



Civic Engagement Bibliography

Prepared for the National Park Service
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Background/Context for Civic Engagement

Abram, Ruth. "Planting Cut Flowers," *History News: The Magazine of the American Association for State and Local History*. Vol. 55, #3 (Summer 2000), pg. 4-10. Also, "The Usable Past," *Forum Journal*. (Winter 2001), pg. 48-55.

Two versions of what is essentially the same article. An account of Abram's discovery of history as "a powerful tool for the living" and the impact of this concern for the present upon the orientation, organizational structure, and programs of the Lower East Side Tenement Museum. Argues that historic sites have a responsibility to provide a balanced and well-rounded view of the past – the good and the bad - and to assist visitors in drawing connections between the past and present. Suggests that the museum profession's fear that the public cannot bear the truth is both unfounded and stifling to progressive developments within the museum field. Raises many fundamental questions about radical history, controversy, museum mission and visitor response to a conscience-directed approach.

Ballantyne, Roy and David Uzzell. "International Trends in Heritage and Environmental Interpretation: Future Directions for Australian Research and Practice," *Journal of Interpretation Research*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Winter 1999); 59-75.

Places the increased focus upon interpreting environmental issues, contested heritage, and "hot" topics in international context. Argues that the discipline of interpretation is changing in response to globalization, increased interest in interpretive theory, postmodernism, and the growing politicization of society –and that not responding to these changes will render interpreters irrelevant to the needs and desires of contemporary society.

Blight, David. *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Explores the remembering and forgetting of the American Civil War – the politics of memory through which national reconciliation was achieved at tragic cost to race relations. Probes the interrelationship between the themes of race and reunion in American culture from 1863 to 1915, analyzing the three competing visions of the war that collided and combined throughout these years – the reconciliationist vision, the white supremacist vision, and the emancipationist vision. Argues that sectional reconciliation after such unfathomable carnage was both a political triumph and a necessity, yet was achieved through the resubjugation of many of the freedmen – "a story of how the forces of reconciliation overwhelmed the emancipationist vision in the national culture, how the inexorable drive for reunion both used and trumped race." Background/Context for understanding both the triumph of reconciliation over race in the

establishment and orientation of Civil War battlefield parks, and the crucial need to overturn this framework.

Breen, T.H. *Imagining the Past: East Hampton Histories*. New York: Addison-Wesley, 1989.

A historical ethnography of both a small Long Island community and a historian's journey into questioning his own methodology and pre-conceptions. Argues that the town's own representation of its history as a descent from a lost golden age dooms residents to missing the continuities between the problems of development currently threatening the area and the historical problems long part of East Hampton life. An exploration of the depth to which cherished narratives shape community identity and the fierceness with which they can be defended when challenged, particularly when the challenge comes from an "outsider" or a professional historian.

Chappell, Edward A. "Social Responsibility and the American History Museum," *Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol. 24 (Winter 1989); 247-265

A call for museums/historic sites to "stop adjusting the furniture and begin reforming our essential presentations of the past," to accept responsibility for the broad social implications of what they present to the public. Argues that historians and curators who suggest that their only responsibility is objective presentation of facts confuse objectivity with conservatism, using their position to reinforce traditional views of reality and social relations. Highlights the tension between preservation and interpretation as priorities. Charges that museums are often revisionist about relatively unimportant things like paint colors, yet frightened by revisionism on a larger scale. Questions whether accuracy, for its own sake, without a larger goal, is sufficient.

Diamant, Rolf. "On the Banks of the Cane River: A Reflection on the Role of the National Park Service in Public Life and Civic Dialogue," *Journal of the Association of National Park Rangers* (Fall 2001).

An overview of the evolution of interest in a "usable" past within the NPS, and the institutional shift, in the words of Chief Historian Dwight Pitcaithley, "from being a preservation organization to being an education organization underpinned by preservation." Suggests that parks have a pivotal role to play in ensuring the continuance of democratic commitment to the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.

Foner, Eric. "The Russians Write A New History," and "We Must Forget the Past: History in the New South Africa," in *Who Owns History? Rethinking the Past in a Changing World*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2002. Pgs. 75-87, 88-109.

"The Russians Write A New History" examines the forging of a new historical consciousness in the twilight years of the USSR. A powerful demonstration of history's political nature; its malleability and role in legitimizing changes in contemporary society. Wrestles with the oppositional nature of nostalgia and true historical understanding, while recognizing that both authentic and invented pasts can serve as powerful tools for either conservative or radical critiques of contemporary society. "We Must Forget the Past" explores South Africa's desire to jettison a past constructed to reinforce the apartheid regime. Demonstrates ways in which new interpretations of South African history have challenged long established stereotypes and suggested new realities, and draws attention to the troubling desire to forget the painful past expressed by Nelson Mandela.

Argues that "we can forget the past, but the past, most assuredly, will not forget us," that the living products of history are inescapable and that instead of being forgotten, a painful past must be engaged.

Glassberg, David. *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.

An exploration of the shifting boundaries between personal, public and professional uses of the past, incorporating the author's own reflections on the role of professional historians in shaping the historical consciousness of the American public. Probes a variety of encounters between Americans and their past: historic preservation efforts in California, viewer response to Ken Burns' *The Civil War*, construction and reinterpretation of a pacifist war memorial in Massachusetts, different perspectives among black and white residents as to what makes an urban neighborhood "historic" or "significant," and community investment in/understanding of New England town character.

Goldman, Theresa L., Wei-Li Jasmine Chen, and David Larsen. "Clicking the Icon: Exploring the Meanings Visitors Attach to Three National Capital Memorials," *Journal of Interpretation Research*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Summer 2001); 3-29.

An exploration of the meanings visitors attach to the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial and the Korean War Veterans' Memorial, their interests relative to interpretive programming, and the extent to which connections between the meanings they perceive in these resources and their own interests are stimulated through exposure to interpretive programs. Visitors' reflections and reactions reveal diverse opportunities for civic engagement to lift their experiences to the next level and suggest that the public may be more ready for/interested in this approach than has been predicted.

Green, James. "Making Movement History," in *Taking History to Heart: The Power of the Past in Building Social Movements*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000. Pg. 1-21.

Emphasizes the role of historical consciousness in "movement building and in the mysterious processes that create human solidarity." A discussion of the politics of memory and the role of history, both experienced and learned, in shaping individual lives, collective identities and society in its broadest sense. Strongly emphasizes the role of history in both chastening naivety about easy change and in providing hope for the oppressed and a vision for those committed to a more just world. Suggests that history's power to assist in building progressive movements for the present and future has been greatly underestimated.

Horwitz, Tony. *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War*. New York: Vintage Books, 1998.

A portrait of the depth of the South's engagement with the Civil War – a picture of the forms and ways in which the Lost Cause still resonates in the memory and rituals of the South. Considers both the benefits of profound awareness of the past in the present and the pitfalls of such strong

commitment to a contested and divisive heritage. Questions the reasons for, culture of, and consequences of reenacting, an activity of great engagement, as well as the possibility of separating some interpretations of heritage from others. Can some be honored without silently upholding others?

Karamanski, Theodore J. "Reflections on Ethics and the Historical Profession," *Public Historian*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Summer 1999); 127-133.

Suggests that the current comfortable status of public history as "another" sub-field of historical study is a sign of its failure as a professional movement. Argues that ethical questions were the foundation of the public history movement – the idea that historians must be accountable to the public, that they must embrace social responsibility, that their work should both inhabit and affect the public sphere. Criticizes postmodernist theory as corrosive to "the ethical foundations of the public history movement," a retreat from social responsibility. Encourages public historians not to be content with their own efforts to engage the public and embrace the civic functions of history, but to strive to convert the academics to a new vision for the profession.

Karp, Ivan and Steven D. Lavine, eds. *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991

A collection of essays from the 1988 conference, *The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*; analyzes the form and substance of museum exhibits, concentrating on museums and multiculturalism, particularly questions of power, authority and communication among museums. Includes both case studies and theoretical explorations.

Leon, Warren and Roy Rosenzweig, eds. *History Museums in the United States: A Critical Assessment*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989.

The first book-length critical assessment of historical museums in the United States. Concentrates on the question of how recent historical scholarship has and has not been translated into museum presentations, pushing past "the" new scholarship to ask which scholarship and what framework. Welcomes the new social history to museums while cautioning against its uncritical embrace. Seeks to explain "the *why* of history exhibits" through examining the primary constraints that shape museum presentations – political, institutional, financial, and biographical, as well as the makeup of one's audience.

Loewen, James. *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong*. New York: The New Press, 1999.

A tour of the nation's historic landscape, focused largely on monuments and historic markers. Also includes some stops at sites and museums. A powerful critique of interpretation, the book draws attention to the vagueness, banality and triviality that too often characterize interpretive markers and programming. Calls attention to the narrative gaps in the public history landscape, drawing attention to the absence of so many of American history's difficult or controversial stories. 95 case studies provide specific examples of problematic programming or wording, arguing for the necessity of continuous reevaluation and revision. Illuminates history's potential to stultify, bore and justify, or conversely to challenge, engage, and empower. In the words of George Orwell, "whoever controls the past controls the future; whoever controls the present controls the past."

Pitcaithley, Dwight T. "Barbara Kingsolver and the Challenge of Public History," *Public Historian*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Fall 1999); 9-18.

Focuses on public historians' roles in inhabiting and challenging "the spaces between," places where disparate points of view rub together, blend, and sometimes clash. From these spaces emerge both controversy and opportunities to increase understanding and tolerance. Instead of decrying the "culture wars," historians have an opportunity to use these spaces as an avenue of entrance to significance discussions with the American public. Highlights the extent to which Civil War parks within the National Park Service have in the past focused almost exclusively on military maneuvers and marginalized discussions of causation, pointing to the "Holding the High Ground" resolutions as a significant step in the right direction. A call to patience and a reminder that even slow progress is still progress – and if perceptions are altered, that change is "good enough for now."

Reuss, Martin. "Federal Historians: Ethics and Responsibility in the Bureaucracy," and "Principles and Standards for Federal Historical Programs," in *Ethics and Public History: An Anthology*, ed. Theodore J. Karamanski. Malabar, FL: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1990. Pg. 78-84, 85-88.

Helpful for setting civic engagement within the framework of doing history in a federal agency. Draws attention to the at-times competing claims of professional and agency loyalty that guide the decisions of federal historians and lays out a "code of ethics" to guide the practice of public history in the federal government. When history and political goals conflict, how can they be negotiated into at least partial resolution? Helpful background reading for reflecting on performing civic engagement as a federal agency.

Rosenzweig, Roy and David Thelen. *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

The results of Rosenzweig and Thelen's unprecedented survey of the American public's attitudes toward and uses of the past. Perhaps the best source for information about why Americans visit historic sites and museums, how the past impacts the lives they live in the present, and the means through which they feel most engaged with history. Suggests that desire for a personal, emotional connection with the past, often achieved through interaction with artifacts, a resentment toward "mediated" experiences (regardless of what form the mediation takes), and a desire to form and test their own conclusions based on personal experiences forms the core of popular interest in historic sites and museums – information that is at once enlightening,

invaluable and potentially distressing for those seeking ways to make their sites places that spark engagement.

Shackel, Paul A., ed. *Myth, Memory, and the Making of the American Landscape*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001.

A collection of contextual analyses of nationally significant objects and landscapes. Explores the changing, contested and plural meanings of these elements of the American landscape, focusing on the ways in which constructed pasts exclude certain groups, the role of nostalgia in privileging certain narratives over others, and the equation of patriotic commemoration with an obedient and patriotic citizenry. Examines the interlocking spheres of heritage and national mythology.

Sider, Gerald and Gavin Smith, eds. *Between History and Histories: The Making of Silences and Commemorations*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.

An anthropological/historical dialogue on commemoration and silence. Calls traditional assumptions and philosophical approaches into question, arguing that silences regarding traumatic social events are often not, as historians charge, concerted forgettings that destroy class consciousness. Instead, commemoration is often a more private phenomenon contained within an ethnic or class community – used as a powerful tool for raising consciousness – more powerful due to the fact that the memory is not shared with the dominant society. Historians who seek to expose these untold stories often replicate/perpetuate the class domination they decry.

***The National Park Service and Civic Engagement: The Report of a Workshop Held December 6-8, 2001 in New York City*. NPS: Northeast Regional Office, 2002.**

A summary of the first National Park Service and Civic Engagement Workshop and the initial stages of internal discussion regarding civic engagement as the essential foundation and framework for NPS activities. Places civic engagement within the context of strategies for pursuing the new directions sketched out in the NPS Advisory Board's *Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century*. Provides a series of case studies of already established civic engagement processes and explorations of ways in which similar practices might be incorporated into park sites and programs. Includes a series of recommendations for core activities, approaches to educational partnering and civic involvement, and preliminary actions leading toward a deliberate expansion of the NPS civic engagement effort.

Winks, Robin. "Sites of Shame: Disgraceful Episodes From Our Past Should Be Included in the Park System to Present a Complete Picture of Our History," *National Parks* (March/April 1994); 22-23.

Argues that national parks should not only commemorate places and events in which we take pride, but should also mark events and places that represent shameful episodes in American history. Effective educational systems can never be based on unqualified praise. Erasing certain aspects of the national past is Stalinist – in order to grow, freedom needs a climate in which errors are publicly spoken of and corrected (at least symbolically). Every event, person or topic interpreted by the National Park Service must be placed in context of the time in which it occurred – and telling a more full and inclusive history is the mark of a mature nation.

Confronting Contested Pasts

Black, Allida. "Struggling With Icons: Memorializing Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt," *Public Historian*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Winter 1999); 63-72.

An examination of the contested process surrounding the design and erection of the FDR Memorial. Applauding the memorial's success in capturing and reflecting the Roosevelts' impact on ordinary Americans, she nonetheless criticizes its propensity to present the President and First Lady as "icons in bronze," "removed from the humanity to which they devoted their lives." An interesting reflection on the dynamics and difficulties of interpreting iconic figures, of historicizing great men and women and exploring the ways in which images are created. Centers on the position of Eleanor Roosevelt and the implications of the image in which she is cast, arguing that above all else, the memorial tells us that late 20th century American society is uneasy about change, politics, wives and power.

Bunch, Lonnie. "Embracing Controversy: Museum Exhibitions and the Politics of Change," *Public Historian*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Summer 1992); 63-65.

Museum/public history profession must continue to move forward in its growing commitment to making exhibits more inclusive, stimulating and challenging. Such actions will orchestrate their return to "the centers of their communities," transforming them into safe havens for dialogue, audience interaction and forums that stimulate debate and understanding.

Bodnar, John. *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Explores the creation of public memory, particularly through commemorations, ceremonies, landmark designations and national holidays. Concentrates on the challenges posed to the imagined community of the nation by vernacular, particularistic narratives, revealing the tension between cultural leaders' and ordinary people's uses of the past. Stresses that what is most at stake in a struggle over the past, is not the past itself, but rather the present. "Public memory speaks primarily about the structure of power in society because that power is always in question in a world of polarities and contradictions and because cultural understanding is always grounded in the material structure of society itself." Explores the creation of ethnic memory, commemoration in urban contexts, the pioneer narrative in the Midwest, the role of the National Park Service in creating an official history, the bicentennial, and the struggle over the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Particularly relevant may be Chapter 7, "The National Park Service and History," an exploration of the NPS's role in creating a nationalistic narrative of American history centered around the building of the nation-state.

Burnham, Philip, "The National Park Service: An Appraisal," in *How the Other Half Lived: A People's Guide to American Historic Sites*. Boston: Faber and Faber, 1995.

A critique of the NPS's historic pose as "benevolent caretaker," which he argues has resulted in a highly traditional and limited vision, as well as a narrow definition of "national significance." Argues that high profile NPS sites are almost always "ennobling examples," carefully chosen to extol the virtues of patriotic sacrifice, territorial expansion, military victory, and the "poor boy makes good" American dream. Sharply criticizes the idea that designation of new sites is largely a matter of demographics, questioning whether this is not self-serving history at its extreme.

Encourages the NPS to recognize its potential to be more active in the site selection process and not allow its own bureaucracy to stifle attempts to broaden its narrative.

Crow, Jeffrey J. "Interpreting Slavery in the Classroom and at Historic Sites," *Perspectives (Newsletter of the American Historical Association)*, (March 1998); 23-26.

Offers four basic principles to guide the interpretation of slavery in particular and African American history in general: inclusiveness, truthfulness, research and tailored interpretation. Emphasizes the importance of making distinctions and being faithful in details – not all blacks were slaves, not all whites were slave owners, farms and plantations were two distinct entities, etc. Encourages the interpretation of slavery at sites not traditionally associated with African American history, such as the homes of major Civil War figures. Argues that "one size does not fit all sites" and that interpreters should not try to cover all the themes of black history at each site, but should focus on one or two discrete aspects that are particularly pertinent to the site in question.

Davis, Jack E. "A Struggle for Public History: Black and White Claims to Natchez's Past," *Public Historian*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Winter 2000); 45-63.

An exploration of the way in which history has been disseminated in public in Natchez, Mississippi, focusing on the competing narratives historically embraced by black and white residents. Calls attention to the role of history as a tool for cultural dominance, as an authority whose "truths" are often marshaled to validate and defend the status quo. Yet also examines the opportunity for alternate readings of the past than those put forward by the dominant culture. Looks at the impact of the civil rights era in galvanizing black residents to speak out against white interpretations that apotheosized the antebellum period and marginalized or denigrated black history, leading to black pull-out of the Confederate Pageant in the 1960's and return on more respected terms in 1990. Highlights the confusion of many whites as to how what they considered a celebration of community pride could be a source of pain to their neighbors, and the idea that "accurate" history should not/could not be offensive.

Davison, Patricia. "Museums and the Reshaping of Memory," in *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, ed. Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee. Cape Town: Oxford University Press Southern Africa, 1998. Pg. 143-160.

A reflection on the responses engendered by the South African National Gallery's 1989 *Miscast: Negotiating KhoiSan History and Material Culture* exhibit, an attempt to add a critical and analytical edge to the popular "Bushman" diorama - an assortment of lifelike casts of KhoiSan hunters that had for years given tangible form to stereotypes about aboriginal peoples' alleged physical and mental inferiorities. Designed in such a way as to bring visitors face to face with the oppression suffered by native peoples under colonialism, the exhibit forced viewers to walk across images of KhoiSan people, thus signifying inescapable complicity with the exploitive policies of the former regime. Instead of sparking healthy dialogue and a willingness to confront the lingering effects of such treatment, the exhibit was stymied by the anger of KhoiSan descendants, who charged that a museum curator had no right to represent their history, that the exhibit rendered them passive victims, and inflicted violence upon them in the present. A note of caution highly relevant for those attempting to interpret histories of oppression and exploitation.

Eichstedt, Jennifer and Stephen Small. *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002.

Argues that the experience and legacy of slavery is still inadequately presented in plantation museums across the South - the vast majority of sites have constructed narratives that valorize the white elite of the pre-emancipation South and trivialize the experience of slavery for both slaves and masters. Calls attention to the counter narratives found at some sites organized and staffed by African Americans, and a small number of white-organized sites that have made efforts to incorporate African American experiences of slavery as part of their presentations. Argues for public debate and intervention as the most promising avenue toward ending the "white-centric exhibition narrative".

Ellis, Rex. "A Decade of Change: Black History at Colonial Williamsburg," *Colonial Williamsburg* (Spring 1990); 14-23.

An account of Colonial Williamsburg's journey toward interpreting social history, slavery and 18th century black life. Examines the reasons why the black perspective was so long absent from the Foundation's interpretations and early attempts to address the problem without "really" confronting it. Explores in depth the "turning point" decade of the 1980's and the development of the Department of African American Interpretation and Presentations. Touches lightly on the controversial issues of the effects of playing the role of a slave on interpreters and the question whether this kind of interpretation can unconsciously perpetuate negative stereotypes and confirm prejudices. A helpful resource for parks and organizations instituting new programs.

Goodheart, Adam. "The Bonds of History," *Preservation* (Sept./Oct. 2001); 36-43, 94.

An exploration of different approaches to preserving the antebellum period, particularly the slave past, across the South - from plantations that don't mention slavery to plantations that hold reunions for descendants of former slaves, from slave cabin bed and breakfasts to prolonged struggles to erect a historical marker on a slave market site. Argues for the importance of preserving the slave past on the landscape as well as in books and monographs - to make it a "walking history" inscribed on the landscape.

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

Both an institutional history of Colonial Williamsburg and a study of the packaging of American history, history and consumerism, the construction of cultural beliefs, the impact of the new social history on museums and historic sites, and the potential of interpreters as a medium for conveying critical history. Particularly concerned with Colonial Williamsburg's ongoing attempts to integrate African American history into its narrative of life in the colonial capital in ways that are both respectful and upsetting. Points out the oft-forgotten impact of philosophy of history on approaches to interpretation. Though displaying an understanding of the discipline of interpretation that is perhaps not as fully developed as it could be, the analysis cuts to the heart of a potential dilemma in the role of the interpreter under civic engagement. Interpreters are asked both to maintain good vibes with visitors at all times and to participate in impression management, yet also to communicate a critical narrative, be provocative and controversial, and quite possibly disturb or upset visitors.

Hass, Kristin Ann. *Carried To The Wall: American Memory and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Uses the objects left at the Wall to explore the process of creating public memory of a divisive chapter in American history – the restlessness of memory of the war has motivated the American public to carry on on-site an unsolicited conversation about its meaning and legacy. Explores the challenges both the Wall's design and public interpretation of its meaning have posed to the traditional narrative of patriotic sacrifice and the heroic dead. Argues that the Memorial and the things people leave there are part of a continuing public conversation about the relationship of individuals to nations, patriotism, and nationalism, and about the division between public and private memory. Examines the Wall as a vehicle for non-leftist protest against government policies and a crucible for forging a diverse, complex, and textured memory of war and the disruption it created in American life. In creating a forum for a cacophony of voices, memorialization at the Wall has ensured that the complexity that characterized the experience of the war and continues to characterize the negotiation of its legacy from being subsumed into an orthodox narrative.

Horton, James O. "Presenting Slavery: The Perils of Telling America's Racial Story," *Public Historian*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Fall 1999); 19-38.

Argues that the kind of open and honest public conversations on race called for by former President Clinton cannot happen until the American public is both educated on the topic of slavery and able to discuss it in public. Forging a link between historical and contemporary issues, he asserts that the past forges our identity and defines the terms of our debates and that public historians have a critical role to play in providing historical context for much-needed conversations. It is impossible to realistically address vital contemporary concerns about race while ignoring the institution that most fundamentally shaped race relations in America. Highlights the many incorrect assumptions about slavery prevalent in society and the uncomfortable encounters experienced at sites attempting to discuss the issue. Examines the attempts to represent slavery at Colonial Williamsburg and Monticello, holding them up as models for other sites interested in engaging the issue. Touches on the failed exhibit on plantation slavery at the Library of Congress, charging the reaction of black employees was as much a reaction to contemporary racial tensions within the institution as to the racial caste system of the antebellum South. Raises the disturbing issues of who should be expected to or has the right to discuss racial issues, the emotional/psychological impact of playing a slave, and the idea of proper/improper context for addressing these painful issues.

Kidwell, Clara Sue and Ann Marie Plane, ed. "Representing Native American History," *Public Historian*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Fall 1996), pg. 7-143.

Explores a variety of issues relevant to the representation of Native Americans in museums and at historic and archaeological sites, such as interpreting Horseshoe Bend National Military Park, representing native-white relations, why Native American artifacts were for so long classified as natural history, respecting sacred perspectives on objects and narratives, repatriation of human remains, and understanding the political and policy implications of interpretations of the past.

Considers the role of representation of the past in the struggle for cultural survival and recognition by outsiders. Examines the challenges posed by Native American histories to the underlying assumptions about time, fact and narrative that characterize the European historical tradition.

Levinson, Sanford. *Written in Stone: Public Monuments in Changing Societies*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1998.

An examination of the social and legal arguments regarding the construction, modification, display and destruction of public monuments, focusing on Communist statuary, the Confederate flag, and racially offensive monuments in the American South. Questions whether a society has a responsibility to preserve commemorative pieces that are racist, sexist, totalitarian, etc. at their core, eventually arguing that the destruction of any kind of negative historical memory is itself both escapist and dangerously totalitarian. Argues against the use of court power to ban potentially offensive cultural symbols such as the Confederate flag, suggesting that neither force of arms nor force of law can bring about a genuinely respectful society. Such a society will come to life only through a transformation of the hearts and minds of individuals.

Liebhold, Peter. "Experiences from the Front Line: Presenting a Controversial Exhibition during the Culture Wars," *Public Historian*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (Summer 2000); 67-84

An account of one of the 1990's successful controversial exhibitions, the National Museum of American History's *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: A History of American Sweatshops, 1820-Present* (1998). Explores the lessons learned from the attacks on previous exhibitions, *The Last Act: The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II* and *The West as America*, and the processes through which the exhibit's curators sought to ensure institutional support at the highest levels, prepare viewers for the content of the exhibit by laying out the reasons for which a museum undertakes this kind of exhibition, and not only reassure the apparel industry that the exhibit would be balanced, fair, and appropriate, but to enlist industry perspectives for incorporation into a dialogic section. A success story in which controversy proved to be an opportunity and thousands of visitors responded favorably and thoughtfully to an opportunity to view a contested issue in historical context.

Linenthal, Edward T. and Tom Engelhardt, *History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past*. New York: Henry Holt, 1996.

Places the 1994-1995 controversy surrounding the National Air and Space Museum's proposed exhibit on the dropping of the atomic bomb into the cultural context of post-war, particularly post-Vietnam, America. Examines the collapse of a consensus culture of victory and its effect on historical scholarship, making clear the connections and conflict between interpretive approaches and the contemporary climates from which they spring. Raises questions regarding the role of history in the culture wars and potential pitfalls of "buy in" and public involvement in crafting museum narratives. Can civic engagement proceed with groups who prove more interested in

victory than in conversation? As an example of a failed attempt to apply a lens of conscience to a historical experience, the story of the exhibit that never happened contains many lessons for those interested in civic engagement.

Linenthal, Edward T. *Sacred Ground: Americans and Their Battlefields*. Second Edition. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993.

An exploration of the struggle for symbolic ownership and possession of American battlefields. As ceremonial centers and civic spaces, battlefields' "sacred space" legitimize the historical and contemporary viewpoints of those who struggle for access. The charge to the National Park Service and other battlefield administrators is to orchestrate the plurality of contending voices, providing equal access to the "free market of sacred space" for proponents of the "heretical" narrative as well as the orthodox. As long as no single point of view is permitted to prevail, such struggles can be viewed as healthy symptoms of a strong democracy.

Nash, Gary, Charlotte Crabtree and Ross Dunn, *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past*. New York: Vintage Books, 2000.

The story of the nation's struggle to choose what history/whose history children should learn in school, focusing on 1994's controversy over the National History Standards. Suggests that the controversy is a striking lesson in the inseparability of public education (or public history!) and policies from political ideology, the current political climate, national identity and the struggle for social justice. Argues that contention over the past is as old as the past itself, that democratization of the historical profession has led to a more balanced narrative of American history, and that continuous reexamination of the past is the greatest service historians can render in a democracy, concluding that nothing serves patriotism worse than covering the dark parts of the American past. "History is unceasingly controversial because it provides so much of the substance for the way a society defines itself and considers what it wants to be."

"Native Americans and Museums," *Public Historian*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Summer 1992); 23-50.

A dialogue between two opposing viewpoints. The first lauds the passage of NAGPRA, analyzes the curatorial decisions and policies of the National Museum of the American Indian and approves of museums' increasing use of Native American consultants. The second, pointing to the lack of total consensus within the Native American community over repatriation, criticizes the process as mere political correctness, a surrender to the narrative of political victimization. Claims that the return of legally acquired collections for religious reasons is in violation of the First Amendment, arguing that using religion as the basis for denying the study of museum objects and "destroying them through reburial" is anti-intellectual.

Percoco, James A. *Divided We Stand: Teaching About Conflict in U.S. History*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2001.

Reflections on and suggestions for teaching about conflict, controversy, multiple points of view and painful/divisive topics in high school history classes. Explores the use of journal writing, visits to monuments and memorials, reenactments, historical film, music, novels, artwork, etc. –

some of which might be put to good use by interpreters, curators and other historic site professionals. Stresses the need to create a climate of respect in which respect for others and their different opinions is paramount, the need for creativity and clear goals, and the importance of remaining sensitive to the profoundly personal reactions such teaching/interpretation may provoke.

"Public Controversy, Curatorial Freedom, and the American Museum: A Conversation with Alfred Young," *Northern Illinois University Faculty Bulletin*, Vol. 61, No. 3 (January 1998); 6-17.

A series of reflections on the negative impact of the *Enola Gay* controversy on creativity and risk-taking in the museum world; the threat to exhibition quality posed by the decline of public funding and the growing reliance upon corporate sponsorship; the way in which the age of subject matter may affect its potential for provoking controversy; the importance of explaining revisionism to the public; and the appropriate level of involvement for advisory groups and communities in exhibit planning. Remains hopeful that the majority of the American public is ready for quality, honest history and does not demand unqualified celebration.

Strange, Carolyn and Tina Loo, "Holding the Rock: The 'Indianization' of Alcatraz Island, 1969-1999," *Public Historian*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Winter 2001); 55-74.

Explores the creation of on-site public remembrance of the 1969-1971 Native American occupation, particularly the coming together of two currents of memory, one originating with the NPS and the other springing from the actions of Indian activists, occupation veterans and academics. Explores the complexity of early federal action on the island - the NPS acted to preserve occupation graffiti at the same time other agencies embarked on bulldozing remains - and the ways in which these actions would later impede Native American willingness to share their story with any federal agency, even the NPS. Highlights the fact that the impetus for NPS interpretive inclusion came not from park administration, but from front-line rangers. Argues that the gulf between a largely white bureaucratic narrative and a largely native activist narrative was bridged by academic interest in the topic and oral history projects that encouraged veterans to take their memories back into the public sphere. A story of taking the initial steps toward trust.

Sutton, Robert K., ed. *Rally on the High Ground: The National Park Service Symposium on the Civil War*. Eastern National, 2001.

A collection of papers from the NPS's 2000 symposium on rethinking the Civil War and the implications of such philosophical realignment on the interpretation, management policies and preservation priorities of Civil War parks. Explores the triumph of reconciliation over race in the establishment and orientation of Civil War battlefield parks, the need to provide greater social and cultural context for the American Civil War, as well as the lack of diversity in park visitation. Also explores the absence of larger context and contemporary implications in the majority of the history presented at the parks. Question and answer sessions contain much material on the sensitive nerves touched by the introduction of more controversial elements into the interpretation of the Civil War, and on theoretical frameworks that make slavery not an "imposed" side issue but the central reality integral to any solid understanding of the conflict.

Wallace, Mike. "Museums and Controversy," in *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996. Pg. 115-129.

Both chronicles the growing willingness of American museums to tackle controversial issues in their interpretive programming and exposes the boundaries that remain. Encourages museum professionals to take the risk of exploring topics and partnering with communities still considered taboo.

Young, Alfred F. "A Modest Proposal: A Bill of Rights for American Museums," *Public Historian*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Summer 1992); 67-75

A response to the attack on curatorial freedom that seemed so prevalent during the culture wars of the early 1990's. Points out the failure of scholarly organizations to intervene on behalf of public historians and museum professionals. Proposes the drafting of a "bill of rights" for museums that enshrines curatorial freedom as an inviolate principle as academic freedom for professors. Framed around the question of whether curators have a right to their own interpretation and to implement it as they see fit. Raises many questions about the efficacy of comparison between the university and the museum, and to what extent exhibitions and interpretive programs should be framed around curatorial vs. public interpretations and questions.

Engaging Communities

Chew, Ron. "Toward a Dynamic Model of Exhibition-Making." *Wing Luke Asian Museum Newsletter*. (Summer 2000). www.winqluke.org/LetterDir.html

A challenge to museums to undertake a more responsive, public-centered approach to exhibit design that responds to current issues and promotes community engagement. Argues that slow-track museum exhibitions that require years of preparation are out-dated and unresponsive to the public. In their place should come exhibitions that change as frequently as department store displays, reflecting contemporary public concerns and dialogues. "Journalistic" model of research should replace the "academic" model, and a model of reciprocal sharing of artifacts among museums in an unlimited process of borrowing should replace the acquisition model.

Franco, Barbara. "Doing History in Public: Balancing Historical Fact with Public Meaning," *Perspectives (Newsletter of the American Historical Association)*, Vol. 33, No. 5 (May/June 1995); 5-8.

An exploration of the difference between scholarly and public questions, arguing that the past way to avoid debilitating controversy surrounding exhibitions is to "channel public discourse into productive and respectful explorations that can challenge scholars to address questions that are meaningful to the public while exposing public meanings to the rigors of historical analysis." Instead of calling in community members to review a final product, museums need to involve the public in the process of determining which questions to pursue in exhibitions. The historians' "history" and the public's "memory" do not have to be at war. Two different truths can operate simultaneously.

Green, James. "Learning to Teach Movement History to Workers," in *Taking History to Heart: The Power of the Past in Building Social Movements*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000. Pg. 73-97.

Chronicles the development of UMass-Boston's Labor Studies Program, a program committed to using movement history to empower workers to bring about change in their own shops/locals/unions. Explores Green's experiences as an activist historian, and the development of a present-focused problem-posing approach to teaching history.

Igoe, Kim and Alexandra Marmion Roosa. "Listening to the Voices in Our Communities," *Journal of Museum Education*. Vol. 27, No. 3 (Summer 2002); 16-21.

A report on Phase 1 (community dialogue phase) and the beginnings of Phase 2 (dissemination) of the American Association of Museums' Museums and Community Initiative, exploring some of the insights provided by the dialogues, concluding that "every museum has a unique and essential civic role and a responsibility to contribute to the health and vitality of its community." Encourages those just beginning to explore their civic/community roles to look to the example of ethnic and community-based museums.

***Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums*. Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 2002.**

A three-part report on the development of the American Association of Museums' (AAM) Museums and Community Initiative. First segment, "Mastering Civic Engagement: A Report from the American Association of Museums," examines the historical context for AAM's interest in the relationship between museums and communities, describes the qualities of museums as civic enterprises, and suggests questions to guide further thought about civic engagement. More of a theoretical exploration than a practical guide for implementation. Second segment, "A Framework for Civic Engagement," explores the potential for museum involvement in civic life as seen through the eyes of community, cultural and civic organizations. Third segment, "Points of View," contains reflection on actual community involvement practices/projects undertaken by arts programs and museums. Report is largely focused on engagement through neighborhood involvement rather than interpretation, (the group emphasized more than the individual) and is perhaps more relevant for art and technology museums than for history museums.

***Museums in the Life of a City: Strategies for Community Partnerships*. Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 1995.**

Report on an AAM initiative in Philadelphia that outlines the possibilities and challenges, as well as some strategies for creating long-term partnerships that increase a museum's role in creating and sustaining the social fabric of its immediate community. Includes participants' reflections on their experiences, and the successes and failures of the initiative.

Tchen, John Kuo Wei. "Creating a Dialogic Museum: The Chinatown History Museum Experiment," in *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, ed. Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer and Steven D. Lavine. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992. Pg. 285-319.

Analyzes the development of New York Chinatown's dialogue-driven, multivocal history museum (now called Museum of Chinese in America). Explores the community-based approaches to research and public programming that created a museum in which personal memories and testimonies inform and are informed by historical context and scholarship. Suggests that unless the majority of cultural institutions learn to effectively provide forums to discuss the thorny issues of 21st century America, they risk absenting themselves from meaningful public discourse.

Weyeneth, Robert R. "History, He Wrote: Murder, Politics and the Challenges of Public History in a Community with a Secret," *Public Historian*, Vol. 16 (Spring 1994); 51-73.

An exploration of a struggle for historical integrity in community memory; the use of a National Register nomination process to encourage re-engagement of the community of Centralia, Washington, with the events of the 1919 Centralia Massacre. Considers the difference between confrontation with the past and reconciliation with the past, focusing on the problems presented for public historians through public ownership of history, the power of the past as a tool wielded in community struggles for power, the lack of legitimacy of public history in the labor community, and the strength of public desire to see the past as a mirror of the present.

Interpreting Violence and Tragedy

Foote, Kenneth E. *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997.

Pinpoints the four major categories of response to sites shadowed by a tragic past: sanctification, designation, rectification and obliteration. Sanctification draws clear boundaries between the sites and its surrounding environment, signifying that the events that transpired on the site have a lasting positive meaning that must be preserved. Designation implies that the reasons for the site's significance are clear, that the events are unforgettable, but not the stuff of which legends are made. Rectification, the most common approach, reintegrates these sites into the activities of daily life. Obliteration implies that the tragedy occurring upon a site is horrific enough that all evidence of the event must be destroyed, but that it lacks a deeper meaning that would result in sanctification or designation.

Gourevitch, Philip. "Behold Now Behemoth. The Holocaust Memorial Museum: One More American Theme Park," *Harper's Magazine*. Vol. 287, Number 1718 (July 1993), pg. 55-62.

A highly critical review of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, its interpretive approach, exhibit design, and philosophical mission. Raises difficult questions about America's willingness to tell the stories of Europe's inhumanity but not its own, the purpose of memorializing and commemorating violence, the pornographic appeal of hideous imagery, and whether an exposure to horror is really an antidote against it. A sober critique of many of civic engagement's fundamental ideals and convictions.

Kavanagh, Gaynor. "Remembering Ourselves in the Work of Museums: Trauma and the Place of the Personal in the Public," in *Museums, Society, Inequality*, ed. Richard Sandell. London: Routledge, 2002. Pg. 110-122.

Calls attention to the great ethical responsibility assumed by a museum or historic site when it begins to engage with personal memories, particularly those of a traumatic nature. Argues that self-esteem rests on personal memories, thus their recall must be carefully mediated. Difficult memories forced to the surface can be highly disruptive to carefully constructed coping mechanisms and cause serious injury to their bearer. Thus, it is crucial that museums retain the personhood of memory-bearers at their core, and create a safe place for memory dialogue. However, not all memories will produce feelings of well-being – and these, no less than others, need to be made public. Challenging exhibitions on difficult topics will unavoidably force to the surface painful memories in some visitors. Should all coping mechanisms or reasons for repressing memory be equally respected?

Linenthal, Edward T. *Preserving Memory: The Struggle to Create America's Holocaust Museum*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.

Chronicles the development of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum from its beginnings in the President's Commission on the Holocaust through the process of selecting an architectural design, amassing a collection, designing an interpretive approach and opening to the public. Recounts the often painful decisions regarding inclusion/exclusion, privileged voices, the presence of the perpetrators, working with stakeholder and survivor groups, and interpreting horror – decisions relevant to any conscience-driven approach to history. Also examines the museum's activist role in using Holocaust memory as a weapon to combat genocide, totalitarianism and dehumanization in their contemporary forms (particularly ethnic cleansing in Serbia, a prescient issue at the time the museum opened), drawing attention to the contested nature of such memory and its frequently contradictory lessons for contemporary life.

Linenthal, Edward T. *The Unfinished Bombing: Oklahoma City in American Memory*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Examines the memorialization process following the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building and the memory-work sparked by the tragedy. Explores the conflicts, debates, decisions, mistakes, successes and reflections that characterized what was perhaps the most democratic memorial design process ever undertaken. Focuses more on the process than the end product, arguing that "it is through the process that people are most fully engaged with the searing issues they want to express in memorialization." Vividly demonstrates both the risk and the enormous rewards of approaching the past not as a dead and divorced reality simply to be learned or absorbed, but rather as a living entity to be engaged.

Young, James E. *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.

Explores Germany's struggles to commemorate the murder of its Jewish population and remember the terror of its Nazi regime. Focuses on public art, architecture and what Young refers to as "counter-monuments," painfully self-conscious memorial spaces conceived to challenge the traditional redemptory purposes of art and memorialization, thus challenging the purpose of their own existence. Examines the idea of a memorial as something intended "not to console but to provoke; not to remain fixed but to change; not to be everlasting but to disappear; not to be ignored by its passersby but to demand interaction; not to remain pristine but to invite its own violation; not to accept graciously the burden of memory but to throw it back at the [town's] feet." Argues that memorials too often become places to forget rather than remember, and analyzes attempts to make them places of a kind of personal engagement that is often painful in its intensity.

Young, James E. *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.

Stresses the importance of remembering the biographies of monuments, memorials and historic or commemorative sites. "Remembering" is filtered through national, communal, ethnic, religious, etc. traditions, ideals and experiences. Only through understanding the context in which and process through which a monument/memorial/site came into existence can one appropriately negotiate its meanings. Encourages the use of the concept of "collected" memory over collective memory, emphasizing the plurality of meanings embodied in a site, an aggregate collection of often competing memories.

Museums/Sites and Social Service Roles

Duitz, Mindy. "The Soul of a Museum: Commitment to Community at the Brooklyn Children's Museum," in *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, ed. Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer and Steven D. Lavine. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992. Pg.242-261.

A case study of one museum's journey from traditional cultural institution to an engaged member of the community and facilitator of social service-type functions. Examines/Analyzes new programming – drawing attention to the way a museum can serve as both community center and force for change in an urban minority neighborhood. Discusses the internal discussions and debate necessary for moving an institution in a new direction. Argues that the development of a "social conscience" has provided direction and opportunities for the museum that are both overwhelming and inspiring.

Silverman, Lois H. "The Therapeutic Potential of Museums as Pathways to Inclusion," in *Museums, Society, Inequality*, ed. Richard Sandell. London: Routledge, 2002. Pg. 69-81.

Argues that mental health is a common denominator, a need common to all people, and thus, commitment to improve the mental health of visitors is a path toward broader social inclusion by museums. Argues that the therapeutic potential of museums offers an opportunity to facilitate the social inclusion of some of the most marginalized groups in society: adults with life-

threatening illnesses and their care-givers, senior citizens, and adults with behavioral health issues. Examines the pilot projects of the Museums as Therapeutic Agents (MATA) Collaborative, arguing for extensive partnerships between what she considers two closely related disciplines – the museum field and the mental health field. Yet the sort of critical history/social criticism advanced by civic engagement may be a hindrance to mental health programs' goals of self-actualization and self-esteem.

Museums' Civic Function

Alexander, Mary. "Do Visitors Get It? A Sweatshop Exhibit and Visitors' Comments," *Public Historian*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (Summer 2000); 85-94.

A series of impressions, conclusions and suggestions for future exhibitions drawn from a thorough examination of the visitor comment books of one of the 1990's successful controversial exhibitions, the National Museum of American History's *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: A History of American Sweatshops, 1820-Present* (1998). The sophistication and depth of insight displayed in the comments poses a welcome challenge to the stereotypical portrait of visitors as harried, superficial and only seeking entertainment, suggesting that visitors are much more intelligent and socially engaged than they are often given credit for being. Many made the connections between past and present, some expressed the desire for more direction from the museum on what they could do to oppose sweatshop labor, others recorded sophisticated reflections on historical and economic processes, while still others suggested additions or modifications to the exhibit. Draws a connection between the "Dialogue" component built into the exhibit and visitors' willingness to share their own thoughts.

Archibald, Robert R. *A Place to Remember: Using History to Build Community*. Thousand Oaks, CA: AltaMira Press and American Association for State and Local History, 1999.

An exploration of the intersections of history, memory and community that illustrates ways in which individuals and communities are active participants in the past – and the role and importance of history in contemporary life.

Bacon, Barbara Schaffer, Cheryl Yuen and Pam Korza. *Animating Democracy: The Artistic Imagination as a Force in Civic Dialogue*. Americans for the Arts, 1999.

www.artusa.org/AnimatingDemocracy

Reveals pivotal and innovating roles that the arts can play in the renewal of civic dialogue, as well as challenges faced by arts and cultural organizations as they engage in this work. Acknowledges the varied ways that the arts have reflected on and prompted discourse on social, political and civic matters. Focuses largely on specific artists and cultural organizations whose work stimulates or advances public dialogue on civic issues.

Better Together – The Report of the Saguaro Seminar: Civic Engagement in America. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000. www.bettertogether.org

Distillation of a multiyear conversation about strategies for rebuilding the nation's social capital. One chapter in particular deals with the arts and social capital.

Dye, R. Thomas. "The Rosewood Massacre: History and the Making of Public Policy," *Public Historian*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Summer 1997); 25-39.

An account of the role of a team of historians in influencing the decision of the Florida legislature to pass the 1994 bill compensating former Rosewood residents for the loss of their property in the 1923 mob burning of the town. Raises significant questions about the motives of legislators calling upon historians, the differences between legal research and historical research, and the challenges to applied history raised by those opposed to its public policy implications.

Frisch, Michael, " 'Brooklyn's History Museum:' The Urban History Exhibit as an Agent of Change," in *Ideas and Images: Developing Interpretive History Exhibits*, Kenneth L. Ames, Barbara Franco and L. Thomas Frye, ed. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1992. Pg. 253-282.

Explores the potential of an exhibit design process, when undertaken in the midst of a period of redefinition of museum mission, identity and audience, to become a major agent for change through defining and representing the institution to the public in its newly emerging form. Using the experiences of the Brooklyn Historical Society, Frisch examines an exhibition that helped to revitalize and re-orient a moribund institution, attract new audiences and generate public enthusiasm for the Society. Attracting the public by centering around familiar and beloved symbols such as the Brooklyn Bridge, Coney Island and the Brooklyn Dodgers, the exhibit used the symbols as jumping-off points for exploration of structural issues such as deindustrialization, urbanization, and race and identity. The exhibit provided an excellent explication of Brooklyn history while at the same time moving the narrative beyond parochial local history to questions of interest and significance far beyond the boundaries of locale. Looks at the concept of convening focus groups less for the purpose of soliciting input into the exhibit than for providing forums for exploring the best ways to advertise the museum's new direction.

Graffagnino, J. Kevin. "Using the Past to Change the Future: A Strategy for Historical Organizations," *History News: The Magazine of the American Association for State and Local History*, (Summer 2001); 11-15.

Argues that a "we're about the past but our eyes are on the future" philosophy for historical organizations is not only responsible public service but a necessary tool in the struggle to build larger constituencies and broader support for history in the public sphere. Explores the recent broadening of mission at the Kentucky Historical Society, examples of KHS's new proactive role on the contemporary issues front, and partnerships with state agencies and private-sector groups. Cautions that historical organizations that venture into the world of applied history

cannot afford to be seen as partisan – must commit themselves to advancing the process of working toward political and social solutions to contemporary problems rather than promoting particular solutions. A focus on the present and future does not demand abandonment of traditional areas of historical activity, but does incorporate new elements into the core of museum mission.

Leon, Warren. "A Broader Vision: Exhibits That Change the Way Visitors Look at the Past," in *Past Meets Present: Essays About Historic Interpretation and Public Audiences*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987. Pg. 133-152.

Taking as his beginning point audience response surveys demonstrating the high percentage of visitors who appear to have passive, disengaging experiences in museums, Leon argues that the fundamental problem with most exhibits is that they rarely make significant differences in the way visitors look at/understand the past. Conceding that some visitors do not expect or want museum visits to fundamentally alter their general perceptions of history, he still affirms that museums have the potential to do a much better job of reaching those open to new paradigms and frameworks. Suggests an approach in which historiography and interpretive divisions are made visible, and competing interpretations are laid out side by side before the visitor, thus hopefully drawing him/her into the ongoing dialogue. The best approach to engaging adult visitors is "shaking them up," challenging assumptions, and treating them like analytical adults rather than passive sponges.

Peers, Laura. "'Playing Ourselves': First Nations and Native American Interpreters at Living History Sites," *Public Historian*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Fall 1999); 39-59.

Examines the implications of attempts to represent Native peoples at five living history sites across Canada and the northern United States, concluding that although the sites themselves are focused on recreating the social and material dimensions of the past, much of what goes on in the Native American demonstration areas has more to do with the present than the past. Focuses on the interaction between visitors and Native interpreters, drawing attention to the fact that Native interpreters are often unprepared for the extent to which their work will consist of challenging prejudices, or the psychological impact of daily confrontation with racism or insensitivity. Optimistically concludes that despite the prevalence of stereotypes among visitors, when confronted or corrected, most are apologetic for having been unwittingly offensive and welcoming of the new information offered by interpreters. Her notation that most confrontations actually result in conversations of greater length and depth than the majority of visitor/interpreter interactions calls attention to the civic dialogue qualities of these kind of discussions. As interpreters and visitors discuss stereotypes and prejudices about Native peoples, worldviews begin to shift and history touches contemporary life.

Postman, Neil. "Museum as Dialogue," *Museum News*, (Sept./Oct.1990); 55-58.

Suggests that museums are answers to the question of what it means to be human – each makes assertions about the nature of humanity, probably all of which are correct. But some

museums tell more important truths about humanity than others. "A museum must be a timely argument with society," for its most vital function is to provide society balance, to keep choice and dialogue alive through putting forward alternative views, views that escape the tyranny of the present to tell us about who we once were as a people, what is wrong with who we now are and what new directions are available for the future.

Sandell, Richard, ed. *Museums, Society, Inequality*. London: Routledge, 2002.

An exploration of the wide-ranging social roles and responsibilities of museums. Examines the impact of museums on society, their role in instigating social change and engaging with contemporary social concerns, and sketches out the outlines of more inclusive museums for the future. Challenges museums to approach the processes of collection, preservation, and display not as outcomes in their own right, but rather as avenues through which they may create social value. Central theme is the social utility and responsibility of museums.

Skramstad, Harold. "An Agenda for American Museums in the Twenty-First Century," *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*. Special Issue – "America's Museums." Summer 1999. Pg. 109-128.

Offers two roles for American museums in the coming century – 1) Helping to redesign American education through increasing refinement of nontraditional educational methodologies and 2) Contributing to community development and renewal. Stresses the civic dimension and functions of 18th and 19th century museums, but ignores the restrictive and repressive aspects of this civic involvement. Encourages museums that the future lies in moving from a collections-centered worldview to a public-centered one. Suggests that experience, design and delivery are central to the museum mission and artifacts and content are means rather than ends. A sense of participating in the "experience business" rather than the "content business" lifts museums from merely transmitting information to inspiring and changing their audiences. Focus must shift from "outreach" (museums reaching out to the community) to "inreach" (the community reaching in to museums through experiences that both connect to their own lives and expand their perceptions of the world).

"The Museum as a Public Place," *Journal of Museum Education*. Vol. 24, nos. 1 and 2 (1999).

What does it mean to be a public place? What are the features of a vital public place and what are the implications for museums? Articles include "The Civic Museum: A Place in the World," "Museums and Livable Communities," and "Space Creatures: The Museum as Urban Intervention and Social Forum."

Thelen, David. "Learning Community: Lessons in Co-Creating the Civic Museum," *Museum News* (May/June 2001).

Reflections on the AAM-sponsored dialogues between museum professionals and members of community and civic organizations about the future of museum/community partnerships. Emphasizes the difficulties of attempting partnerships without the serious and sustained commitment of the entire institution to a civic role – suggesting that museums interested in pursuing civic engagement would do well to begin internally, in reshaping staff relations, attaining employee commitment at all levels, and fully integrating civic purposes into the museum's sense of mission. Cautions that successful civic and community engagement cannot be solely the project of a museum's education department, but must be supported and participated in by those at the highest levels of the institution's administration. Also includes cautions about the elitist tendencies inherent in devotion to "best practices" and professionalization.

Wallace, Mike. "Razor Ribbons, History Museums, and Civic Salvation," in *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996. Pg. 33-54.

Sketches out a role for urban history museums in "reconstituting civic comity and saving our cities." Suggests that such museums are ideally located to serve as public forums about community concerns and help situate contemporary problems in historical context. Sketches out possible exhibitions that could address issues of both historical and contemporary concern such as poverty, crime, housing, transportation, public health, shopping, entertainment, etc. Through these kind of exhibitions, museums could make the leap to raising questions about the future of cities.

Wallace, Mike. "The Politics of Public History," in *Past Meets Present: Essays About Historic Interpretation and Public Audiences*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987. Pg. 37-53.

An exploration of the political dimensions of public history, the relationship between past and present, and the need to reconnect the ligaments between past and present in the eyes of the public. Argues that "if we do not understand the past/present relationship, we live on the surface of things, vulnerable to explanations that focus on the conjunctural, the transitory, the immediate; we misdiagnose our problems and hamper our search for solutions. Understanding the way in which the present has emerged from the past maximizes our capacity for effective action in the present." In providing us greater context for understanding the present, history becomes a tool for the living and an avenue for enhancing civic society.

Wallace, Mike. "Visiting the Past: History Museums in the U.S.," in *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996. Pg. 4-32.

Explores the history of the less-than-democratic civic and political functions of American museums, focusing both on their use by elites as agents of social control and Americanization and the challenges posed to elite control and the orthodox narrative. Pays particular attention to the Progressive use of museums to Americanize the immigrant working class; the impact of corporate ideology on historical interpretation, particularly at Greenfield Village and Williamsburg; Depression-era stirrings of populist ideology in historical representation; Cold War celebration of Americanism; and the impact of the new social history on museum presentations.

Argues that museums have so often successfully served as instruments of class domination because by their very nature, they create ways of seeing and not seeing. When museums concentrate on elites as shapers of history, ignoring the vast majority of the population, they inhabit "the capacity of visitors to imagine alternative social orders – past or future."

Weyeneth, Robert R. "The Power of Apology and the Process of Historical Reconciliation," *Public Historian*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Summer 2001); 9-38.

An exploration of the recent upsurge of historical apologies across the globe, posing the fundamental questions of whether apologies have the power to reconcile, whether either apologies unaccompanied by material reparations or material reparations unaccompanied by apologies are sufficient, whether the present can apologize for the past. Examines the wide-ranging motives behind such apologies – political considerations, therapeutic catharsis, improving a corporate image, defusing a volatile situation, attaining "closure," building improved relationships for the future, etc. Also considers the various arguments against historical apologies, particularly retrospective admissions of guilt. Argues that apologies do take positive steps toward healing wounds – and in their "long view" perspective acknowledge that although victims and perpetrators may be long dead, their legacy continues to shape the present.

Weil, Stephen. "From Being *about* Something to Being *for* Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum," *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*. Special Issue – "America's Museums." Summer 1999. Pg. 229-258.

Traces the post-World War II transformation of the American museum from an association dedicated to research and collections to a more educationally-focused, externally-oriented organization, and finally to a more entrepreneurial, public-minded and service-oriented institution. Suggests that museums should end their attempts to draw parallels with universities and instead view themselves as "value-neutral" and highly adaptable instruments to be used for a wide variety of external purposes. Argues that preservation, interpretation and scholarly inquiry are not both means to an end and ends in themselves, but instead derive their only real value from their capacity to contribute to an outcome external to the museum itself. Stresses the need for bottom-line evaluation of a museum's quality to be based upon its impact upon visitors and the community.

Nuts and Bolts

Green, James. "'Bringing the Boundaries of History Closer to People's Lives': The Massachusetts History Workshop," in *Taking History to Heart: The Power of the Past in Building Social Movements*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000. Pg. 51-70.

Explores the work of a History Workshop committed to helping members of the public engage with their own history and the memories that have shaped their lives. Analyzes the content, successes and failures of three workshops dedicated to bringing together retired workers, current workers, historians, activists and community members in a dialogue about the meaning and memory of their shared pasts.

Greider, Thomas and Lorraine Garkovich. "Landscapes: The Social Construction of Nature and the Environment," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (Spring 1994); 1-24.

Explores the concept of multiple symbolic meanings emanating from the same physical object, and the idea of landscapes as symbolic environments created by human acts of conferring meaning to a place. Examples of the multiple attachments and meanings for individual places provide ideas for interpreting their broader symbolic significance – lifting interpretation to a new level.

Interpretive Signage: Principles and Practice.

www.interpretivesigns.qut.edu.au/effect_interpret/involve/emotions_attitudes_values.html

Contains examples of interpretive signs that confront controversial issues through exploring multiple perspectives.

Larsen, David. "Be Relevant or Become a Relic: Meeting the Public Where They Are." Presented at the George Wright Conference, April 19, 2001.

Strategies for meeting visitors "where they are" and provoking deeper reflection and consideration of new perspectives. Discussion of the relationship of ascribed and inherent meanings to the introduction of new ideas that may contradict well-established beliefs. Highlights the interpreter's role as a facilitator of provocation, suggesting that the key to introducing new meanings and perspectives lies in presenting them in relationship to existing meanings and perspectives rather than as replacements for them.

Larsen, David. "Controversy as Opportunity," unpublished paper, and Draft Documents for "Module xxx: Interpreting Critical Resource Issues, Controversy, and Multiple Points of View," Interpretive Development Program, Stephen T. Mather Training Center, National Park Service.

Grounds resource preservation in relevance; arguing that controversy implies relevance. "Controversy means somebody cares about the resource. When people care about the resource, there is great potential for them to care for the resource." Suggests that the key to interpreting controversial issues is connecting multiple resource meanings to multiple audience interests and perspectives, applying the techniques of interpreting multiple points of view, respecting audience members' right to retain their beliefs, and acknowledging that different perspectives often conflict, creating controversy. Contains some practical suggestions of how to do this, tying it into the NPS Interpretive Equation.

Levy, Barbara Abramoff, Sandra MacKenzie Lloyd and Susan Porter Schreiber, "Reading 7.3 – Interpreting Slavery at Historic Sites: Tips for Guides," in *Great Tours! Thematic Tours and Guide Training for Historic Sites*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2001.

Provides ten suggestions for improving the interpretation of slavery at historic sites. Among other things, the authors advocate facing race, fully integrating the story of slavery with the rest of the site's story rather than approaching it as an "add-on, providing historical context for understanding slavery, emphasizing the individual, embracing complexity, and creating opportunities for guides to visit other sites at which slavery is interpreted and have training sessions with experienced interpreters of African American history.

Machlis, Gary E., "Interpreting War and Peace," in *On Interpretation: Sociology For Interpreters of Natural and Cultural History*, Gary E. Machlis and Donald R. Field, ed. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 1992.

Suggests several thematic approaches to interpreting war and peace: focusing on understanding causation and how wars occur, demonstrating the cost of war, using past conflicts as resources to prepare for future wars, and making the possibilities of peace visible through examining treaties and peace processes that have been successful. Encourages the use of the broadest possible context when discussing these issues.

Martinez, Daniel. "Interpreting Controversial Historic Sites: Insights and Strategies Applied at Custer Battlefield and the USS Arizona Memorial," in *National Interpreters Workshop Proceedings 1988*. Ft. Collins, CO: National Association for Interpretation, 1988; 144-154.

An overview of strategies developed by interpreters at these two battle sites. Provides examples of upset visitors and ranger responses, encouraging front-line interpreters to appreciate the value of controversy in stimulating visitor interest and engagement. Stresses the need to be knowledgeable about one's subject material and familiar with media interpretations of both the site and the historical event/period. Suggest role-playing ("this is the situation facing you...how would you handle it?"), dialogic provocation (providing the visitor with an opposing point of view to the one he/she brings to the table) and using quotes in order to express your own point of view in an indirect and respectful manner.

***Museums and Community Toolkit*. Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 2002.**

The companion publication to *Mastering Civic Engagement*. A collection of practical suggestions for museums interested in convening community dialogues as a first step toward a more civically-engaged role in their communities. Offers suggestions on identifying participants, facilitation, location, the makeup and function of a steering committee, the relationship of community dialogues to internal inquiries, etc. Includes the M&C Dialogue Design, a framework

of questions and activities for use in structuring a dialogue. Practical, specific suggestions and guidelines for those seeking guidance on how to turn theory into practice.

Smith, Rick and Peter O'Connell. "Workers on the Line: Teaching Industrial History at the Tsongas Industrial History Center and Lowell National Historical Park," *OAH Magazine of History*, Vol. 11, Number 2 (Winter 1997), pg. 22-26.

An overview of "engagement programming" at the Tsongas Center, laying out the participatory interpretive experiences that encourage visiting students to identify with immigrants (both nineteenth century and recent) to Lowell and their struggles and triumphs, gain a sense of the pace of life on an assembly line, decide how to spend their meager earnings, and make judgments about fair and unfair labor practices and appropriate worker response. An example of civic engagement programming already successful "on the ground."

Tilden, Freeman. "The Visitor's First Interest," "Not Instruction But Provocation," and "Past Into Present," in *Interpreting Our Heritage*. Third Edition. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977. Pgs. 11-17, 32-39, 68-77.

"The Visitor's First Interest" explores the need for successful interpretation to make a connection between the story being told and the visitor's own life and experiences. Argues that one of the most effective interpretive approaches is to provoke individual visitors to question what they would have done under like conditions. "Not Instruction But Provocation" is the basis of the NPS's own understanding of interpretation's primary goal – not to impart factual information, but to challenge visitors to ponder larger and more conceptual questions, a goal almost identical to that of civic engagement. "Past Into Present" examines the importance of mental and physical participation in the interpretive experience, suggesting that engagement requires a tangible, physical dimension as well as an intellectual one.

Wallace, Mike. "Boat People: Immigrant History at the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island," in *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996. Pg. 56-73.

A review of the permanent exhibitions at these two sites. Fleshes out possibilities for engagement brought to life through Ellis's exhibition and makes suggestions for ways in which they could be strengthened and increased.