonian Institution forensic anthropologist Douglas W. Owsley to recover four partial sets of human remains at Antietam. Besides discussing individual artifacts that were recovered with each burial, Potter and Owsley are able to make a reasonable case for the identification of one of the fallen soldiers. In another fine essay, Steven D. Smith uses the recovery of the *H.L. Hunley* to demonstrate that archeology can be highly political. Smith provides a well-presented controversial argument about the perception of Confederate symbols in modern America.

The second and largest portion of the book consists of essays relating individuals' experiences during the Civil War. The nine essays fall into four groups: the life of the common soldier in settings such as camp or prison, the study of domestic life during the Civil War, the lives of African Americans and how they were affected by the war, and agriculture and agrarian landscapes during the Civil War. The experiences of the common soldier are detailed in essays about Fort C. F. Smith, Sheridan Field Hospital, and Andersonville Prison. Each provides excellent primary source material to support the archeological evidence at these sites. Domestic life during the Civil War is detailed using examples from the Owens' House/Post Office Complex at Camp Nelson, Kentucky, and from Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. In both of these essays, archeological evidence is used to explore

how the functions of domestic structures may have changed during the Civil War and how the individuals in these settings may have dealt with conditions brought upon by a sudden influx of military personnel.

The African-American experience is clearly essential to understanding the Civil War, and the three essays devoted to this topic are outstanding. Kenneth E. Koons presents a seemingly limitless amount of data on the numbers and occupations of African Americans in the Shenandoah Valley, while Erika K. Martin Seibert and Mia Parsons explore how the lives of a free African-American family were affected by the battles at Manassas. Elise Manning-Sterling looks at how the devastation of the Civil War impacted both agricultural output and the agrarian landscape.

The final section is devoted to the Civil War archeologist's biggest threat and best ally, the metal detector. Of the four essays in this chapter, one details work on the Battle of Chickamauga while the remainder address the Battle of Antietam. Each of these essays demonstrates that systematic metal detector surveys are simply the only manner in which Civil War militaria can be effectively recovered over a large area. John E. Cornelison Jr.'s essay emphasizes that the overall value of these surveys depends entirely on the accuracy with which the recovered artifacts are mapped. Bruce B. Sterling and Bernard W. Slaughter follow with an essay that sets the standard for conducting metal detector surveys. Through an exhaustive, multiyear survey at Antietam, the authors detail the most- and least-effective methods for recovering military artifacts through metal detector surveys.

While the final section is extremely useful as a guide for conducting large-scale battlefield surveys, all of the chapters tend to ignore an important issue: archeological surveys depend on volunteer relic hunters. While volunteer services are invaluable, relic hunters often use skills learned as project volunteers to loot and destroy sensitive archeologi-

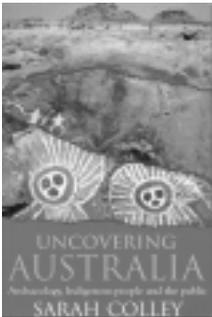
cal sites. Future work on metal detector surveys must address this controversial issue.

Archaeological Perspectives on the American Civil War is a must-read for students of the Civil War. Although some scholars may be surprised that this book focuses almost entirely on the eastern theater of the Civil War, they will be rewarded in that many of these essays succeed in presenting a unique understanding of the role of the common individual during this crucial time in American history. It is a valuable resource for anyone interested in African-American studies, agricultural history, and domestic life in the 19th century.

Brandon S. Bies
University of Maryland

Uncovering Australia: Archaeology, Indigenous People, and the Public

By Sarah Colley. Washington, DC, and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, in association with Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, New South Wales, Australia, 2003; 251 pp., illustrations, notes; paper \$24.95.



This book is about the practice, politics, and ethics of archeology in Australia. Aimed at nonspecialists, but written to be of interest to archeologists and cultural heritage managers, it will also interest those working in the United States and Canada, as

there are many parallel issues. Factors operating in Australian archeology today include the “relationship between ‘science’ and Indigenous rights; community-based action against development which threatens important cultural places; and the role of government and the media in mediating interactions between different interest groups.”

Throughout the book, Colley uses case studies to illustrate her points. The examples may not be well known outside of Australia, but demonstrate how particular cases changed relationships among archeologists, Indigenous people, the public, government, environmentalists, and the media.

Colley provides the reader with a professional context by summarizing archeological practice and the basics of cultural heritage management. In Australia and many other countries, the term cultural resource management has been replaced by the term cultural heritage management in order to include a much broader meaning. Heritage includes intangible as well as tangible heritage. In addition, the separation of cultural and natural heritage makes little sense to Indigenous societies. As in other countries, focusing on cultural landscape and landscape archeology breaks down this divide somewhat.

Three chapters center on relationships between archeologists and Indigenous people, covering issues of repatriation and Indigenous rights and negotiations over archeological research. In some cases archeology is in direct disagreement with Indigenous beliefs. Indigenous people may perceive archeology as both a physical and spiritual threat. However, archeology may also bring tangible benefits and Colley provides examples of success stories of archeologists and Indigenous people working together. Archeologists need permission to conduct archeological research (as opposed to compliance studies) on Indigenous places in Australia and therefore need to negotiate with communities. When an archeologist approaches a community and seeks permission to conduct a survey or excavation, the community can decline permission, suggest changes to make the work more relevant, or give permission, perhaps with certain conditions. As in other countries, questions arise about who represents the community.

Some of Colley’s case studies illustrate that relationships are different between archeologists and

Indigenous peoples depending on whether the context is research or consulting work. Archeological work is more likely to take place in the latter context. Australian planning legislation requires considering archeology as part of environmental assessments. As in the United States, cultural values must be taken into account but the presence of heritage resources does not necessarily stop development.

In Australia as in the United States, the legislated process defines the archeological record in terms of artifacts, groups of artifacts, and spatially bounded sites, and promotes a piecemeal approach focused on small, disconnected parts rather than on region- or landscape-based approaches. Landscape approaches have long been of interest in the United Kingdom and other parts of the world. In the United States, the regional approach has been available for decades and yet restricted by the site-based approach reified in cultural resource management legislation.

There has been a trend toward providing Indigenous people with more legal control over their own places, but in the current political climate, Colley thinks that the tide may have turned against Indigenous interests. In spite of this, Colley expects increased Indigenous coordination and control of heritage assessment work. Archeology of some kind will continue, but numerous questions persist, such as who will do the work. Will it be members of the community and will they have archeological training?

Colley considers archeology in a broader public context. In discussing archeology and the public, it is clear that not much information is available on public perceptions of archeology in Australia. (Contrast this with the good baseline data collected in the United States by Harris Interactive. The study is available online at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/aad/pubs/harris/index.htm>). Discussion here is based on public misconceptions about the "romance and adventure" of archeology. Colley refers to Peter Hiscock's useful distinction between

"pseudo-science," which uses scientific terminology and cites "evidence," and "New Age" archeology, which rejects conventional methods and relies on revelation rather than examination. United States practitioners of cultural resource management will recognize the situation in this statement: "Proponents of both pseudo-science and New Age archaeology commonly accuse scientists, archaeologists and the government of ignoring them and perpetuating a cover-up about the True meaning of archaeological sites and what Really happened in the past."

Colley's concluding chapter on archeology, Indigenous Australia, and postcolonialism attempts to explore connections between archeological practice and knowledge in the contexts of postcolonialism and postmodernism. The author explicitly acknowledges the discordance of modern society and the loss of confidence in science and academic knowledge in the postmodern age. She argues for considering other social values when deciding significance of a place, particularly in the wake of colonialism where Indigenous people and their culture were devalued. In this postcolonial context, the politics of race influences archeology in Australia.

Colley states clearly that this is not an archeology book. Instead it is a book about archeology in social context and is intended to provoke discussion. It should succeed in that intention, not only in Australia but in any country with both Indigenous and immigrant populations where cultural heritage or cultural resource management is practiced.

Barbara Little
National Park Service

*Claiming the Stones, Naming the Bones:
Cultural Property and the Negotiation of National
and Ethnic Identity*

Edited by Elazar Barkan and Ronald Bush. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2003; 384 pp., illustrations, notes; paper \$50.00.

This eclectic volume developed from a 1998 conference sponsored jointly by the Getty Research Institute and the Drue Heinz Trust at Oxford University. One co-editor is a professor of history and cultural studies, the other is a professor of American literature. The general theme is the relationship between cultural property and cultural identity, with the former broadly construed to encompass a diverse range of phenomena, scholarship, and interests.

Archeologists are interested in material culture and in current and emerging theories regarding the effects, operation, and social role of cultural things in social contexts. Several interesting issues concerning material culture, or cultural property, and the construction of identity are raised in this volume, but without an attempt to link observations and insights to current theoretical work in material culture studies. Lacking a relevant theoretical framework, the overall value of the contributions is reduced and cultural property is subject to a kind of “mystification.” In the opening paragraph of the introduction, for example, the authors allude to some “inexplicable chemistry” underlying the power of material culture to create a sense of identity.

The book comprises an introduction and 14 essays from legal, literary, anthropological, historical, and biological perspectives that explore the social significance of claims to cultural property and the resulting controversies. The sections of the volume are based on three categories of cultural property: tangible, intangible, and what the authors term “representations,” the reformulation of traditional cultural property in the service of

reconfigured identities. The first two sections deal with tangible cultural property and remains. The first two chapters—on the Elgin Marbles and pre-Columbian remains and indigenous cultural identity—cover ground already substantially treated by scholars. The subsequent chapter by Claire L. Lyons traces the life history of a gold plate from its origins in the 4th century B.C. to its present disputed circumstances in a private collection in the United States. This study offers a fresh analysis of competing interests in the material remains of the past at their point of intersection with a specific object.

The next two chapters deal with the skeletal remains of an individual who has come to be known as Kennewick Man, another topic about which much has been written. The piece by Douglas W. Owsley and Richard L. Jantz, which argues the side of science, is notably out of date with the most recent references to events in 1999. The following chapter by Patty Gerstenblith, written from the opposing point of view, opens with a two-page quote from a Tony Hillerman novel and then proceeds to review the Kennewick case, again providing information with respect to NAGPRA and repatriation legislation that has been amply covered elsewhere.

The next section of the volume, entitled “Legislating the Intangible,” contains three chapters that deal with intellectual property rights and three different types of intangible property: traditional ecological knowledge, traditional music, and body ornamentation or tattooing. Darrell Addison Posey’s chapter on the Kayapo is rather diffuse, although he makes several interesting points regarding indigenous systems of knowledge and the political significance of definitions of culture and nature. Helene La Rue’s well-organized essay on world music and the impact of new recording technologies provides a useful and current synopsis of traditional music and intellectual property concerns. The final chapter in part three offers a Maori scholar’s account of

the history and current cultural significance of the tradition of body ornamentation.

The final section contains five chapters on issues of control, authority, and rights with respect to representation. In the first of two chapters that deal with African-American representation, Marlon B. Ross provides an insightful analysis of “copyright in race,” in which he treats blackness like whiteness as a particular form of cultural property. In the following chapter, Jonathan Arac deconstructs *Huckleberry Finn*’s place in the American literary canon from the point of view outlined by Ross. The final three chapters consider Irishry and Jewishness in the context of literary works. As a set, these chapters allude to important issues of heterogeneity in groups typically viewed as monolithic, and highlight the ways that competing factions and individuals negotiate and contest identity.

While the strength of this volume might, on one hand, be considered its eclecticism, on the other, this can be viewed as a weakness. Given that it provides broad coverage of cultural property topics in a single volume, it could be a useful, state-of-the-art compendium. Unfortunately, a coherent framework is lacking and a number of chapters appear to be considerably out-of-date. As the co-editors note at the end of the introduction, the terms “cultural property” and “cultural identity” have perhaps become so loosely and inclusively defined as to lose their usefulness. This collection might be a good illustration of this danger.

Tamara L. Bray
Wayne State University

A River and Its City: The Nature of Landscape in New Orleans

By Ari Kelman. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003; 296 pp., photographs, notes, bibliography, index; cloth \$29.95.

Scholars have long focused on New Orleans’ politics and literature, race relations, working class, food, and tourism. Within the past decade, the history of the city’s public spaces has received increased attention. Kelman’s new book examines the complex history of the waterfront and its changing character reflecting concerns about the waterfront as public space and business opportunity. Through a variety of attempts to enhance trade, control floodwaters, and rechannel the mighty Mississippi, the waterfront has remained the city’s defining natural feature.

This broad-ranging and thoughtful book represents a gentle reaction against other historians, notably William Cronon, Michael Sorkin, and Mike Davis, who have decried the loss of public space in the face of the relentless power of modern corporate capitalism to redefine urban landscapes. Kelman’s story purports to be more complex than merely seeing man against nature as he delves into the complex legal status of riverfront land use rights, conflicting engineering visions for water management, and the often weak constituency behind public access to the waterfront over the past several hundred years. Definitions of the public good are constantly changing, he notes, and conceptions of public access remain unclear.

The book presents episodes in the waterfront’s history, from the torturous legal battles over the batture (parts of the riverbanks that are covered during high water and uncovered during low) in the late 18th century to the later legal fight over monopolistic power of steamship companies, from the impact of the yellow fever epidemic of 1853 on the waterfront, through the struggles to create levees and warehouses in the late 19th century to the

dramatic impact of the 1927 flood. Kelman ends his story with the successful attempt to stop highway construction along the waterfront in the 1960s.

President Thomas Jefferson was involved in a major dispute over control of a portion of the bature that pitted him against an old antagonist, Edward Livingston, who had settled in New Orleans after scandals drove him from New York. Having become sensitized to the concerns of Westerners' access to the river since the 1780s, Jefferson eventually weighed in against Livingston's attempt to prove his ownership of the alluvial land. Yet Kelman notes, locals had a tradition of understanding nature's erratic force that Livingston could not grasp. In the end, (actually this is a never-ending story), Livingston's persistence extracted something of a compromise from city officials.

The impact of new technology, specifically the steamboat, reflected "the contingent nature of public space" for which Governor Claiborne advocated when trying to establish a monopoly for the Fulton group (those investors associated with Robert Fulton, inventor of the steamboat), a relatively common business practice in Jefferson's day. Yet competitors soon arrived in the form of Henry Shreve, who successfully challenged the Fulton group for the riparian common. Perceptions of "artifice and the river" became fused to notions of progress as American merchants subsequently battled Creole elites to define the waterfront in commercial terms, eventually and briefly breaking up city governance into three submunicipalities over the issue.

Kelman finds that "as commercial capitalism took root in cities, people no longer valued spaces for their uses but instead for the amount of capital proprietors could ask in exchange for them." His implicit message is that we need to rethink the intangible values of waterfronts and public access.

One of Kelman's recurring themes is that control over nature, frequently the bottom line of boosters'

promotion of artifices such as wharves and levees, has always proved illusory in the long run. New forms of economic competition, from canals to railroads, shifted the trade along the Mississippi from east to west. But, the waterfront remained contested space as well, facilitating escape for slaves going upriver, notably during the 1853 yellow fever outbreak. The shape of control produced a variety of victims, such as those flooded out of their homes in 1927 when a portion of the levee was destroyed, sacrificing "the people of the poorer river parishes so that New Orleanians, and particularly the city's commercial community, could thrive." Manipulation of the news media during the flood as well as during the yellow fever epidemic underscores the powerful scope of elite bias in rationalizing river politics.

Although the breadth of Kelman's sources is impressive, there is an inadequate feel for how residents or seamen reacted to the waterfront. Besides the writings of Mark Twain and J. D. B. DeBow which he cites in early chapters, it would have been useful to read more about the complex sights and sounds of the area. What was it about the multicultural and cross-class aspect of the place that proved so alluring or off-putting? More attention might also have been paid to how the mentality of the commercial elite's redefinition of the waterfront as a public good overlapped with other aspects of their social, political, or business relations. Nonetheless, Kelman has made a valuable contribution that can help us re-examine how we think about urban waterfronts and our frequently faulty approaches in channeling nature.

Gregory Bush
University of Miami

Mount Mitchell & The Black Mountains: An Environmental History of the Highest Peaks in Eastern America

by Timothy Silver. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003; 346 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, index; cloth, \$39.95, paper \$19.95.

Over the past two decades, environmental historians have examined resource management approaches and have taken managers to task for ignoring the human impact on the environment. Although his aim is not to study resource management, Timothy Silver focuses much-needed attention on State parks and the Forest Service in his study of one mountain chain of the southern Appalachians. The book seeks to describe the changes in the land in this small region northeast of Asheville, North Carolina, over thousands of years, but the chapters on Forest Service initiatives and wildlife management problems offer important insights into the triumphs and hazards of preservation.

Silver, whose first book was on the environment in colonial Virginia, does an exemplary job describing the Progressive-era foresters who shaped Mount Mitchell State Park. Intensive logging had destroyed wildlife habitat and State foresters responded with aggressive management of timber and game. The Southeast Forest Experiment Station prepared a detailed planting plan for Mount Mitchell of Fraser fir, red spruce, and nonnative Norway spruce. They stocked both native species, such as wild turkey and bobwhite quail, and exotics like ringneck pheasant and elk. They also engaged in predator control that had long-term consequences for the ecology of the mountains.

Silver has organized the book in the chronology most familiar to scholars of the southern Appalachians. There are chapters on geological forces that shaped the Black Mountains; the first Native Americans and European immigrants to the region; the geographers, like University of North Carolina Professor Elisha Mitchell, who explored

the mountains and lost his life there in a legendary fall; logging, railroads, and the chestnut blight; original Forest Service management under the Weeks Act; and the modern strains between tourism, hunting, and development.¹

Interspersed among its pages, *Mount Mitchell* includes journal entries from one of Silver's camping adventures in the Black Mountains. Venturing into the first person—always a scary step for those with a scholarly background—the author asks the reader to hear the January wind at 4,000 feet, examine a remaining chestnut stump, smell the uncut hayfield in the valley, and tramp through the ubiquitous rain. These interludes not only help the reader experience the place, they give Silver authority as a naturalist-writer and render the text more personal and readable.

It is a convention among historians to make their monographs sound “path-breaking” or “new.” In his introduction, Silver claims to write the first “true-to-life chronicle of the southern Appalachians, one in which nature gets equal time with people.” This is presumptuous. At least a dozen books and museum exhibits already have attempted this, and it would be impossible to write this book without the prominent role assigned to Elisha Mitchell and the influential State forester, John Simcox Holmes. Nor is Silver's thesis—“human perceptions of nature...dictated most of the activities of the region”—unique. Nonetheless, the work will be of great interest to managers who wish to use the environment as a lens for interpretation and to students of State parks and their development.

Margaret Lynn Brown
Brevard College

1. The 1911 Weeks Act established the first national forests east of the Mississippi by providing funds for land in “the watersheds of navigable streams.”

The Past in Peril

By Mike Toner. With a Forward by John E. Ehrenhard. Tallahassee, FL: Southeast Archeological Center, National Park Service, 2002; 122 pp., illustrations, tables; paper, free of charge.

As news of lost treasures and raided archeological sites in Iraq played out in the national media, the National Park Service's Southeast Archeological Center gathered and reprinted a series of articles by *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* science writer, Mike Toner. Starting in 1999, Toner wrote a six-part series on cultural heritage sites and artifacts in danger. The reprinted works, along with complementary graphics and images by photographer David Tulis, make up *The Past in Peril*.

The series starts with a case study of looting in Peru. Toner describes the economics of looting, and how the poor locals take the biggest risks while gaining the least as the value of artifacts increase exponentially the closer that they get to collectors. Next is a collection of articles that delves further into the trade of stolen artifacts. Toner explains how anonymity in the art and artifact trade means that too few questions are asked about provenance. He shows how easy it has been for dealers and smugglers to ship artifacts to other countries for laundering. From there, valuable objects go to art dealers and auction houses in New York and Tokyo. His global perspective takes us to Antarctica, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia as he reports on thefts the world over.

Museums do not escape Toner's coverage. Exposés on major institutions such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the British Museum take them to task for early collection practices, and the well-known Elgin Marbles case is described in some detail. This particular issue helped lead to the "Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums" issued in December 2002 by 18 major museums of the world. There are exam-

ples from the United States, specifically Georgia, sprinkled throughout.

We get a fuller perspective of what is happening in the United States later in the book. The most popular examples here are the looting of Civil War battlefields and Native American burial sites. Again, due to the rewarding market for bullets, belt buckles, and baskets, people are willing to dig up private and public lands in search of goods to sell. When you include the fact that many places do not have the resources to protect their property, it is a sad tale to tell that our past is slipping away into the black market. A final section is devoted to other ways that we are losing our past—how sprawl, armed conflict, and tourism are destroying heritage sites. This is by no means an innovative work, but it brings together in a concise, journalistic style some of the issues we face as a profession and for society as a whole in preserving the material aspects of the past. Both the author and the publisher should be congratulated for their efforts to raise public awareness of these issues.

Harry Klinkhamer

American Association for State and Local History

EXHIBITS*El Río*

Smithsonian Institution, Arts and Industries Building, Washington, DC. Project Directors: Olivia Cadaval and Cynthia Vidaurri

February 14-April 30, 2003

How are cultural identity, traditional knowledge, and sustainable development related in a particular place at a particular time? This is the main question explored by *El Río*, an exhibit created through the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. The material culture, interactive vignettes, music, photographs, and films that comprise the exhibit prompt the viewer to question the

multiple and often complex relationships among its main themes.

By focusing on a particular place—the Río Grande/Río Bravo basin on the border of the United States and Mexico—and how the people there live, a series of questions are raised: How are identities created and maintained? How does place affect culture? What is the relationship of the communities of the United States and Mexico to the Río Grande/Río Bravo basin, and how do the people who live there perceive themselves as carriers of traditional knowledge about culture and the environment? How do they perceive themselves as communities, individuals, or even nations? What is the compatibility of environmental and cultural projects?

A strong point of *El Río* is that many of these related questions are answered in the exhibit through current scholarship, particularly in border studies. Border studies have long been an important perspective in understanding American history.¹ During the past decade, however, scholarship has expanded beyond the borders themselves to examine identity politics and transnational projects.² This exhibit highlights these trends and serves as a effective storytelling space based on current methodological and theoretical perspectives.

The exhibit itself is comprised of several areas, separated by physical gaps rather than by titles. Each area tells several different stories emphasizing various aspects of culture and environment in places along the Río Grande/Río Bravo basin and highlighting relationships among the three main themes: traditional knowledge, cultural identity, and sustainable development. The exhibit is in both English and Spanish, with the English presented first at times, and the Spanish first at other times. This subtle but deliberate manipulation of the text allows the power of language to be shared, making it a truly bilingual as well as binational space.

The Río Grande/Río Bravo basin and its people are illustrated through a display map of the region that highlights particular places surrounding the basin, such as small towns. Without reference to Mexican versus American citizenship, the people are presented as a mix of Native American and Spanish descendants, as well as first generation inhabitants. A few direct references are made to specific tribal names or ethnic or racial groups with whom the people in the exhibit are affiliated. This lack of specificity regarding who these people are makes the viewer think about and question identity and how it is created and maintained. Rather than focus on nationality, or individual or group identities, the focus is on culture and traditional knowledge.

The second half of *El Río* raises questions about the maintenance of culture in the face of disparate environmental and political policies. Headphones are traded among visitors as they listen to ceremonial, social, and topical traditional music, and a discussion of how water policies conflict with traditional values, and watch videos of the corn dance. Power issues are emphasized through oral histories and artifacts related to religious cycles versus forced seasonal migrations, small local businesses versus corporations, and affordable housing for migrant communities. Artifacts associated with those issues include photographs and material culture from local businesses—barber chairs, meat market interiors, traditional herbs in a drug store, and adobe houses. This portion of the exhibit hints more openly at a primary concern with the emerging global relations of capital, the relationship between power and hegemonic constructions of culture and practice, and the position and outlook of the viewers themselves.

A series of questions concludes the exhibit: What are your environments? Is there traditional knowledge in your community? Can that knowledge maintain and improve the environment? Considering these questions places the visitor in the same position as the people of the Río Grande/Río Bravo basin, prompting the viewer to

think about the extent to which globalization changes the techniques of social resistance.

Taking a page from border and transnational studies, *El Río* focuses on the complex social relations that link the people of the basin with both the United States and Mexico, with the environment and culture, and with modern technologies and traditional practices. The multiple relationships among the people who live in the Río Grande/Río Bravo basin are reflected in the development of familial, economic, social, religious, and political ties that span borders.

Erika K. Martin Seibert
National Park Service

1. For detailed discussions on border studies, see Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands, La Frontera* 2nd Edition (San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books, 1999); Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature* (New York and London: Routledge, 1989); Héctor Calderon and José David Saldívar, *Criticism in the Borderlands: Studies in Chicano Literature, Culture, and Ideology* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991); Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993).

2. Frances R. Aparicio and Susana Chávez-Silverman, *Tropicalizations: Transcultural Representations of Latinidad* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College, University Press of New England, 1997); Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, and Cristina Szanton Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Politics, Postcolonial Predicaments and Deterritorialized Nation-States* (London: Gordon and Breach, 1994); Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi, eds., *The Cultures of Globalization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998); Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, eds., *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997); Donald E. Pease, ed., *National Identities and Post-Americanist Narratives* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994).

Gateway to Gold Mountain: The Angel Island Experience; Tin See Do: The Angel Island Experience; made in the usa: Angel Island Shhh; and My Mother's Baggage: Paper Sister/Paper Aunt/Paper Wife

The Ellis Island Immigration Museum, New York, NY. Curator: Judy Giuriceo.

March 8-May 31, 2003

*Imprisoned in the wooden building day after day,
My freedom is withheld; how can I bear to talk
about it?*

I look to see who is happy but they only sit quietly.

*I am anxious and depressed and cannot fall asleep.
The days are long and the bottle constantly empty;
My sad mood even so is not dispelled.*

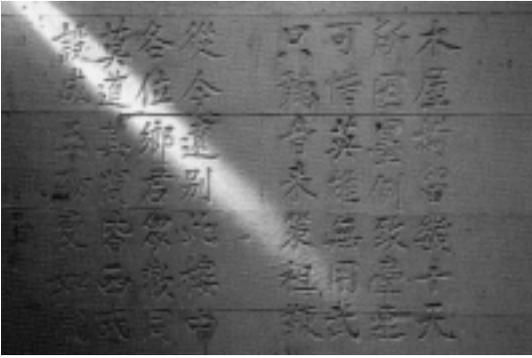
*Nights are long and the pillow cold; who can pity my
loneliness?*

*After experiencing such loneliness and sorrow,
Why not just return home and learn to plow the
fields?*

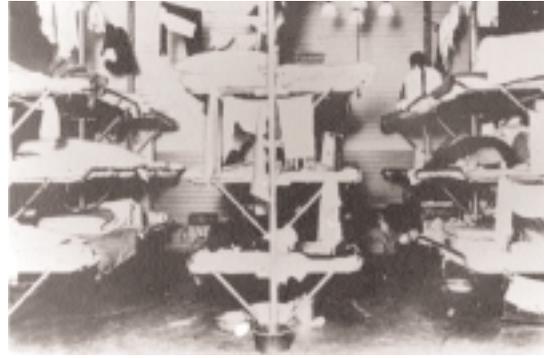
— From the walls of Angel Island Immigration Station, author unknown

On a typical daily trip into Manhattan, commuters catching a glimpse of the Statue of Liberty may be reminded of the significance of immigration to the United States. Is there a comparable symbol of immigration on the West Coast? A special exhibit at the museum on Ellis Island reveals its western counterpart, Angel Island Immigration Station.

The Ellis Island Immigration Museum took a novel approach in addressing west coast immigration by combining the Angel Island Immigration Foundation traveling exhibit, *Gateway to Gold Mountain: The Angel Island Experience*, the Kearny Street Workshop's, *Tin See Do: The Angel Island Experience*, and installations by artist Flo Oy Wong,



The poetry carved into the walls of Angel Island Immigration Station spoke of the sadness and loneliness of confinement. (Courtesy of Surrey Blackburn.)



Immigrants stayed in these barracks anywhere from a few days to 2 years. (Courtesy of the California State Department of Parks and Recreation.)



Detainees were questioned about their families and what they intended to do in the United States. (Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.)



A doctor examines a detainee at Angel Island. (Courtesy of the California State Department of Parks and Recreation.)

made in the usa: Angel Island Shhh and *My Mother's Baggage: Paper Sister/Paper Aunt/Paper Wife. Gateway to Gold Mountain* and *Tin See Do* chronicle the journey of Chinese immigrants and their lives during detention on Angel Island. *Made in the usa* and *My Mother's Baggage* explore the personal identities of Chinese immigrants. The collaboration among Ellis Island National Monument, Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, Kearney Street Workshop, and Ms. Wong provides a fuller view of the immigration phenomenon.

Angel Island, a State park in the middle of San Francisco Bay, was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1997 and, unfortunately, was listed as one of America's 11 Most Endangered Places in 1999 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Between 1910 and 1940, over 1 million people passed through the station. The vast majori-

ty were Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, and Asian Indian, with Portuguese, Mexican, and Russian immigrants as well. The significance of the Angel Island experience begins with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the first time immigration control was based on nationality or race. Designed to curtail Chinese immigration, the law allowed for additional discriminatory laws directed at other people of Asian origin or descent.

Gateway to Gold Mountain and *Tin See Do* reveal both the similarities and differences experienced by Chinese immigrants in their pursuit of freedom. Their feelings of sadness and isolation are embodied in the presentations. Most Asians were detained for prolonged periods on the island, from a few weeks to 2 years. The displays depict the attitudes, hopes, and fears of immigrants through photographic images and poetry carved

on the walls during their time at Angel Island. Each image or poem reveals the detainees' anxiety, depression, and longing. The photographs vividly capture views of medical inspections and interrogations. The exhibition also includes a video, "Carved in Silence," by Felecia Lowe.

The artist's two exhibits, *made in the usa: Angel Island Shhh* and *My Mother's Baggage: Paper Sister/Paper Aunt/Paper Wife*, add personal narrative to this history. They feature people, their collected memories, and some historical interpretation by Flo Oy Wong. Both installations recognize the importance of personal stories and oral history as a counterpoint to the photographic records of *Gateway to Gold Mountain* and *Tin See Do*.

In *made in the usa*, Wong presents the American flag on cloth rice sacks in an ironic play on the symbolism of the flag—freedom, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. She combines the rice-sack flags with photographs and passages from recorded interviews with former detainees to create 25 mixed-media collages of the Angel Island experience. The collages commemorate the trials and tribulations of the detainees' lives. They are markers, moving epitaphs of American history, documented from the spoken word.

Wong uses her family in further scrutinizing immigration. *My Mother's Baggage* examines the boundaries of truth, and issues of self, identity, and trust, while exposing some of her family secrets. Like other Chinese immigrants, Wong's family came to the United States seeking a better life. Wong's use of suitcases as containers of memories to capture the hidden stories and lives of her family is an imaginative means of demonstrating these private aspects of the immigration process.

The exhibits bring the story of Asian immigration, and in particular Chinese immigration, to a larger audience. It links two major points of entry for the United States, and illuminates hardships associated with the immigration experience that were previ-

ously unrecognized. The exhibits accomplish this through an honest and personal inspection of public policy and process.

Atim Oton
AzEO Media, New York

Harlem Lost & Found

The Museum of the City of New York, New York, NY. Curator: Michael Henry Adams

May 3, 2003-January 4, 2004

The exhibit *Harlem Lost & Found* at the Museum of the City of New York is based on a book of the same name by curator Michael Henry Adams.¹ The exhibit traces Harlem's social and urban history through its artifacts and architecture and shows how Harlem developed from an Indian village to an urban cultural capital.

The exhibit is chronological, starting with Native American settlement and featuring stone tools and arrowheads found in the area. The 17th-century Dutch settlement of Nieuw Haarlem, located north of the city, gave the neighborhood its name. When the English took control of New York City, they attempted to rename the settlement New Lancaster, to no avail. Country estates dotted the rural landscape in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Most have been demolished but two survive: the Morris Jumel Mansion, built in 1765, and Alexander Hamilton's Grange, built in 1802. Illustrations, paintings, furniture, silver, clothing, and a scale model of Hamilton Grange provide an engaging picture of this country estate.

Harlem's development peaked from the 1880s to World War I. The construction of trolley and subway lines, the pressure of the city's rapidly growing population, and the increasing density of areas farther south triggered the expansion. As defined in

the exhibit, Harlem encompasses a large part of northern Manhattan.

The new tenements, row houses, and apartment buildings attracted European immigrants, mostly Germans, Italians, and eastern European Jews. By 1917, Harlem had the second largest Jewish population in the country at 170,000, but by 1930, the Jewish population numbered only 5,000. The synagogues that they built were sold to churches. The show features the former Temple Anshe Chesed, designed by Edward Shire in 1909, now Mount Neboh Baptist Church. The exhibition highlights extraordinary buildings by important architects, such as Strivers' Row by McKim, Mead and White in 1891; the 1909 St. Mary's Church by Carrère and Hastings, architects of the New York Public Library; and early skyscraper architect Francis Kimball's 1887 Queen Anne style row houses on West 122nd Street.

African Americans moved into Harlem at the beginning of the 20th century. They came from other parts of New York City, the South, and the Caribbean. There were many instances of racism and exclusion. The financial panic of 1904-07 left hundreds of apartments vacant, creating opportunities for African Americans who sought better housing. By 1930, more than 200,000 African Americans lived in Harlem.

Two photos of the dining room at 118 West 120th Street are particularly evocative of the ethnic history of Harlem. The first shows the Guttenberg family in 1902. Eight family members are seated formally at a dining table under an elaborate chandelier, celebrating the Guttenberg's golden anniversary. The second shows the artist Grace Williams in the same room, now a studio, with her colorful paintings in front of the same ornate mantel. Ms. Williams is the third generation of her family to live in the house.

One of the most famous Harlem residents featured in the exhibition is Madam C. J. Walker. Born in a log cabin in Louisiana in 1867, she started a beauty

products company for African-American women and became a millionaire. Madam Walker was part of the first wave of African Americans who moved to Harlem. In 1915 she hired an African-American architect, Vertner Woodson Tandy, to redesign two rowhouses on West 136th Street and create what was to be the last of the area's mansions. The house was demolished in 1942.

Jazz plays throughout the exhibition, a reminder of the influential era of the Harlem Renaissance that reached its height in the 1920s and transformed Harlem into a cultural capital. Influential artists included writers Langston Hughes and Countee Cullen; Aaron Douglas, whose murals are at the Countee Cullen library; and James Van der Zee, who maintained a studio in Harlem and whose photographic portraits are in the exhibit. Music and venues like Small's Paradise and the Savoy Ballroom were also an important part of the Harlem scene during this period.

Vividly colored terra cotta fragments highlight a display of the famed Audubon Ballroom. It was one of the first theaters built for William Fox of the 20th Century Fox movie studio and became best known as the place where Malcolm X was assassinated in 1965. Most of the building was demolished in the 1990s but parts of the ballroom and the facade were saved and incorporated into a new building.

The exhibit uses architectural fragments such as a cornice frieze, balusters, railings, and gargoyles to show what we are missing. Losses like this and a number of others prompted the curator, a historic preservationist, to publish a book showcasing Harlem architecture.

The exhibition is modest in size, but crammed with information. The captions are extensive, with academic descriptions of the history and architecture of Harlem. The show relies on the collections of the Museum of the City of New York, known for its historic photographs and New York City decorative arts collections, as well as the curator's pri-

vate collection. Contemporary color photographs by Paul Rocheleau portray Harlem's vibrant and extraordinary architecture.

For those who cannot visit the exhibit in person, the Museum of the City of New York Website provides a good summary of the exhibit at www.mcnyc.org.

Mary Dierickx

Mary B. Dierickx Architectural Preservation Consultants

1. Michael Henry Adams, *Harlem Lost and Found* (New York: Monicelli Press, 2002).

Bronzeville: Black Chicago in Pictures, 1941-1943

The International Center of Photography, New York, NY. Curator: Maren Stange

February 28-June 8, 2003

In 1940, sociologist St. Claire Drake described Chicago's Black Belt as an "eddy of faces—black, brown, olive, yellow, and white." A neighborhood defined by its inhabitants, it became affectionately known as Bronzeville. Those who lived in Bronzeville, a South Side Chicago neighborhood, geographically bounded from 22nd to 63rd Streets between Wentworth and Cottage Grove, resembled a socio-economic dichotomy of African-American people: the elite and the destitute. Its character was documented from 1941 to 1943 by photographers Edwin Rosskam, Russell Lee, John Vachon, and Jack Delano as part of the Depression-era Farm Security Administration project to depict urban conditions of the recent rural migrants from the South. *Bronzeville: Black Chicago in Pictures, 1941-1943*, an exhibit at the International Center of Photography (ICP), presents over 120 photographs that capture the essence of Chicago's Black Belt.

Guest curator and associate professor at The

Cooper Union, Maren Stange, and ICP Assistant Curator Cynthia Fredette organized the exhibit using anthropological and social historical themes: The Face of the "Black Belt," 12 Million Black Voices, Family and Home, Work and Business, Church, and Going Out. Photographs in these categories voice the emotional triumphs and disappointments of urban life and a story of perseverance.

The introduction to *Bronzeville* asks, "Who were the people of Bronzeville?" and "How did they live?" The photograph, "People Sitting on the Front Porch in the Negro Section," by Russell Lee begins to answer using unbalanced subjects to symbolize the social and economic unbalance in this community. On the right, a man sits isolated in front of a sundry shop while to his left three men and a woman look suspiciously at the camera. They are subjugated individuals, exemplifying the complex dynamics of Bronzeville, a place of symbolic promise with destitute realities.

Photographer Edwin Rosskam's observation that the "housefronts in the 'best' area of the Black Belt are merely shells enclosing slum living" underscores the purpose of the Farm Security Administration photographic project. The Roosevelt Administration used the project to legitimize New Deal efforts to alleviate poverty. A second photograph in this section, "Candy Stand Run by a Negro on the South Side," by Lee bears witness to the urban decay that persisted in Bronzeville. The store, standing on a deteriorated street, resembles a shanty on the edge of a village.

The title of Richard Wright's second book, *12 Million Black Voices: A Folk History of the Negro in the United States*, serves as the title of the next section. Combining the language of Wright with the Farm Security Administration imagery generates a fresh perspective of Bronzeville. The photographers' images are supported by Wright's words, in addition to commentary throughout from St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton's groundbreaking sociological and economic study, *Black Metropolis*.¹

“Family and Home” uses the images of its subjects to bridge Bronzeville’s multiple socio-economic categories. The photographers in this series contrasted the inhabitants of Bronzeville, the well-todos and the undesirables. Following the evidence provided by Wright, Lee, Rosskam, Drake, and Cayton, Jack Delano focused his photographic account on the exemplary families living in the Black Belt. Delano’s photographs coincide with a shift in philosophy for the Farm Security Administration project, which was absorbed into the Office of War Information in 1942. The purpose of the project changed from documenting poverty to publicizing patriotic behavior.

Wright described life on the other side of the Black Belt as “kitchenettes—our death sentence without trial.” The kitchenette was the divided interior of a large house that once belonged to wealthy white families. These apartments offered less than comfortable living conditions: a room furnished with a bed or two, sometimes a living area, and a small kitchen area. The photographs give Wright’s critique credibility. For example, the photograph “Negro Family Living in Crowded Quarters” depicts a mother and her three children, surrounded by draped laundry and unsecured lights.

Delano’s images contrast starkly with photographs taken by Lee and Rosskam: he shows families reading and playing instruments and fraternity brothers at the University of Chicago. The photograph “On a Sunday Afternoon at Home, [musician] ‘Red’ [Saunders] and his Wife Read the Comics to Their Children and Puppy Whose Name is ‘Blitz,’” capture a family attending to “American” values. In addition, Delano emphasizes the elegance of Bronzeville. “Oliver Coleman has Apparatus for Recording in his Home on Indiana Avenue. He uses it to Record the Work of his Students and his own Drumming,” pictures a man in solitude refining his skills for the benefit of others. Delano’s photographs convey a different tone that enabled the curator to interpret the Bronzeville reality—a continuum of wealth and poverty.

In the realm of “Work and Business,” enterprise abounds and the photographs unveil the multifaceted entrepreneurial spirit of the people of Bronzeville. Rosskam’s photograph, “Lunch Wagon for Negroes,” shows the perseverance of one man carving out a business for himself. Stange juxtaposed this photograph with other similarly industrious subjects, including shoeshine boys, barbers, and dime-store attendants. Although these occupations employed citizens in respectable jobs, the exhibit team accurately depicted the dominance of the service industry.

Stange’s themes of “Church” and “Going Out” transcend the previous mood by embracing the strength of the human spirit. The church in the black community provided guidance and spiritual uplift. Regardless of the facilities, the passion for worship was not curtailed. Delano, Rosskam, and Lee illustrate the piety, sophistication, and revelry found in Bronzeville churches. This same vitality infiltrated the community in social and recreational life. Stange includes photographs from taverns, nights at the Savoy Ballroom, and community centers. Through personalities such as Gwendolyn Brooks, Langston Hughes, and blues singer Lonnie Johnson, Stange reinforces the cultural legacy of Bronzeville.

Bronzeville captures the neighborhood’s rich character, meticulously presents a complex social history, and affirms the premise behind the Farm Security Administration project: to document the overwhelming effects of the mass migration of rural people to urban areas such as Chicago.

Danette T. Sokacich
New York, New York

1. St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, *Black Metropolis; A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1945).

Exhibit Catalogue: Maren Stange, *Bronzeville: Black Chicago in Pictures, 1941-1943* (New York: New Press, 2003).

Saving Mount Vernon: The Birth of Preservation in America

National Building Museum, Washington, DC.
Curator: Pamela Scott

February 15–September 21, 2003

Saving Mount Vernon: The Birth of Preservation in America celebrates the role of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association in preserving and restoring George Washington's Mount Vernon plantation in Virginia. Commemorating the association's 150th anniversary in 2003, *Saving Mount Vernon* argues that founder Ann Pamela Cunningham's efforts to restore and refurnish the house and preserve the surrounding acreage as Washington knew them "heralded the birth of the historic preservation movement in America and inspired others to emulate her principles of authentic preservation." The exhibit successfully, and appropriately, celebrates the ladies' achievements and explains the significance of Mount Vernon to Americans. Too many times, however, it misses opportunities to enrich the story by engaging the broader context, including issues of race and preservation efforts by others.

The exhibit is organized into six thematic sections. The first deals with Mount Vernon as icon and notes that Mount Vernon became a national shrine with George Washington's 1799 death. Over the past 150 years, an estimated 80 million people have visited Mount Vernon, which made it a successful tool for fulfilling two of the association's goals: reminding Americans of Washington's role as a founding father and inspiring visitors "to emulate George Washington's exemplary patriotism."

This section also features Mount Vernon in miniature, an exact replica of the mansion's interior and exterior. This object, which alone makes the exhibit noteworthy, offers visitors the opportunity to study the house in detail and at their own pace.

The next section focuses on Cunningham's grass-roots efforts to purchase Mount Vernon from Washington's great-great nephew John A. Washington. By 1858, the association had garnered enough political and financial support to acquire the estate. Thereafter, the ladies implemented an impressive restoration and preservation program that secured Mount Vernon's future. Primarily focusing on documents, this section is the least visually interesting, and the size and sometimes color of the label text are also problematic.

Included in the exhibit are letters from Cunningham to newspapers to build support for her project. Although the exhibit does not highlight these issues, the letters reveal that her efforts to save Mount Vernon were intertwined with the sectional tensions and Southern nationalism that also characterized the 1850s. In an 1853 letter "To the Ladies of the South" in the *Charleston Mercury*, Cunningham talks about the threat of "Northern capital" and "speculative machinists," and appeals to Southern women "in the name of...Southern feeling and honor." While Cunningham ultimately became convinced that her efforts needed to be national if they were to be successful, Southern nationalism clearly continued to shape the association's priorities in preserving Mount Vernon.

The third section describes the process of, but not the laborers involved in, restoring the mansion. Here the exhibit also encounters a minor organizational problem: it would have been informative to see the topic of the restoration of the mansion together with the topic of the preservation of the viewshed, which appears in an earlier section. While the viewshed photographs provide a nice background for the miniature, discussing the preservation of the house and landscape together would have provided a more holistic depiction of the ladies' efforts.

One of the most object-dense areas of the exhibit addresses the more specialized preservation work of the association's tomb, outbuildings, gardens

and grounds, and relics committees. Here visitors can see the original cupola finial, a model of Washington's 16-sided barn, and a variety of Washington's personal items and ceramics. This section is the only one that mentions the institution of slavery; but even here references to slaves and slavery are scant. Photographs show former slaves or their descendants, like Thomas Bushrod and Tom Quander. A painting of an outbuilding shows a slave woman. Exhibit text states that "Although advised to tear down structures where slaves had lived and worked, the association did not comply."

While slavery may be tangential to the story of the association, the issues of race and racism are not. And in this way, the exhibit demonstrates how the association was representative of broader preservation efforts. In prioritizing what was most important to preserve and restore, the ladies overlooked the slave quarters for more than a century. While they admirably understood the quarters' importance in Mount Vernon's daily domestic life, the exhibit also reveals that Mount Vernon's superintendents used the Servants' Hall for their office until 1983.

Not once does the exhibit deal with the issue of how historic sites, monuments, and shrines—all of which characterize Mount Vernon—reflect both the past and the present. At various points, the ladies chose not to highlight a certain aspect of Washington's past and determined what history they thought was worth remembering. The exhibit offers little information about the ladies' decisions, choices, and values about what to preserve at Mount Vernon. The omission of the race and slavery issues becomes more problematic when one considers some of the language in the exhibit. One label described slave Tom Quander as having "descended from a family that had been residing at Mount Vernon since the eighteenth century." The video described the slaves as a "hard-working labor force." Both phrases come across as whitewashing the issue of slavery. More than a dozen visitors

expressed concerns in the comment book over what they perceived as "glossing over" the story of slavery. Indeed, one young person perceptively asked, "What about the slaves? Where did they stay? Why wasn't it restored?"

Next, experiencing Mount Vernon looks at visitation to the plantation. This entertaining section includes photographs of the many different individuals, groups, and dignitaries who have made the pilgrimage over the years. The ladies quickly found a means for raising funds for their efforts in the sale of souvenirs, many of which are on display. This section of the exhibit reflects on the influence of Mount Vernon—not only on preservation, but on American architecture generally. Postcards and other images of hotels, restaurants, and private homes show how pervasive and influential Mount Vernon's architecture has become.

A final section takes the visitor inside Mount Vernon's green dining room and teaches visitors that historic preservation is an ongoing process that changes as historians conduct additional research.

The exhibit does many things well, but unfortunately it does not prove, or really even try to prove, that the association's efforts were the first major preservation efforts nor that they inspired others to preserve. Indeed, despite its declining condition, Uriah Phillips Levy purchased Thomas Jefferson's Monticello in 1834, 20 years before Cunningham saw Mount Vernon. He believed that "the houses of great men should be preserved as 'monuments to their glory'" and he and his family owned it for almost a century.¹ Clearly, Levy and Monticello, as much as Cunningham and Mount Vernon, deserve a role in the story of the origins of historic preservation.

Saving Mount Vernon covers an important and interesting topic, is visually stimulating and appealing, and uses an effective combination of historical documents, photographs, and objects. One visitor

summed up the exhibit's success when she wrote in the comment book, "A great tribute to George Washington and the ladies who worked to preserve his home and farm." If one accepts the exhibit as a celebration of the association, an organization clearly worthy of celebration, then the omissions regarding Southern nationalism, race and slavery, and the broader preservation movement are less problematic. While the exhibit missed some important opportunities for scholarship and engaging particular issues, it achieves much and is sure to appeal to broad audiences.

Laura Croghan Kamoie
American University

1. Marc Leepson, *Saving Monticello: The Levy Family's Epic Quest to Rescue the House That Jefferson Built* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2001), 254.

Washington Perspectives and Washington Stories

The City Museum of Washington, DC,
Washington, DC. Curators: Laura Schiavo and Jill
Connors

Permanent exhibits

The new City Museum of Washington, DC, has an important mission: to make the capital and its history accessible to the citizens of Washington and to national and international visitors. To accomplish this, the museum's creators have an innovative concept—a central museum in downtown Washington that serves as an orienting hub with links to the city's neighborhoods and to important governmental, business, cultural, and community sites.

Located in a former Carnegie Library, the museum occupies 60,000 square feet of exhibition and education galleries, an auditorium, and a museum store. It is a cheerful space, with yellow and deep red detailing on the white walls of the main hall. Equally cheerful greeters direct you to the two primary exhibits, the introductory exhibit *Washington*

Perspectives and the 23-minute multimedia show *Washington Stories*.

In *Washington Perspectives*, an enlarged black-and-white photograph shows children playing in an alley with the Capitol dome hovering in the background. Its label is simple and direct: "Washington's peoples and neighborhoods as well as the federal government have shaped this unique place—the nation's capital." The take-home message has been delivered.

The floor of the exhibit is a huge aerial photographic map of the 100 square miles of the original district that is astounding in its detail. During my 4-hour visit, there was always someone kneeling, making connections, and delighting in new discoveries. The map also serves as a gathering place, a spot where visitors encounter one another and can talk about their discoveries.

Arranged around this map are four exhibit areas that address four eras: Imagining a Capital, Creating a City: 1790-1860; A Modernizing City: 1861-1900; Progress, War, and Protest: 1901-1945; and Changing Neighborhoods and Community Voices: 1946-present.

The design of the exhibit is dense and encourages visitors to explore, open drawers and doors, and stick their heads in cubbyholes to investigate. In the period 1790-1860, for example, one label reads: "Fortunes were made and lost." Another proclaims: "The seat of government lacked the power to govern itself." A third asks: "Slavery in the capital of a democracy?" These issues are arrayed among images of Washington's landscape, early buildings, and residents, with the focus on people whose lives affected, or were affected by, these themes. Those interested in learning more about the themes will find a treasure trove of artifacts, such as an 1802 manumission letter, an 1827 Black Codes, and an 1843 Certificate of Freedom for Jane Taverns and her children, signed by the mayor.

Beyond the drawers, there are four "behind the facade" interpretative sets in each section of

Washington Perspectives. Opening the “Imagining a Capital” door reveals a table in an early boarding-house where, due to the lack of adequate housing and the transient nature of the Federal Government, congressmen lived while Congress was in session. At each chair a question is posed. One asks, “A Profitable Business?” addressing the single women and widows who typically ran the boardinghouses, many of whom barely eked out a living.

Overall, with its multiple perspectives, interactive design, and engaging questions, the exhibit provides an excellent orientation to the major themes of Washington’s history. The exhibit curators have synthesized much of the new scholarship on urban Washington to craft the exhibit’s narrative. The exhibit’s few shortcomings include the absence of powerful artifacts. Although several are strong—for example, a fifth-grader’s drawings of the April 1968 riots and an embroidered shawl worn to Ford’s Theatre the night of Lincoln’s assassination—the exhibit would be improved by additions that better illustrate the major themes.

Washington Stories, the multimedia show, is a treat. The program begins with a hologram of a gray-haired matron, Miss Inkster, who steps onto the stage to deliver an introduction to the city, complete with note cards. But the good lady has barely begun her talk when she is interrupted by other Washingtonians. An African-American woman talks about Washington’s U Street, “It belonged to us and we belonged to U Street.” Someone complains about the District’s lack of representation in Congress.

Miss Inkster is dismissed and the tale is taken over by people from the city’s past, including the city’s original planner Pierre L’Enfant, early mayor Robert Brent, British Admiral George Cockburn, Frederick Douglass, and Martha Custis Williams, who lived in Georgetown during the Civil War. The show concludes with the statement that Washington is a city of unexpected moments and places, which visitors really must explore for themselves.

While *Washington Perspectives* and *Washington Stories* are the feature exhibits, the museum houses much more. The research library resides on the second level, along with changing exhibit spaces featuring *Taking a Closer Look*, an exhibit of original prints and maps of Washington, and *Sandlots to Stadiums: Sports and Community in Washington, DC*, which focuses on the connections between athletics and those who participate in and support them. On the main level, two galleries will feature revolving neighborhood exhibits designed in collaboration with community partners. *Chinatown: Place or People?* and *Mount Vernon Square Communities: Generations of Change* open in fall 2003. An archeology laboratory and classrooms for educational programs are located in the basement.

The new City Museum of Washington, DC, provides an energizing, welcoming, and informative overview of Washington. Visitors are reminded that real people live in Washington, and, not surprisingly, the museum’s Website reaffirms the City Museum’s three main messages: “Welcome,” “Real People Live Here,” and “No Matter Who You Are, You Have A Connection to Washington, DC.”

Melissa McLoud
Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

Treasure State Treasures

Montana Historical Society, Helena, MT.
Curator: Kirby Lambert

Semipermanent, open until 2007

The Montana Historical Society’s exhibit, *Treasure State Treasures*, has a twist that is sure to please the visitor. The story line does not illustrate the typical State historical event or famous Montana personality. Its chief objective is to get artifacts out of storage and on exhibit for visitors to enjoy, while giving them an opportunity to understand challenging museum issues.

The Montana Historical Society was established in 1865 and is the oldest, continuously run State historical organization in the Nation. The society publishes the journal, *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*; includes the State's historic preservation office; and operates an active educational outreach program.

Treasure State Treasures is organized around objects—a wall with military items, a cabinet of walking sticks, a kitchen full of paraphernalia. Exhibit curator, Kirby Lambert admits that an object-rich exhibit is the only way to address the enormous challenge of selecting just a few treasures among the hundreds of thousands of artifacts collected since the organization's establishment. Interpretive text is minimal but successful in setting the tone and explaining how objects were selected. Some speak to State significance and others are typical of everyday life. Selected items represent all areas of the State.

The success of *Treasure State Treasures* is “the drawers.” A map cabinet has its drawers filled with archival riches protected by Plexiglas. Two “dressers” contain drawers for three-dimensional artifacts. Each drawer reflects a theme—railroads, political badges, and shoes. A label explains how the drawers are similar to museum storage where artifacts are not just squirreled away, but stored for conservation and research.

Future components of the exhibit will address context. A few bedraggled objects will be displayed next to a few pristine items. The visitor will learn that what appears to be “junk,” a lump of adobe from Fort Benton, is valuable because of the story behind it and that the “nice” pieces, a couple of very large arrowheads, are not as valuable because no information exists to verify their authenticity.

Treasure State Treasures provides an admirable example of how museums can select from their storehouse of seemingly ordinary artifacts, place

them within a broad context, and connect them to the experiences of their visitors.

Chris Ford
Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site

September II: Bearing Witness to History

Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Behring Center, Washington, DC. Lead Curator: Marilyn Zoidis; Collecting Curators: William Yeingst, Peter Liebhold, and David Shayt

September II, 2002–July 6, 2003

Business professor and author Peter F. Drucker stated that “in a few hundred years, when the history of our time will be written from a long-term perspective, it is likely that the most important event historians will see is not technology.... It is an unprecedented change in the human condition.” Our current human condition is a country emerging from war, seeking economic stability, and forging a new position in the global marketplace. However, for most Americans September is no longer the month of passing fancy from summer to fall, from vacation to school; this month has become a moment in time when America experienced terror not seen since Pearl Harbor.

The simultaneous events at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania, are addressed through the National Museum of American History's exhibit *September II: Bearing Witness to History*. Within months of that fateful day, museum curators sought to document the event through artifacts. This ongoing collection effort is sampled in *September II*. The installation contains photographs, artifacts, objects, a testimony book, and a video.

Anyone who has visited Smithsonian museums dur-

ing the height of tourist season knows the cacophonous din of the crowds. At this exhibit, in high contrast, the atmosphere is reverential and subdued.

The entrance is filled with photographs taken by professionals and amateurs who capture the horror and devastation of the attacks. The photographs provide a visceral, firsthand depiction of the moment with images of collapsing buildings, soot-covered survivors, and stunned and teary-eyed onlookers. In the object gallery, approximately 50 items, representing the three crash sites, are used to document the stories of the local impact as well as the national response and recovery effort.

All of the items provide commentary on the horrible events of September 11, but three items in particular communicate the depth of human determination, resilience, and memory. A squeegee owned by window washer Jan Demczur became a tool of liberation on September 11. Trapped on the 50th floor in an elevator at the World Trade Center, Mr. Demczur used the squeegee to cut holes through which he and five others crawled and escaped from the building just minutes before it collapsed. The second object is a scrapbook compiled by Michelle Guyton, an artist from Mobile, Alabama. A means to reflect, cope, and heal, this scrapbook incorporates historical and patriotic themes, as well as newspaper and magazine clippings.

The third object is a selection of postings from a memorial created by survivors and family members at the entrance to Bellevue Hospital in New York. This spontaneous human effort to locate missing loved ones and to memorialize those who had been lost began within days of the attacks as people posted makeshift fliers containing photographs and descriptions of "missing persons." Dubbed the "Wall of Prayers," it brought together people of all faiths who came to mourn and pray for the missing, the survivors, and the Nation.

September 11 includes a number of interactive elements. A short video produced by ABC News

recounts the initial television news response. "Tell Us Your Story" encourages visitors to write their recollections about how September 11 affected them.

Finally, there is an Internet site that offers a virtual tour of the museum's collection of more than 140 September 11 artifacts and several interviews with curators (<http://americanhistory.si.edu/september11>). The site is maintained in conjunction with The September 11 Digital Archive at George Mason University. The exhibit will remain permanently online with its visitors' guide, selected objects, links, and video and audio clips.

This exhibit evokes the strong emotions, reflections, and reminiscences about the September 11 attacks. It also provides useful information. By analyzing the written reflections left by museum visitors, scholars may add to our understanding of the human response to horrendous events. The exhibit may aid parents and educators in answering questions posed by children and students. By sharing stories, the public can continue to recover. The National Museum of American History, Behring Center, has done an excellent job in offering this exhibit for our contemplation and catharsis. This exhibit will begin touring the Nation in fall 2003.

Ida E. Jones
Howard University

WEBSITES

The Migration Heritage Toolkit
migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/toolkit

The Migration Heritage Centre (MHC), New South Wales, Australia; accessed on July 29-31, 2003.

The preservation of place and cultural expressions is challenging for many contemporary preservationists as they seek to be inclusive of ethnic and minority communities. Resources that help expand advocacy efforts to include community revitaliza-

tion and redevelopment remain relatively few, particularly guidance for communities on assessing heritage from their unique cultural perspectives. “The Migration Heritage Toolkit” was developed to help heritage professionals and local migrant communities in New South Wales, Australia, work together to identify, document, and evaluate the legacy of migrants that began arriving in 1788.

Completed in 2002, the toolkit contains guidelines and Web-rich resources to assist migrant communities with preserving and sharing heritage for future generations. The toolkit also brings a wide range of issues related to migration to the broader public’s attention. Using the toolkit, migrants learn how to develop skills necessary to manage and protect artifacts, places, and experiences that comprise their migration heritage.

Available online and in print, the toolkit was developed in consultation with migrant communities and in collaboration with the New South Wales Heritage Office. The Migration Heritage Centre provided initial support for the toolkit. The most significant product of center’s work is the establishment of a tangible link between the history of human migration to Australia and the cultural heritage of ethnic groups.

Projects sponsored by the center, like the toolkit, are dedicated to recognizing and promoting migration and refugee heritage as part of the larger cultural landscape of New South Wales. The center defines migration heritage as a historic and living heritage expressed through personal effects, language, food, music, beliefs, memories, buildings, and land. By establishing the breadth of what constitutes heritage significance, the toolkit immediately sets itself apart from the traditional canon.

The Website itself reflects the center’s commitment to the cultural diversity of Australia. It provides summaries of projects, including “Mapping Italian Heritage in NSW,” “Tune in to Fairfield City: A Multicultural Driving Tour,” and “Leaving the

Crocodile: The Story of the East Timorese Community in Sydney.” Other projects address “Shanghai and the Jews of China,” “Lebanese and Arab Australian Communities Heritage Project,” and an oral history project on the “Vietnamese Community in Australia.”

The toolkit has three parts: Background Information, The Migration Heritage Study, and Resources. Each part is divided into subsections that allow the user to navigate to questions pertaining to a particular migration heritage study. Under the “The Migration Heritage Study” heading, four workshop scenarios are presented. The workshops are intended to gather participants to discuss, assess, and manage their migration heritage. The workshop guidance includes not only how to arrange presentations, but also the technical details of event organization.

Although not intended to promote a “top down” research approach, as seen by the breadth of the center’s collaborative projects, the toolkit does leave the user wondering how a member of a migrant community might undertake organizing and implementing such a study. The toolkit actually is more useful to the heritage professional.

Furthermore, the toolkit does not provide the kind of critical background material on migration in Australia or basic research methods critical for a community member to assume a leadership role in facilitating the study as a coordinator. The toolkit relies heavily on an expert from the heritage profession—a historical society member, someone from a local or regional library, or a person involved in local government—taking an interest in an existing migrant community. Despite these shortcomings, few other sites provide as comprehensive a step-by-step approach to identifying places of cultural significance for migrant or refugee communities.

The toolkit presents a coherent package of text, audio, and visual sources to enable the user to

understand the process of a migration heritage study. The site also provides a variety of other support and reference resources for developing the preliminary phases of a heritage study. Moreover, the site makes excellent use of heritage resources to provide users with a strong network of organizations at the local, regional, and national levels. Nearly all of Australia's cultural groups also found their way to other countries, making this Website relevant to other countries, including the United States.

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The Booker T. Washington Papers
historycooperative.org/btw/index.html

The History Cooperative; maintained by the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois; accessed on June 18-22, 2003.

My daughter, Portia, said to me, not long ago: "Papa, do you know that you have never told me much about your early life, and your children want to know more about you." Then it came upon me as never before that I ought to put something about my life in writing for the sake of my family, if for no other reason.

—Booker T. Washington,
The Story of My Life and Work

Written in 1900 as Booker T. Washington's first autobiographical endeavor, *The Story of My Life and Work* was nearly obscured by his second and more popular autobiography, *Up From Slavery*, published the following year. Today, *The Story of My Life and Work* can be found in the 14-volume compilation of Washington's writing dating from 1860 to 1915. Originally published by the University of Illinois Press, the compilation is now available on the Internet.

"The Booker T. Washington Papers" was launched in 2000 to offer amateur and professional historians free access to the writings of this renowned African-American leader, many of which are out of print. The "Washington Papers" Website was designed by Paul Arroyo of the University of Illinois and Michael Jensen of the National Academy Press, part of an electronic library of archives and collections developed by the History Cooperative—a collaboration among the American Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, the University of Illinois Press, and the National Academy Press.

"Washington Papers" provides researchers the once rare opportunity to explore thousands of pages of primary sources with tremendous ease and flexibility. The site's designers utilize the National Academy Press's "open book" framework that allows online readers to peruse each electronic page as if simply turning the pages of an actual book. This framework also employs a chronological search feature across multiple volumes. Searching for information on Washington's initial contact with Julius Rosenwald, for example, turned up results throughout the 14 volumes—all with the click of a mouse.

This ability to easily research events, speeches, and letters from Washington's life is one of the highlights of the Website. For a researcher, this feature is an incredible time-saving tool. Without it, the search for information on Rosenwald would have required hours of reading through hundreds of pages to retrieve the same information provided within a matter of minutes.

The Website was designed to present the papers in a clear and straightforward style. In addition to providing access to the complete collection of volumes, the Website offers original illustrations from many of the volumes, and the option to purchase bound volumes. But links are sparse. At the time of review, only three were provided: "Documenting the American South: Booker T. Washington, 1856-

1915” at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; “Up From Slavery: An Autobiography” at the University of Virginia; and the National Park Service’s Booker T. Washington National Monument Website.

“Washington Papers” is a unique and valuable tool for the cultural historian, bringing rare primary sources on the history and culture of African Americans closer to those who use them the most: folklorists, college and university professors, students, curators, museum interpreters and educators, and genealogists. Websites like this mean no long wait for interlibrary loans, no overdue fees, and no library card required.

Shirl Spicer

North Carolina Museum of History

Our Documents

www.ourdocuments.gov

National History Day and National Archives and Records Administration; maintained by the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC; accessed July 11-16, 2003.

“Our Documents” features 100 digitized documents chosen from among the thousands of public laws, Supreme Court decisions, inaugural speeches, treaties, and constitutional amendments that influenced the course of United States history from 1776 to 1965. Starting with Richard Henry Lee’s resolution of June 7, 1776, to the Second Continental Congress that became the basis of the Declaration of Independence, the documents include the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court ruling upholding “separate but equal” accommodations, the United Nations Charter, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that enforced the 15th Amendment by prohibiting mechanisms that discriminated against voters of color.

The Website was launched in September 2002 as part of a White House initiative to engage students, teachers, parents, and the public in a national reflection on citizenship in a democracy. While the site may not have sparked a national discussion of citizenship, it is reaching the students and teachers who are the core audiences for the site’s developers, the National Archives and Records Administration and National History Day. The National Archives provides instruction for teachers in the use of primary documents in the classroom, making them a perfect partner for National History Day, which for over 25 years has engaged students in grades 6-12 in discovering history using primary documents.

Selecting so few documents from so many was a subjective process and there will be disagreement about what should have been included. A careful review reveals a list that reflects important events in each decade, and discloses both the strengths of our democracy and the weaknesses of a country that has enslaved and discriminated. As a whole, the 100 documents reveal the complex and sometimes contentious history of our Nation—although the homepage would benefit from an overview of what is meant by “milestone documents.”

The design is consistent throughout and the use of icons and layering of information make it easy to navigate. The site changes weekly, featuring three new documents on the homepage. One click brings up the list of documents. Click on a document for a digitized image and transcription, a discussion of its significance, its citation, and a high-resolution PDF file that will print the document on 8- by 11-inch paper.

In addition to the documents, which alone are a valuable resource, teachers may download either a 2-page tip sheet on how to work with primary documents, or an 80-page teacher source book. This tool includes information on how to develop lesson plans, three model lesson plans, a reading list, a bibliography that recommends up to nine books

per document to provide historical context, and a timeline that places the documents in a chronology with a brief annotation on the significance of each.

“Our Documents” is an outstanding resource for teachers and students. It provides national access to important documents, most of which are not available in their original form to the general public. According to Mark Robinson of National History Day, a large percentage of the more than 2,000 students who participated in the National History Day competition in June at College Park, Maryland, used documents from this Website.

Some historians will feel that important documents have been excluded from the list of “milestones.” To respond, a campaign has been launched through national periodicals and the Website to invite teachers, students, and others to vote on what they feel are the 10 most significant documents in American history.

Mychalene Giampaoli
The City Museum of Washington, DC

Alexandria Archaeology Museum
www.AlexandriaArchaeology.org

The City of Alexandria, VA;
accessed on July 5-11, 2003.

Twenty years ago, archeology had limited ability to interest—and much less to educate—the public. Site reports were not publicly accessible and, more often than not, sat on shelves collecting dust. Today, technology is bringing archeology into the home, the schoolroom, and the office—a mere click away for Web surfers. There is no better example of how to exploit the medium than the “Alexandria Archaeology Museum” Website.

Created to connect the public with archeological resources important to Alexandria’s past, the site

accomplishes much more. By exhibiting “Alexandria’s 10,000 years of human history and its relationship to the world and region,” it brings awareness and appreciation to not only the field of archeology, but also heritage resources and historic preservation, all while stimulating local tourism. The site offers activities, tours, exhibits, articles, and studies, catering to both scholars and the public.

The Website’s appeal is in its ability to effectively communicate. The site entices visitors to visit the actual museum with free admission, group tours, classes, hands-on activities, and special events. It even features a summer camp for students, who participate in a dig led by city archeologists. The site also offers ideas to those looking to explore Alexandria, providing links to walking and biking tours, the American Heritage Trail, historic cemeteries, and Jones Point Park, a 60-acre archeological site exhibiting 5,000 years of history.

Visitors who want to plan their own tour of the city can click on “Following in Washington’s Footsteps,” which highlights still-extant taverns, churches, schools, businesses, and homes visited by George Washington. Each site includes an image, brief description, and a narrative about Washington’s relationship to the place. This format is a clever way to both educate people on the historical significance of these sites and encourage tourism. Increasing revenue and public support are powerful tools for saving significant resources from development threats.

The site satisfies professionals by providing information on conservation, collections management, preservation laws and ordinances, archeological discoveries, bibliographies, consultant reports, and research. Links to scholarly articles published in the *Historic Alexandria Quarterly* are accessible under the research section as well as a timeline of 250 years of Alexandria history called “Discovering the Decades.” In addition, the site boasts a searchable database covering such diverse topics as heritage studies, material culture studies, methods,

people, public places and events, and thematic studies.

“Alexandria Archaeology Museum” devotes a useful and comprehensive section to historic preservation, providing everything from preservation laws to descriptions and images of over 40 Federal, State, and city projects in Alexandria. There are 13 subcategories under the site’s preservation section and several with laws and ordinances that protect designated archeology sites. Look here for zoning ordinances, code reports, preservation laws, and resources on Alexandria’s archeology.

Visitors may download and print the “preliminary assessment form” which is required before any development may occur in a designated area. Much like city historic districts, these designated archeological areas are protected by city ordinances. Protected archeological areas represent a reaction to a major population influx and ensuing development 15 to 20 years ago. City archeologists were able to keep a step ahead of the developers through city ordinances and public education and by building a large constituency.

Embedded within the City of Alexandria’s Website, the “Alexandria Archaeology Museum” site is as extensive as it is easy to navigate. Tourists and residents have the option of searching other city museums, local government agencies, tourism groups, and historical organizations as well as recreation facilities and trail maps. However, the flexibility of the navigation bar layout also makes it somewhat confusing. First-time users may find themselves unintentionally searching the city’s other services. Nonetheless, the ability to link and explore many options make this an enticing Website.

Just as architectural historians have recognized that surveys are limited if the public is unaware and unable to interpret them, archeologists must also share and interpret their studies with the public. This is a daunting task, as archeological sites do not reveal their importance to the untrained eye.

The “Alexandria Archaeology Museum” Website demonstrates that archeological sites can be interpreted for, and enjoyed by, the public. Perhaps, paradoxically, this Website has brought us closer to the past than we were 20 years ago.

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