

Expanding the Preservation Narrative: From Research to Action : This panel

discussion highlights Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) preservationists and their academic research and preservation work. Panelists will briefly introduce how they utilized their academic work into preservation action (e.g., nominations for local, state, and/or national registers, creating toolkits related to preservation, advocacy work, capacity building). Then panel discussion will then examine the importance of BIPOC preservation scholars and practitioners in centering traditionally marginalized voices in historic preservation. o

[#DismantlePreservation Session Links](#)Speakers: Angelo Baca (Doctoral Student, Sociocultural Anthropology, New York University; Cultural Resources Coordinator, [Utah Diné Bikéyah](#)); Tejpal Singh Bainiwal (Doctoral Candidate, Religious Studies, University of California, Riverside; Board member, [Asian & Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation](#)); Sarah Zenaida Gould, PhD (Interim Executive Director, Mexican American Civil Rights Institute; former director, Museo del Westside; Co-Chair, [Latinos in Heritage Conservation](#)); Jeffrey Harris ([Independent historian and historic preservation consultant](#)); Kristen Hayashi, PhD (Director of Collections Management & Access and Curator, [Japanese American National Museum](#); Board member, [Asian & Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation](#)); Alison Rose Jefferson MHC, PhD (Historian and Heritage Conservation Consultant, [Historian and More](#)); Davianna Pomaika'i McGregor, PhD (Professor of Ethnic Studies and Director of [Center for Oral History](#), University of Hawai'i, Manoa)

Moderator: Michelle G. Magalong, PhD (Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow, [School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation](#), University of Maryland; President, [Asian & Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation](#))

Questions! Do you have something specific you would like to learn in this session? Do you have a question for these speakers? Leave your questions below!

- How can I better support your work? (seconded!) How can the field of preservation better support your work?
- Is there an organization that lobbies on behalf of expanding funding for historic preservation so that organizations can have more funding for paid internships,

and if so, how active is it, and what are the current projects accompanying #DismantlePreservation ?

- Is there an organization that offers funding for the kind of research that you do? If not, what kind of funding sources are needed for your work?
- Also asked in “Identifying and Tackling Implicit Bias in Preservation”: Traditionally the National Register nomination process, integrity requirements, and criteria as well as various Historic Preservation Tax Incentive programs are structured in such a way that they often limit access for properties owned by or affiliated with marginalized people and working families, and thus put their associated histories at increased risk. Is anyone aware of any ongoing petitioning or work with elected officials to propose modifications to the existing systems to better address these accessibility limitations? If so, who are the particular elected officials or organizations who are active in advancing these efforts?
 - I came here to ask this, but from a city historic preservation commission perspective. For example, folks in my area are hoping to designate a historic Black church (& local NAACP meeting place) to protect it and to signify its importance. They're a small congregation, already struggling with upkeep. How do we work with these folks to protect their history without further straining their resources? It's a common problem in our area; 22% of the population lives below the property line, and 61% of parcels have a primary structure aged 50 years or older. We're reviewing the ordinance right now to make changes, so here's our chance to really affect policy change.
- Are there any efforts to use 'applied' research in historic preservation? In other words are there frameworks we can use, such as sustainable development, that can channel BIPOC research and advocacy into everyday practice? What about

applied social science methods such as rapid ethnographic methods, participatory research, surveys, etc?

- Which actions by white preservation practitioners most often undermine your work and your messages?
- I am curious how and when your work has overlapped environmental law, such as the NEPA process, and your experiences with successfully navigating that. There seems to be some important areas of overlap between cultural landscape preservation and preservation of ecologies and I want to know how these concerns support or push against one another in the preservation process particularly as far as BIPOC resources are concerned.
- I'm currently working on a project that involves an artist deriving illustrations from historic photos. My strategy is to contact tribes as I come across photos with Native Americans to ask if they have any objections to the individuals in the photo being illustrated or if they want the individual identified in the artwork. My white coworkers on the same project are choosing to exclude photographs with Native Americans or ask the artist to remove the Native Americans from historic images. I tried to explain that this is wrong and advised them to contact the tribes. They literally ignored me and talked over me at meetings. This is just one example of a pretty regular occurrence in my office. How can I get these messages across to my white coworkers without being ignored or brushed off?
- As a white person working in a mostly white-staffed municipal preservation office, I try to prompt conversations on and movement towards greater equity in our preservation practice and policies. In the grand scheme, I can see that I should step back and support BIPOC-led efforts; but I don't see those efforts are happening in our particular niche yet (lots of work is happening on other more essential fronts). I *think* that I, as an antiracist ally and advocate, can convene and help facilitate discussions and action around equity in local preservation, but

I want to be careful that I invite BIPOC folks to participate in meaningful ways and to help direct those efforts. Does that make sense? Do you have any suggestions on how I can both make space for this work and put Black and Brown voices at the center of it?

- ^ Echoing what is said above. I live/work in a very diverse community but that is not reflected in our designated resources or preservation institutions. How do we successfully build bridges when we're a field of largely white people talking with other white people? I want to genuinely engage and involve people of color without making them feel tokenized. (seconded!)
- How do we promote and designate resources that are culturally/socially significant and keep those stories alive? We often get caught up in whether the resource retains integrity from the time period for which it is significant or that it clearly retains its cultural associations, but what if those no longer exist? How do we make designation about the people even if the physical place may not be completely reflective of why the place is significant? Once a property or neighborhood is designated, it is so easy to get caught up in the details of physical preservation that the cultural significance gets lost - or the people who made the neighborhood significant (eg African American enclave) have been displaced. How should our policies be adjusted to prevent this?
- How do we center BIPOC voices in the core of preservation theory to displace the white men (often European) who currently dominate this position (e.g., Ruskin, Viollet-le-duc, Morris, Peterson, Fitch)? Once this happens, how do we use this new "emancipated doctrine" to change the NR and the Standards, which are fundamentally based on these white men's ideas?
- What does higher ed need to do to assure that BIPOC and Latinx people are getting hired into tenure-track positions in historic preservation degree programs? Currently, most of these programs have one faculty member on the tenure track.

When a hiring committee is assembled, the committee members are almost always practitioners (nearly always white, often male); tenure-track faculty from allied programs (e.g, architecture, history) are usually invited to participate in the hiring committee, but don't know a lot about the preservation field and have little ideas about its diversity problems. How can hiring committees therefore ground themselves in the exigent problems of white supremacy in the HP field to make better hiring decisions?

- How do we recruit more BIPOC representation to enter into the field of preservation? I don't know what the numbers look like, but I would have to guess that a super majority of the people graduating from historic preservation programs nationally are white.
- How has the field of historic preservation contributed to anti-blackness and anti-indigeneity? And more importantly, how can the field of historic preservation do better to work toward solidarity with emerging and ongoing movements to abolish anti-black policing and prisons, as well as return and repatriate Indigenous lands?
- As a white preservation consultant, I am interested in working on projects having to deal with African-American history, but I am concerned that these are not "my" stories to tell (not that most stories I end up telling are "mine," since I work in communities that are unfamiliar to me all the time.) And we have had pushback in my state against white historians doing civil rights context studies, for example. If I have the opportunity to work on a project having to do with researching African-American communities, architects etc. should I seek out African-American historians to be on my team? Or is that "tokenism?"
- In your view, what are some of the field's notable accomplishments and achievements in diversifying preservation activity?

- Should more preservation non-profit organizations establish funds to help support BIPOC projects, or should we call on our members to donate to existing funds/orgs? The very white org that I work for would like to establish a new fund and fundraise so we can work on projects that preserve BIPOC-histories. However, I wonder if we might actually do more good by passing the mic to orgs that are already doing the work. Are we genuinely helping to build a bigger pie? Or just taking a piece?
- As a CRM consultant, many of us are limited by budget and client constraints. I personally struggle with balancing my duty to represent more histories with what I'm "allowed" to do while I'm working (like not being able to speak directly with community members since we're technically subcontractors most of the time) and within the framework of what a state/federal agency is asking for. Do panelists or other consultants have guidance on how they approach this (aside from demanding that BIPOC groups and historians do this work for us, which seems to be the solution given by a lot of white academics)?
- Does the existing NR need to be the end all of determining the significance of a place? What would the NR look like if it required experts to seek the situated knowledge of the local people who value an old place? Why do we need to force people to talk and act like experts for their heritage to be acknowledged via the preservation enterprise?
- How do practitioners deal with the challenge that the period of significance for NR and local nominations must be at least fifty years old, yet many communities of color have historically significant sites whose period of significance (to those communities) is more recent? This requirement precludes immigrant and other stories from the 1970s onward.
- I don't understand opposition to cd(s). In Texas for me I see them as a flexible tool to use to do innovative preservation without scaring folks who have a pre

conceived notion of hd(s). They can protect whatever you want them to protect.

Whatever the people want to protect. Why the bane?

- How do we encourage BIPOC students to enter the preservation career pipeline?
- It is insane to me that the education requirements are so restrictive in the field.
I'm an Architect and did so much less education. Why is the bar so high?
- Should more preservation non-profit organizations establish funds to help support BIPOC projects, or should we call on our members to donate to existing funds/orgs? If a very white org would like to establish a new fund and fundraise so we can work on projects that preserve BIPOC-histories would we actually do more good by passing the mic to orgs that are already doing the work? Are we genuinely helping to build a bigger pie? Or just taking a piece?