

ANNIVERSARIES AND ACTIVISM: SHAPING INCLUSIVE HISTORIES IN BALTIMORE

GREGORY SMOAK / GREG.SMOAK@UTAH.EDU

If you are like me, one of the things that attracted you to public history in the first place was its inclusiveness. Public historians collaborate with community partners to produce meaningful and useful history for the people. Until the mid-20th century, the work of public historians focused on exclusive stories of great men and the preservation of elite spaces. The slow and difficult process of expanding national and global narratives began as historically marginalized communities asserted their place in the political life and civic dialogue of nations. Their actions forced historians to rethink and rewrite their narratives to include people who could no longer be silenced. Because of their collaborative nature and expansive methodological toolkit, public historians were particularly well suited to play a crucial role in this process. We chose the theme “Challenging the Exclusive Past” for the 2016 joint meeting of the National Council on Public History and the Society for History in the Federal Government (SHFG) as a means to critically assess both the successes of public historians as well as the continuing challenges they face in creating truly inclusive history in the 21st century.

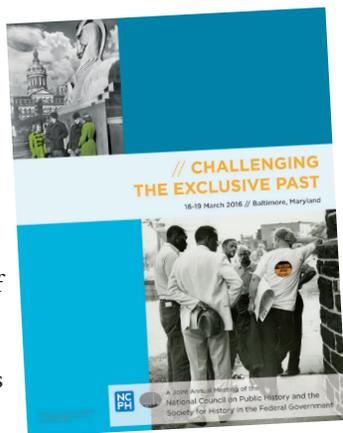


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After we chose the conference theme, events in our meeting city brought the legacies of the exclusive past into the national spotlight once again. On April 19, 2015, Freddie Gray died in a Baltimore hospital one week after he suffered severe injuries while in police custody. His name was added to a tragically long list of young African American men who have died in this manner. When protests surrounding

Gray’s funeral turned violent, the city was placed under a state of emergency for nearly a week. In response to Gray’s death and the civil unrest that followed, local arrangements co-chairs

Denise Meringolo and Elizabeth Nix arranged a public plenary that explores the longer history of racial inequality and protest in the city. “The Uprising in Focus: The Image, Experience, and History of Inequality in Baltimore” brings together community members who experienced both the 1968 Baltimore riots and the unrest of 2015 with a journalist and a community activist to consider the underlying causes and consequences of inequality. The public plenary will take place on Friday, March 18 at the Ebenezer AME Church in Baltimore.

The year 2016 marks two significant anniversaries for public historians – the 100th of the National Park Service (NPS) and the 50th of the National Historic Preservation Act. The NPS centennial will be marked by a half-day symposium, “Challenging the Exclusive Past: Can Federal Agencies Help Reorient and Diversify Public Culture in the 21st Century?” at the Maryland Historical Society on Wednesday, March 16. In addition to the symposium, there will be a number of sessions devoted to NPS history and the historic preservation movement.

Conference attendees will, of course, find the diverse range of sessions, working groups, workshops, and events they expect at every annual meeting. The program committee received a record number of submissions once again this year. We had to make tough decisions and we worked hard

CHECKING IN WITH NCPH’S OCTOBER MINI-CONS

First piloted in 2014, NCPH Mini-Conferences (or mini-cons) are designed to help our members maintain the energy, conviviality, and productivity of the annual meeting year-round, and they’re a great opportunity to get plugged into your local public history community. In October of this year, three NCPH members or member institutions took the reins to organize events in their areas, with support from the NCPH office.



New Directions in Active History mini-con at Huron University College in London, Ontario

DISPATCH FROM ONTARIO, CANADA

Krista McCracken | krista.mccracken@gmail.com

New Directions in Active History: Institutions, Communication and Technologies, an NCPH branded mini-con, took place October 2-4, 2015 at Huron University College in London, Ontario, Canada. We organized this event in the hopes of connecting historians interested in the practice of active history and inviting them to share research, methods, and projects with each other.

The conference built on the work of the website ActiveHistory.ca, founded in 2009 to provide a forum where the work of historians can better reach policy makers, the media, and the public more generally. With 20,000 unique visitors a month, ActiveHistory.ca is one of the best known history-related websites in Canada.

The mini-con branding and funding from NCPH was used as seed money to help attract additional donors and to sponsor a session on public history in Canada. During the planning phase NCPH staff helped by writing a letter of support for the event; promoting



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HISTORY supports the **NCPH** for promoting the value and significance of history every day.



NCPH inspires public engagement with the past and serves the needs of practitioners in putting history to work in the world by building community among historians, expanding professional skills and tools, fostering critical reflection on historical practice, and publicly advocating for history and historians. *Public History News* is published in March, June, September, and December. NCPH reserves the right to reject material that is not consistent with the goals and purposes of the organization. Individual membership orders, changes of address, and business and editorial correspondence should be addressed to NCPH, 127 Cavanaugh Hall – IUPUI, 425 University Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46202-5140. E-mail: ncph@iupui.edu. Tel: 317-274-2716. Join online or renew at www.ncph.org. Headquartered on the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, NCPH is grateful for the generous support of the IU School of Liberal Arts and the Department of History.

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CANDIDATES FOR THE 2016 NCPH ELECTION

Full candidate info at <http://bit.ly/NCPH2016Slate>

Current Board and Committee members are listed at ncph.org/about/governance-committees/

Vice President/President Elect (one candidate)

Marla Miller, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Board of Directors (six candidates for three positions)

Larry Cebula, Washington State Archives and Eastern Washington University

Yolanda Chávez Leyva, The University of Texas at El Paso

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Adina Jocelyn Langer, Museum of History and Holocaust Education, Kennesaw State University

Troy Reeves, University of Wisconsin – Madison Oral History Program

John H. Sprinkle, Jr., National Park Service

Nominating Committee (four candidates for two positions)

Aleia Brown, Michigan State University Museum

Tim Grove, Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum

Joel Ralph, Director of Programs, Canada's History

Daniel Vivian, University of Louisville

Ballots and candidate biographical information were distributed by email to members in mid-November. Please contact ncph@iupui.edu if you are a member and did not receive an electronic ballot. The election closes January 15, 2016. Your vote counts!



Courtesy of flickr user lettawren.

Welcome New Members!

Michael Allen St Louis, MO	Philip Carlino Jamaica Plain, MA	Alexandra Erichson Alexandria, VA	Lindsay Hiltunen Houghton, MI	Marla Miller Amherst, MA	Marla Ramirez Champaign, IL	Melanie Sigman Carrollton, GA	Hannah Zuber Chicago, IL
Alexandria Andrioli Gettysburg, PA	Justin Clark Kokomo, IN	Mindy Farmer Kent, OH	Nicholas Hurley Glastonbury, CT	Nora Mitchell Woodstock, VT	Susan Redman- Rengstorf Liberty Township, OH	Megan Smeznik Copley, OH	NCPH would like to extend a special thanks to our new Patron and Partner members:
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Melissa Blair Baltimore, MD	Jon Daehne Santa Cruz, CA	Jennifer Gansert Linwood, NJ	Christine Lamberson San Angelo, TX	Brooke Neely Boulder, CO	Dan Royles Miami, FL	Camille Weber McMinnville, OR	Alex Weller London, Canada
Philip Bland Kansas City, KS	Justin Davis Inman, SC	Cristin Generoso North Branford, CT	Sonya Laney Greensboro, NC	Joan Neuberger Austin, TX	Kathryn Schinabeck Raleigh, NC	Alex Weller London, Canada	Laurie West Van Hook Leesburg, VA
Kevin Borg Harrisonburg, VA	Casey DeHaven Morgantown, WV	Hannah Givens Carrollton, GA	Shaune Lee McLean, VA	Kim Nicholson Lansing, NY	David Schlitt Pittsburgh, PA	David Schlitt Pittsburgh, PA	Carolyn Schutten Colton, CA
George Boudreau Philadelphia, PA	Corin Deinhart Westlake, OH	Alix Green Hatfield, United Kingdom	Leslie Leonard Trinity, NC	Lauren O'Brien Chicago, IL	Carolyn Schutten Colton, CA	Carolyn Schutten Colton, CA	Alexandra Seale Jonestown, TX
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Rebecca Brenner Washington, DC	Anna Downing Pensacola, FL	Trey Heitschmidt Manhattan, KS	Terrance Mellinger Brentwood, CA	Karen Ploch Cromwell, CT	Andrea Seligman Northampton, MA	Andrea Seligman Northampton, MA	Mishio Yamanaka Carrboro, NC
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PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS



PATRICK MOORE
PMOORE@UWF.EDU

Come to Baltimore this March!

This remarkable city has long held a special place in my heart. Growing up in New Mexico, each summer I would spend several weeks with family just outside the D.C. Beltway. While innumerable hours in the Smithsonian, treks around the monuments, and the awe of Fourth of July fireworks on the Mall were prerequisite activities, the annual trips to Baltimore for an Orioles game and crab cakes were the highlights of my visit.

Even before the Inner Harbor's renaissance, I was enthralled with the city's history and cultural complexity. Perhaps it was the naivety of a young westerner visiting a quintessential industrial urban setting, but the fond memories of Bicentennial patriotism, the Tall Ships framed by Fort McHenry, and people-watching while traversing the suburban streets to old Memorial Stadium – all under the subtle guise of Poe's macabre worldview – created a persistent love affair with this city.

I encourage you to embrace Baltimore and all it

has to offer. Denise Meringolo, Elizabeth Nix, and the Local Arrangements Committee have done a brilliant job of putting together an *almost* perfect range of tours, workshops, and activities that will enrich you both personally and intellectually (sadly, the O's opening day at Camden Yards is just days away...). This year's program, reflecting our joint conference between NCPH and the Society for History in the Federal Government, will be dynamic and engaging, as we have set another record for proposal submissions. The arduous process of carefully selecting the best of the best becomes more intense each year, and we extend our deepest thanks to our Program Committee co-chairs Gregory Smoak and Carl Ashley and to their entire committee for bringing the remarkable meeting content together. Finally, please join me in a huge show of appreciation for Stephanie Rowe and the NCPH professional staff.

I couldn't be more excited to have my final conference as President of this great organization held in a city I hold so dear. Looking forward to seeing you all there!

ANNIVERSARIES AND ACTIVISM

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to craft a program that balances the conference theme with ongoing NCPH initiatives such as sustainability and international public history. We are particularly happy to be meeting this year with SHFG, and Thursday will see 14 dedicated SHFG sessions as well as the Society's annual luncheon, featuring a talk by Donald A. Ritchie, historian emeritus of the United States Senate and a leading figure in the practice of oral history. The combination of the joint meeting and Baltimore's proximity to the nation's capital promises to make the 2016 meeting the largest in NCPH history! On behalf of the 2016 NCPH/SHFG Program Committee and my co-chair Carl Ashley, I invite you to join us in Baltimore this March.

Gregory Smoak is the 2016 NCPH Annual Meeting Chair, and director of the American West Center of the University of Utah.

ACTIONS OF THE NCPH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

After the April 16 meeting of the NCPH Board of Directors in Nashville, Tennessee, and prior to the fall meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, the board convened electronically and by telephone and took the following actions:

- Decided that NCPH should sign on to the American Historical Association's statement protesting proposed changes to the structure of the University of Wisconsin system that threaten to undermine tenure, shared governance, and academic freedom in Wisconsin.
- Decided that NCPH should sign on to the Association of Midwest Museums' letter to the Governor of the State of Illinois expressing concern over the proposed closure of the Illinois State Museum System.

On Friday and Saturday, September 18 and 19, the NCPH Board of Directors convened during the American Association for State and Local History's Annual Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, and took the following actions:

- Voted to approve the Minutes of the Spring 2015 Board Meeting in Nashville, Tennessee.
- Voted to approve a set of guidelines, "Board Member's Roles & Responsibilities."
- Discussed the benefits of continuing – and formalizing – the current NCPH relationship with the International Federation for Public History.
- Reviewed written, and heard formal, reports from the Executive Director Search Committee and the Indiana University-Purdue University History Department regarding the final candidates interviewed for the Executive Director position, and voted to approve a top candidate, along with a salary range for the offer, and agreed to reconvene for further discussion should that candidate not accept the offer.
- In response to the request from the Sustainability Task Force, based on the various drafts and iterations of its related white paper, the board voted to create a Committee on Sustainability.
- Reviewed a report from the Government Historians Committee.
- Discussed and formalized a new "Advocacy Policy" for the NCPH Advocacy Committee of the Board to provide guidance on how NCPH will respond to or lead efforts to speak out on issues of concern to the organization and the public history community.
- Heard an introduction from Tamara Gaskell, new co-editor for *The Public Historian*, based at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Center for the Humanities at Rutgers Camden, and now ex-officio member of the NCPH Board of Directors.
- Voted to adopt the 2016 Operating Budget.
- Voted to approve the 2014 Audit of Financial Statements conducted by Gauthier & Kimmerling, LLC.
- In response to the recommendation of the Finance Committee, the board voted to reconstitute a Development Committee.

COMMITTEES ON THE GO

These updates give a sampling of what NCPH volunteers are doing for the organization and the field of public history. The committees encourage your input throughout the year. Contact information for officers, committee chairs, committee members, and information about serving on a committee can be found at <http://ncph.org/about/governance-committees/>. Most committee meetings are open to visitors during the annual meeting.

COUNCIL OF PAST PRESIDENTS

The Council of Past Presidents bestowed its inaugural Founder's Award on Wes Johnson and Bob Pomeroy at our Nashville conference last spring, and we intend to recognize other members of the founding generation at our Baltimore meeting in March. In addition, we expect that the Baltimore conference—to be held in conjunction with the Society for History in the Federal Government—will provide an exceptional opportunity to continue conducting interviews with colleagues who were involved in the early history of NCPH, the emergence of the public history movement, and the development of public history as an academic discipline. – *Bob Weyeneth*



Joint Meeting of the NCPH Board of Directors and TPH Editorial Board, 2013.

CONSULTANTS COMMITTEE

The Consultants Committee is excited to formally announce the upgrade of the Consultants Directory on the NCPH website. Committee members have worked closely with NCPH to implement changes to the directory functionality based on feedback from the 2013 Consultants Survey. Open only to NCPH members, but visible to all, the directory enables search by name, years of experience, degree, regions, and areas of expertise. If you are a consultant and haven't yet added your name to the directory, or if you would like to update your existing listing, please visit <http://ncph.org/consultant-submissions/>. Once you've explored the new directory, please let us know if you have any suggestions for further improvement. The Consultants Committee will compile suggestions and submit them to NCPH after the Baltimore conference. Feel free to tweet suggestions @NCPHconsultants!

Speaking of the conference, please save the date for the 2016 Consultants Reception in Baltimore. It will take place concurrently with the Poster Session, from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm on

Thursday, March 17. We're looking forward to seeing you in Baltimore! – *Adina Langer and Morgen Young*

CURRICULUM AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

The committee recently finalized a new best practices document, "Best Practices for Establishing and Developing a Public History Program," and has submitted it to the NCPH Board of Directors for review. Three other documents, "Best Practices for Working with Community Partners," "Best Practices for Integrating Technology into the Public History Classroom," and "Public History Across the Curriculum," are under development. Committee members are also making plans for the annual public history educator's breakfast and a workshop, "Teaching Public History," to be held at the joint NCPH-Society for History in the Federal Government meeting in Baltimore in March. In addition, the committee anticipates making additions to the teaching and learning pages of the NCPH website and updating the list of program reviewers before the annual meeting. – *Daniel Vivian*

GOVERNMENT HISTORIANS COMMITTEE

The newly-formed Government Historians Committee, co-chaired by Jean-Pierre Morin and Katherine Scott, is presently developing a mission statement. In addition to exploring issues of interest to NCPH members doing history work within governments at the local, municipal, state, and federal levels, it is planning social activities for the 2016 annual meeting, including a Dine Around for government historians and special tours of government history offices in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan region. – *Jean-Pierre Morin and Katherine Scott*

JOINT TASK FORCE ON PUBLIC HISTORY EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The Public History Education and Employment Task Force continues to gather basic information about trends in the field. It recently completed an online survey of public history employers that generated nearly 400 responses. Analysis of the data will begin immediately. The task force is now developing a survey for alumni of public history M.A. programs in an effort to obtain information about post-graduation experiences. It will be distributed early in 2016. – *Daniel Vivian*

NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE

In the last six months the Nominating Committee has been hard at work putting together the slate for the upcoming election. We believe that every individual on the ballot will be an excellent addition to the

team, as each brings a variety of expertise and experience to the table. We'd also like to remind members that if they ever have suggestions for future elections for the Board and Nominating Committee, they should contact committee members.

Don't forget to vote! Your ballot should have arrived in your email on November 16. Deadline for voting is January 15, 2016.

– *Priya Chhaya*



Courtesy of the Library of Congress. Image ID# LC-DIG-hec-25502.

NEW PROFESSIONAL AND GRADUATE STUDENT COMMITTEE

The New Professional and Graduate Student Committee is currently focused on establishing a new series on the *History@Work* blog called "Ask a Historian." The series is aimed at providing down-to-earth, concrete advice, and insight into careers in public history. There are several authors in the pipeline, and our first post by Anne Whisnant was well received. In addition, the committee is looking into creating a blog guide for Baltimore and is also hosting a social event for the 2016 Annual Meeting on Wednesday night at 8:00 pm after the opening reception. We welcome other committee members to attend. We continue to increase our social media presence with our Twitter content and are looking for ways to update or add to the *Public History Navigator* for this coming year. Suggestions are welcome. – *Kristen Baldwin Deathridge and Theresa Koenigskecht*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Professional Development Committee has just begun to recruit public historians to serve as experts for the 2016 Speed Networking session in Baltimore. If you are interested in participating as an expert, please email mhamilt3@uwo.ca. We also assisted in the selection of the upcoming annual meeting workshops. Earlier this year, the committee asked for opinions on professional development outside of our annual conference. We have begun discussing how to provide additional opportunities, particularly online. If you have ideas to share, please contact the chair, Michelle Hamilton. – *Michelle Hamilton*

the event to Canadian NCPH members; advertising the event in the *PHNU*; and finding speakers for a public history panel. This support was easy to access and allowed us to introduce our student employees to new parts of NCPH.

Over 100 attendees participated in the three-day event. Participants included academic scholars, students, private and public sector workers, local community members, archivists, and others.

One of the weekend's highlights was the "Future of Public History Programs in Canada" panel, organized with help from NCPH. It featured a discussion of public history in Canada with an emphasis on education and the role of NCPH and public history organizations. A video recording of this panel will be made available on the Activehistory.ca YouTube channel.

Branding the event as an NCPH mini-con allowed us to reach out to Canadian audiences who may be unable to attend NCPH's annual meeting. Throughout the event, NCPH members promoted NCPH to active historians and public history professionals who were not previously aware of the organization. The mini-con also saw informal discussions of what could be done to raise the profile of NCPH in Canada. The event was filled with enthusiasm for future partnerships and the development of active history in Canada. We plan to foster the new relationships, energy, and projects discovered at this NCPH mini-con. And hopefully we'll see some new Canadian faces in Baltimore as a result!

Krista McCracken is a Researcher/Curator at Algoma University's Arthur A. Wishart Library and Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre. She is currently serving on the NCPH Membership Committee.

SPOTLIGHT ON SAN MARCOS, TEXAS

Nancy K. Berlage | nkb11@txstate.edu

On October 10, 2015, NCPH Membership Committee members Nancy K. Berlage and Megan Blair hosted *Immigration, Migration, Memory, and Public History* at Texas State University in San Marcos. This mini-conference was sponsored and funded by NCPH and Texas State University. Attendees (approximately 70 over the course of the day) included graduate students; new public history practitioners; seasoned oral historians; and educators of public history, oral history, geography, anthropology, and other specialties.

The conference brought together individuals working on this topic within and outside public history and promoted more awareness of NCPH

and public history in general. It generated multi-disciplinary discussions about public history approaches to immigration history and encouraged attendees to think more about community engagement. The conference also sought to heighten awareness of the connections between public history programs and projects and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant programs: to this end, several participants were fellows of the NEH Summer Institute *America's East Central Europeans: Migration and Memory*, held at Columbia University in 2014.

An informal Friday night reception allowed for conversation in a casual setting. Saturday's early morning registration and continental breakfast was followed by a diverse array of presentations, illustrating the richness of this topic for public history. Individual panels included "Heritage, Identity, Collective Memory"; "Memory, Place, Dissonance, Oral History"; "Nation and the Production of Migration Narratives"; and "Refugees, Immigration Experiences, Empowerment."

Texas State University's Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, Dr. Michael J. Hennessy, joined the conference for a working lunch with two keynote talks followed by a Q&A session. The first keynote speaker was Dr. Yadira Perez Hazel (Center of Ethnic Studies, Borough of Manhattan Community College-CUNY), who gave a presentation entitled "When History Meets Humanity: Oral History and the New Exhibits at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, NYC." She described her work as an oral history manager for the museum and her role in expanding communication channels with surrounding communities.

The second keynote speaker, Dr. Yolanda Chávez Leyva (Department of History, University of Texas-El Paso), offered a presentation entitled "Traspassando Fronteras con Museo Urbano: Engaging Immigrant Communities in a Transnational Narrative." Leyva discussed how she and her students were giving voice to the histories of under-represented groups who live on the Texas-Mexico border.

(Note: A full program with a list of presenters can be found on the website of the Public History Program at Texas State University. Anyone interested in developing follow-up discussions and events on this topic should contact Nancy Berlage at nkb11@txstate.edu).

Nancy Berlage is an assistant professor in the history department at Texas State University and a faculty member of the Center for Texas Public History.

She is currently serving on the NCPH Membership Committee.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.

Alexandra Lord | lorda@si.edu

Connecting Past and Future, an NCPH branded mini-con, took place October 30, 2015 at the National Museum of American History (NMAH) in Washington, D.C. The event was organized in conjunction with the Smithsonian, the American Historical Association, and the Organization of American History, with registration for the event being run through the NCPH. Michael Easterly, a Senior Economist at Compass Lexicon; Elise Lipkowitz, a Science Policy Analyst at the National Science Foundation; Alexandra Lord, the Chair and Curator of the Division of Medicine and Science at the NMAH; and Katherine Ott, Curator in the Division of Medicine and Science at the NMAH, organized this event to help graduate students and young professionals in history discover more about their career options and to encourage them to think about public history and careers outside the academy.

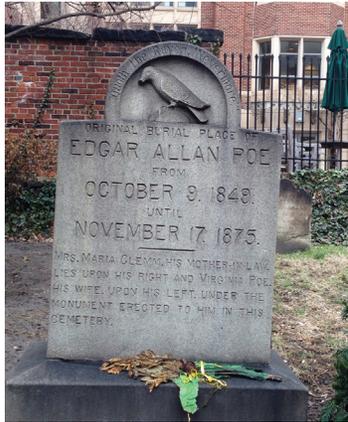
Talking about careers, both in and outside the academy, can evoke anxiety for students, so the mini-con and branding that came with our partnership with NCPH helped assuage students' concerns about their advisors' approval. It also helped introduce students, the vast majority of whom were in traditional academic programs, to the idea of public history. And, of course, the event also introduced many students to NCPH! One of the great highlights of the conference occurred when a student asked speakers which history conference they thought was the best for networking and discussion of non-academic careers. The majority of the speakers said "NCPH!"

Funding for the conference came from the modest registration fee (\$25). This allowed for lunch for all attendees as well as travel funds for speakers who were coming from a distance. The event's 16 speakers included a curator at the National Museum of African American Culture and History; a senior research associate at a historical consulting firm; a grants director from the National Endowment for the Humanities; a senior health policy analyst at a private corporation; an editor at a popular engineering magazine; a director of university programs at the U.S. Holocaust Museum; the former head of Institutional Business at Fidelity International; and even a professor on the tenure track. Students walked away from the event with a broader understanding of the value of a PhD in history.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO DIG DEEPER INTO BALTIMORE

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During NCPH's Annual Meeting in Baltimore, you can challenge the exclusive past by taking advantage of tours and special events organized by the 2016 Local Arrangements Committee.



Gravestone of Edgar Allan Poe at Westminster Burying Ground, courtesy of flickr user Tim Bounds.

will challenge what you think you know about the Civil Rights Movement, drawing your attention to the site of the first lunch counter sit-in in the heart of downtown.

Other tours will ask you to confront challenging questions about the role public history can play in addressing pressing social problems. A walking tour led by Dr. Nicole King will bring you into the city's arts district and ask you to consider whether or not the arts can save a city like Baltimore, which has been devastated by decades of deindustrialization and disinvestment. Eric Holcomb's walking tour of South Baltimore will illustrate the ways in which urban renewal and other development programs altered the fabric of the city, obscuring or obliterating sites shaped by immigrant and African American communities. The bus tour to Hampton National Historic Site will allow participants to explore the long and challenging process of moving site interpretation away from a focus on the "mansion house" and toward a focus on the practice of industrial slavery at the plantation.

Two additional bus tours offer a direct challenge to the exclusivity of the past—and of public history—by highlighting the role that local community activists can play in shaping an understanding of Baltimore's past. Glenn Lowell Ross, a self-described "urban environmentalist," has been conducting his "Toxic Tour" of Baltimore city for about a decade, showing public health officials, medical students, and others how inequality manifests in dirt, disease, and other forms of environmental



Visual of #activehistory2015 tweets, created by Shawn Graham.

The event's conference room had a capacity of 50 people (plus our speakers). This presented a challenge, as the registration was filled within two weeks and a waiting list had to be



Hampton Mansion, c. 1915. Image ID#LC-DIG-ppmsca-16578, courtesy of the Library of Congress.

injustice. For public historians celebrating 50 years of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Toxic Tour will spark important conversations about the roles we might play in connecting preservation and sanitation. Louis Diggs, a U.S. Army Veteran and former Military Instructor in the District of Columbia Public School system, has become a well-known and trusted resource on the history of the African American community in Baltimore. He will lead a bus tour through Baltimore County and treat participants to a behind-the-scenes tour of the Diggs-Johnson Museum, located in the recently restored historic Cherry Hill African United Methodist Protestant Church. These tours remind us that the history of our field includes the work of many dedicated individuals who have worked without pay and with long-delayed recognition to challenge the exclusive past. Both the Toxic Tour and the Baltimore County African American History tour encourage us to recognize the important work city residents have undertaken to counter injustice in all its forms.

The public plenary, to be held at the Ebenezer AME church on Friday, March 18, is an opportunity for us to see the themes of the conference in action. The history of poverty, racial injustice, and inequality in Baltimore has long been left out of conversations about persistent social and economic problems in the city. At the same time, Baltimore's reputation for grittiness and violence has been a staple of media and popular culture. The plenary will engage locals and conference attendees alike in a facilitated discussion about the historical roots and public image of the city. Panelists—a historian, activists, and a photographer—will talk about the historical conditions that fueled the protest and civil disobedience that took place after death of Freddie Gray in police custody last April. They will also raise questions about how those events have been used to reinforce a particular image of the city. We hope this discussion will contribute to a broader effort to build trust between public historians and underserved publics.

Denise Meringolo is the 2016 NCPH Annual Meeting Co-Chair, and is Associate Professor and Director of Public History at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

developed. Attendees came primarily from universities in the Baltimore-Washington DC area: American University, Catholic University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, Howard University, Johns Hopkins University, and the University of Maryland. Other attendees also came from universities as far afield as Temple University, the College of William and Mary, West Virginia University, and the University of Virginia.

Branding the event as an NCPH mini-con enabled students who may not always be able to travel to and attend NCPH's annual meeting to become familiar with an NCPH event. It also

helped to introduce students and colleagues in the Washington, D.C. area to NCPH – just a few months before the annual conference is held in Baltimore. You will probably get the chance to meet many of the students who attended the mini-con next year in Baltimore!

Alexandra Lord is the Chair and Curator of the Division of Medicine and Science at the National Museum of American History. She is currently serving as NCPH Vice President and is a member of NCPH's Board of Directors.

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