

A Summary of Preservation Education in Relation to Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Social Justice and Some Recommendations

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Introduction

In the past few years there has been an increased interest in issues around how historic preservation supports White supremacy, catalyzed, in part, by the Black Lives Matter movement. While a number of authors (e.g., Roberts 2019, 2020a, 2020b; Magalong 2020, Bronin 2021; also see Wells 2021c) have been addressing this issue as it relates to practice, there has been little, if any, discussion or publications that explores how preservation education—specifically—might respond to these challenges. This paper is therefore an attempt to provide some answers for how historic preservation educators at the post-secondary level could begin addressing issues around diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice. Because the majority—70%—of preservation practice is driven by policy (Wells 2018), this paper will mostly focus on this area of preservation practice, as it relates to education.

In the US, there are two well-known leaders in historic preservation education: The National Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Council for Preservation Education (NCPE). The National Trust was a pioneer in post-secondary historic preservation education, starting with the Historic Preservation Today Conference in 1963, the Historic Preservation Tomorrow Conference in 1967, and a conference in Williamsburg, Virginia in 1972 that focused on defining and consolidating the philosophy, criteria, and guidelines in the field (National Trust 1966, 1967; Timmons 1976). In addition to the books that the National Trust published from these conferences, the National Trust also published the *Whitehill Report on Professional and Public Education for Historic Preservation* in 1968 (Whitehill 1968) and a survey of preservation professionals on their opinion of preservation education needs (Sprague 1978). These conferences and publications helped catalyze discussions on early curricula designs for some of the first historic preservation degree programs, such as Columbia University and Cornell University. By the late 1970s, the National Trust had moved on to other priorities, such as the Main Street Program, leaving a gap that a group of preservation educators filled by creating the non-profit National Council for Preservation Education (NCPE) in 1978 (Tomlan 2010). In 1988, NCPE released its first “membership standards,” which, while not intended to certify the curriculum of preservation degree programs, programs could theoretically be excluded from membership in NCPE if they did not meet these standards (Tomlan 1988).

From the 1980s to the present, US-based advocacy in historic preservation education in the US was largely confined to the work of NCPE with the exception of an “Historic Preservation Education Conference” hosted by Roger Williams University in 2012 (Stiefel and Wells 2014). In Europe, however, the Council of Europe, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), and the European Association for Architectural Education have continued to be active in exploring preservation education from the 1960s to the present, and, as such, have produced significantly more content and recommendations than their US counterparts (Goddard 2020). It is important to note, however, that none of these organizations, in the US or abroad, have addressed issues of diversity, inclusion, equity and social justice in the development of historic preservation degree curricula.

To be sure, this deficit in addressing issues of relevancy for people with non-dominant racial or ethnic identities in preservation education exists not only in the lack of focus by preservation organizations, but also in any published work, of any kind. With the exception of Aidoo et al.'s (2020) letter to the National Council for Preservation Education's (NCPE) leadership, in response to NCPE's "Open Letter to the National Council for Preservation Education (NCPE) Membership,"¹ we have not been able to locate any publications or manuscripts that have been authored by people with non-dominant racial or ethnic identities that specifically address preservation education and issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, or social justice. Aidoo et al.'s (2020) letter is therefore quite valuable for preservation educators, and, for this reason, we use this letter to help guide this paper's exploration of themes and topics.

A particularly important reason why there are so few voices from marginalized groups advocating for preservation education change is because individuals with non-dominant racial or ethnic identities have been seriously underrepresented in preservation education. To be sure, African American, Asian American, Latinx, and Indigenous voices critical of preservation practice are almost entirely external from the field, originating from planning, public history, and Indigenous studies, among other possibilities. Few, if any, of these individuals have taken coursework from preservation degree programs, much less achieved such a degree from this kind of program. Preservation education has thus been insulated from many of these debates because nearly all of its stakeholders are White, but for ethical and moral reasons, the *status quo* must change.

This paper will summarize seven major themes related to diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice in preservation education and attempt to explore some ways to address the issues that are identified. Wherever possible, the voices of authors with non-dominant racial or ethnic identities have been centered in this work with priority given to their recommendations in relation to advancing preservation education.

Theme 1: Increase the racial and ethnic diversity represented in preservation students and faculty

[T]he field of historic preservation is predominantly white in terms of whose histories and sites are preserved and the people engaged in preservation education (including faculty and students).

— Aidoo et al. (2020), "Response to NCPE's Open Letter."

Most students in historic preservation degree and certificate programs are White. According to the US Department of Education, almost 85% of students who graduated between July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 with a preservation major at the undergraduate or graduate level identified as White/Non-Hispanic. Of these graduates, 1.0% identified as American Indian, 2.3% identified as Asian, 2.8% identified as African American, and 6.4% identified as Hispanic or

¹ <http://www.ncpe.us/open-letter-national-council-preservation-education-ncpe-membership/>

Latino. For reference, in this same time period, independent of major, about 60% of graduates identified as White/non-Hispanic.

As of December 2018, there were no African American tenured or tenure track faculty with at least a 50% teaching appointment in NCPE member historic preservation degree programs, no Indigenous people, and essentially no people of color (Wells 2021b).

Historic preservation degree programs have been struggling with the lack of diversity in their students and faculty for decades. Because most students in these programs are White, the pipeline to professional practitioners and future preservation educators also remains largely White. Preservation education programs therefore need to recognize their roles in sustaining the lack of diversity in the field and in disrupting this system. In order to proactively address the field's diversity deficit, preservation degree programs need to be aware of the following barriers to diversity and then consider taking action based on this knowledge:

- 1) The preservation field is, in part, defined by its support for White supremacy (Wells 2021c), which Andrea Roberts (2019) refers to as "preservation's White gaze." One way that this characteristic can manifest is as an overemphasis on White visual culture (Wells 2021c), which is evident in the curricula and recruitment materials of many preservation degree programs. Prospective African American students are more likely to choose majors that value their heritage and support "a sense of racial community" (Brown and Segrist 2016). Students with non-dominant racial and ethnic identities may therefore avoid a career in the preservation field because of these perceptions;
- 2) Prospective African American students are significantly more likely to choose a major in a field that focuses on helping people (Carnevale et al. 2016). Given that the preservation field has a reputation for focusing on fabric over people, this is a possible reason that these prospective students will not choose a preservation major (Brown 2020);
- 3) There is a relationship between the ability of a preservation degree program to recruit students with non-dominant racial and ethnic identities and its curriculum (Wells 2021c). Including curriculum content relevant to diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice is a necessary step to attract these students, but the default response is often additive rather than one in which this content is a consistent, central part of every course in a curriculum, which takes significantly more time to implement (see theme 3, below). Prospective students readily interpret the additive response as tokenism. When preservation programs have revised their curricula with a holistic and central focus on critical approaches in the public humanities/public heritage, the diversity of the students who apply to their programs has increased dramatically, such as at the University of Minnesota or Brown University (Brown 2020);
- 4) White students are much more likely to be able to afford a college education, especially at the graduate level. (For reference, the median wealth for African American, Asian American, Latinx, and Indigenous people in the US is significantly less than for White people; see McIntosh et al. [2020]) Preservation degree programs should prioritize student affordability, including funding for scholarships. To make preservation education

more affordable, preservation educators (and employers) also need to question the long-held assumption that a graduate degree is actually necessary to perform much of the policy-related work in the field (see Wells 2021c).² These efforts could, in turn, help motivate needed changes to the Secretary of the Interior’s “Professional Qualifications Standards,” which have long been used by employers of preservation professionals to uncritically justify the necessity of graduate degrees for their employment;

- 5) Because of the diminutive size of the field, there are substantially fewer employment opportunities in historic preservation compared to other degree options students might consider. The impression that historic preservation is a “boutique profession” is therefore more likely to attract students who are more financially secure and therefore can assume more employment risk. Such students are therefore not likely to represent African American, Asian American, Latinx, and Indigenous people because of these groups’ lower family wealth compared to White families (McIntosh et al. 2020);
- 6) Lastly, historic preservation is not widely known as a career option for students in high school or as undergraduates in college, which impacts the potential recruitment of all students, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Theme 2: Recognize and teach how the historic preservation enterprise—especially policy driven work—supports White supremacy

[Historic preservation] render[s] the historical and cultural contributions of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) as marginal, invisible, and insignificant. The preservation discipline has traditionally focused on integrity and standards of historic buildings and structures that honor “master” and colonial narratives. This priority fails to recognize and explore the historical legacies of systematic racism that have (and continue) to shape the built environment for BIPOC. As a result, historic preservation—in terms of practice, research, and education—perpetuates the marginalization of BIPOC and other underrepresented groups. This is not only in what is deemed significant and worthy of designation but also in who is involved in decision making.

For whom are we preserving historic sites and cultural resources? How should university level preservation education be made more relevant to students, site visitors, and broader BIPOC communities?

— Aidoo et al. (2020), “Response to NCPe’s Open Letter.”

Historic preservation policy supports White supremacy in the following ways (see Wells [2021c] for more specific details):

- 1) Most people who work, study, teach, or volunteer in activities created and sustained by preservation policy are White;

² For reference, Paul Sprague (1978) was an early critic of the necessity for graduate-level preservation education based on interviews of practitioners in the field, but, at the time, his work was widely maligned by preservation educators intent on promoting the graduate education model.

- 2) Policy-enabled (mis)representation and historical erasures;
- 3) Policy that privileges the written historical records of White people;
- 4) Criteria for significance and especially historical integrity that favor properties associated with wealth and permanence and are biased against vernacular buildings and places;
- 5) Planning processes that discourage, prevent, or ignore public participation and for whom minoritized groups are particularly impacted;
- 6) Preservation's relationship to property and White, high-style visual culture. (White people, in general, have and currently own the most property in the US.);
- 7) Workplace culture that rewards conformity and undervalues innovation;
- 8) Not enough focus on affordable housing and helping lower-income property owners;
- 9) There are no voices from people with non-dominant racial or ethnic identities in preservation doctrine, rules, regulations, and guidelines;
- 10) Funding to address issues of preservation policy's support of White supremacy is nearly entirely absent.

As Aidoo et al. (2020) advocate, preservation education efforts need to mainstream discussions on how the field supports White supremacy. Preservation educators should understand how they can be part of the solution in addressing the diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice issues in the field.

Theme 3: Center the voices of authors with non-dominant racial and ethnic identities in the core curricula of historic preservation degree programs

We urge [preservation educators] to take considerable steps towards reform in preservation education that from the start disrupt norms of authorship and authority in the academy—those norms that reinforce the exclusionary ways of thinking, convening, engaging, and co-signing.

— Aidoo et al. (2020), "Response to NCPE's Open Letter."

In June 2021, Donovan Rypkema polled preservation educators and practitioners to ask what they thought were the best and most relevant books in historic preservation.³ The results indicate that out of nearly 200 books mentioned, only about 5 were authored by a person with a non-dominant racial or ethnic identity or included a chapter by such an individual. And, only about 16 of these books were on topics relevant to diversity, inclusion, equity, or social justice in historic preservation. Although we are not aware of any systematic research on the inclusion of authors with non-dominant identities in preservation syllabi, a random sampling of 20 such syllabi hosted on the npe.us web site indicates similar statistics in terms of the almost non-representation of authors with marginalized identities.

Centering non-dominant racial and ethnic voices in the preservation curriculum requires that preservation educators be aware of where the field's and their own normative values

³ <https://www.placeeconomics.com/prespoll-results-preservation-books/>

originate, who these values benefit, and openings for challenging these normative values. To be sure, it is difficult to see how Erica Avrami's (2020, 221) charge to preservation educators "to better prepare students to work with *people* in a range of socioeconomic and cultural contexts" can be accomplished without exposing students directly to African American, Asian American, Latinx, and Indigenous authors through their programs' curricula. But, more importantly, it is essential that these authors be presented to students as part of the core theories in the field to avoid the kind of tokenism that Aidoo et al. (2020) caution against. Accomplishing this goal therefore means much more than simply adding authors with non-dominant racial or ethnic identities to preservation curricula, but rather *completely reforming* curricula (or decolonizing curricula) in a way that assures that such authors are considered as core voices in the field rather than peripheral additions. Preservation educators should therefore be prepared to engage in the "transformative reforms" that Aidoo et al. (2020) advocate is critical for recognizing and ameliorating the systemic racism that is a defining characteristic of the preservation enterprise, today.

A few authors stand out because of the consistent recognition granted by their peers and should be considered for inclusion by preservation educators in program curricula. These individuals include Fallon Samuels Aidoo (2020); Kofi Boone (2020); Sara Bronin (2021); Catherine Fleming Bruce (2016); Caroline Cheong (with Fong 2018); Jamesha Gibson (with Hendricks, Wells 2019, 2020); Michelle Magalong (2020); Margaret Capili Magat (2016); Kenyatta McLean (2020); Trinidad Rico (2015, 2017a, 2017b); Andrea Roberts (2019, 2020a, 2020b), and Amber Wiley (2019). By no means is this list meant to be comprehensive, but only presents a starting point for preservation educators.

In addition, preservation educators should look to the conferences, public messaging, and publications produced by the following organizations who advocate for diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice in the preservation field:

- Latinos in Heritage Conservation (<https://www.latinoheritage.us/>)
- Asian & Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation (<https://www.apiahip.org/>)
- Black in Historic Preservation (@BlackInHistPres – Twitter and Instagram)
- The Society of Black Archaeologists (<https://www.societyofblackarchaeologists.com/>)
- National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (<https://www.nathpo.org/>)

There are likely other organizations to add to this list, which is likely to grow with time.

Lastly, preservation educators should recognize that outside of the policy space, especially in areas of the preservation enterprise that focus on historic site interpretation and advocacy, there are many unpaid preservation workers with non-dominant racial or ethnic identities (de la Tore 2003). An important example is Catherine Fleming Bruce's (2016) documentation of the preservation efforts by African Americans to save everyday places associated with the Civil Rights movement.

Theme 4: Teach additional methods in historic preservation degree programs beyond local history/archival research.

[H]istoric preservation ... research ... perpetuates the marginalization of BIPOC and other underrepresented groups.

— Aidoo et al. (2020), "Response to NCPE's Open Letter."

If historic preservation is to become more people- and human-centered in its work, students need to be educated in the use of tools that enable access to the meanings and values of the public. Contingent on this approach are educational efforts to recognize local/traditional/situated knowledge as the 2017 Delhi Declaration advocates (ICOMOS 2017). Yet, according to Avrami and Mason (2019, 28), historic preservation degree programs continue to be deficient in recognizing and acting upon this need and instead remain entrenched in their traditional emphasis on understanding fabric and aesthetics:

Academic institutions and practitioners play a critical role [in] bringing knowledge of ethnography, environmental management, consensus building, and more, as well as "local" forms of knowledge and knowing, to bear on heritage conservation. ... A more inclusive understanding of heritage and values recognizes different kinds of knowledge and different ways of knowing, but formal education at the university level tends to emphasize material conservation and historical and architectural value. The practical skills needed to advocate for listing, preserve structures, and manage heritage predominate in many parts of the world; the political, discursive, analytical, and creative skills needed to instrumentalize heritage as a societal contributor play a lesser role. While a values discourse is certainly emerging in many heritage programs, the extent to which students are being trained to engage with stakeholders and undertake community assessments remains unclear.

There is another, very important reason for historic preservation degree programs to focus on these unorthodox tools: They relate to diversity and inclusion by helping students to, as Erica Avrami advocates (2020, 220), "better understand intersectionality in heritage work." The diverse values surfaced through work in intersectionality with multiple stakeholders, however, will generate conflict. This fact was well recognized by participants in a recent heritage conflict workshop, hosted by the Getty Conservation Institute, who advised that preservation professionals need high-level skills to engage in "consensus building, dispute resolution, and negotiation techniques" (Myers, Smith, and Ostergren 2016, 197). To be sure, this education needs to start with preservation students, but most preservation degree programs fail to teach these critical practice skills with depth and competency.

Thus, in order to address these deficiencies, the curricula of historic preservation degree programs need to deliver learning outcomes in applied social science methods, tools to facilitate grassroots community efforts, civic engagement techniques, and conflict resolution:

1. **Applied social science research methods, including oral history (e.g., from anthropology, sociology, psychology, and public history/folklore studies).**
 - a. *Advocating for education in social science theories/research methods:* Araoz (2008); Avrami & Mason (2019); Cisneros (1996); Court & Wijesuriya (2015); Jones (2017); Fouseki et al. (2020); Hubbard (1993); Jolly et al. (2019); Labrador & Silberman (2018); Logan (2013); Low (2002); Lowenthal (1979); Meeks (2016); Wells (2014a, 2014b, 2015b, 2020a, 2021a); Wells & Stiefel (2014b, 2019).
 - b. *Examples of social science methods applied to built heritage:* Ahn (2019); Amar & Armitage (2019); Butler (2008); DiStefano et al. (2005); Djabarouti (2020); Driskell & Trawalter (2021); Fogarasi & Dúll (2021); Frewald (1989); Galindo & Hidalgo (2005); Herzog & Gale (1996); Herzog & Shier (2000); IFA & Atkins (2004); Kong (2008); Levi (2005); Minner (2019); Neal (2015); Ng (2020); L. Smith (2009); Taplan, Scheld, & Low (2019); Wells (2010, 2012, 2017, 2020b); Wells & Baldwin (2012); Wells et al. (2016); Zhao, Nyaupane, Timothy (2016).
2. **Facilitating grassroots community efforts with a focus on participatory action research (PAR)/community-based participatory research.**
 - a. *Advocating for grassroots methods:* Avrami & Mason (2019); Bruce (2016); Clark (2019); García (2018); Gibson, Hendricks, & Wells (2019, 2021); Magalong (2020); Mills et al. (2008); Minott (2003); Watkins (2021); Wells (2015a).
 - b. *Examples of grassroots methods applied to built heritage and cultural landscapes:* Ashley (2015); Madgin et al. (2018); Peerapun (2018); Roberts (2019, 2020b); Verdini, Frassoldati, & Nolf (2017); Wells et al. (2020).
3. **Civic engagement techniques commonly accepted in urban and regional planning practice (e.g., workshops, interviews, focus groups, surveys).**
 - a. *Advocating for civic engagement techniques:* Australia ICOMOS (1996); Avrami & Mason (2019); Demas (2002); Engelhardt, Peters, Unakul (2019); Jigyasu (2015); Kalman & Létourneau (2021); King (2009); Leahy & Cooper (2007); J. Smith (2015); S. Smith (2016); Weiner (2020).
 - b. *Application of civic engagement techniques:* Appler (2012, 2013, 2017); Bashforth et al. (2015); Baugher, Appler, & Moss (2017); Fitzgerald (2019); Melcher, Stiefel, & Faurest (2017); Minner et al. (2015, 2018), Wang & Shieh (2006).
4. **Conflict resolution.**
 - a. *Advocating for conflict resolution skills:* Avrami & Mason (2019); Johnston & Myers (2016); King (2013); Logan (2015). Education in communication skills/conflict resolution (Institute for Conservation #14 in Zancheti's article)
 - a. *Application of conflict resolutions skills:* Zhang, Lee, & Xiong (2019); Loh (2016); Torre et al. (2005).

Theme 5: Include non-Western approaches and philosophy in preservation curricula

The internationalized professional standards that are promoted in the heritage field today are based largely on Western cultural concepts. A broader understanding of how heritage is valued in non-Western cultures is needed to inform more inclusive development and more context-sensitive application of values-based methodologies, and this work is needed urgently.

— Erica Avrami, Susan Macdonald, Randall Mason, and David Myers (2019)

It is widely understood that orthodox preservation theory, as taught in most historic preservation programs, substantially omits non-Western perspectives for recognizing, treating, sustaining, and protecting heritage (e.g., Avrami et al. 2019; Wells & Stiefel 2014a). This is, as Milholland (2010) reveals, a social justice issue for Native American groups who struggle to have their heritage meanings and values recognized within a regulatory system that is designed to sideline these meanings and values. This issue is critical to many other marginalized groups, as well. For instance, Kenyatta McLean (2020), co-founder of BlackSpace, describes, how, in many African American communities, the concept of time and progress differs significantly from the dominant, Western assumption that time is linear and progress eventual and assured; time, within this African American context, is non-linear and progress is haphazard, patchy, and difficult to predict. In addition to African American people, there are many other racial and ethnic groups in the United States with cultural traditions that are also not embedded in dominant, Western cultural norms that are taken for granted in most preservation curricula. It is for these reasons that Erica Avrami, Susan Macdonald, Randall Mason, and David Myers (2019, 223), which represent some of most prominent leaders in historic preservation education, recognize this issue and recommend the need to understand non-Western heritage values and how these values might influence preservation policy not only internationally, but also in the United States.

It is incumbent on historic preservation degree programs to keep abreast of this developing knowledge and include non-Western preservation/conservation theory and case studies in their curricula.

Theme 6: Emphasize soft skills in preservation curricula and center reflexivity in the work of preservation practitioners

[We need to be] asking difficult questions about preservation leadership, membership, scholarship and stewardship.

— Aidoo et al. (2020), "Response to NCPE's Open Letter."

According to Erica Avrami (2020, 221), as a whole, preservation degree programs fail to adequately prepare students to work with people from a range of socioeconomic and cultural contexts. Internationally, this ability to increase the effectiveness that practitioners have in

working with a diverse public through better “soft skills” is increasingly seen as essential in education, as R. Moioli (2019, 56, 58) observes:

If restoration, or better conservation, of a heritage good is, first and foremost, a cultural operation, it cannot be only the result of a set of technical choices. SS [soft skills] have to become an integral part of the training of the experts in conservation of CH [cultural heritage]. Competences of professionals need to be rethought as currently, the characteristics of the experts in charge of the management of conservation processes, or of the cultural site itself, often don't foresee the capacity of either integrating different skills into a unique profile or coordinating the other professionals involved in the work team. Clearly, the role and the skills of the experts must follow the social and economic changes that over recent decades has led to a different understanding of CH. This doesn't mean that the role of the expert and his professionalism have to be influenced by external factors, losing sight of the Conservation aim. Rather it means that, on varying of the conditions, it is necessary to forecast and follow changes in order to be more effective in pursuing the objective. Thus, the transformation of the expert's role means the transformation of skills.

Avrami (2020, 221) provides specific advice on how preservation educators can accomplish this transformation of skills, with a focus on cultural sensitivity, by “Incorporat[ing] more robust training in the ethics of working with diverse publics, including how to develop cultural competence, establish trust, share decision-making, minimize risk (especially to vulnerable or marginalized populations), create safe spaces, [and] break down language barriers.” Similarly, Silvio Zancheti (2014, 88), believes that historic preservation degree programs have an obligation to teach students the ethical value of involving more of the public in shared decision-making and to value subjective decision-making processes. Students should also be open to understanding extra-disciplinary perspectives, which involves learning how to practice “professional sensitivity.” But, as Kyoko Kishimoto (2018), a leader in anti-racist pedagogy, directs, assuming this ethical stance in working with diverse groups of people requires that students learn to “disrupt [their] assumptions about meritocracy, individualism, and ‘color-blindness’” to become more aware of their intersectionality. This awareness depends on the student's ability to be self-critical, to ask difficult questions, and to challenge assumptions; in other words, the goal is to help students to become *reflexive* practitioners.

Gillie Bolton (2010), an international expert on reflexive practice, explains that reflexivity skills are important in developing more ethical ways of relating to others by examining one's own values and limits to knowledge and how this behavior contributes—positively and negatively—toward an organization's culture (and, by extension, the professional culture of a field). Thus, as Bolton (2010, 13, 14) explains, reflexive practitioners question their

own attitudes, thought processes, values, assumptions, prejudices and habitual actions, to strive to understand our complex roles in relation to others. To be reflexive is to examine, for example, how we – seemingly unwittingly – are involved in creating social or professional structures counter to our own values (destructive of diversity, and institutionalising power imbalance for example). It is becoming aware of the limits of our knowledge, of how our own behaviour plays into organisational practices and why such practices might marginalise groups or exclude

individuals. And it is understanding how we relate with others, and between us shape organisational realities' shared practices and ways of talking. Thus, we recognise we are active in shaping our surroundings, and begin critically to take circumstances and relationships into consideration rather than merely reacting to them, and help review and revise ethical ways of being and relating.

Other authors reinforce the relationship between addressing issues around diversity and plurality in organizations and the need for reflexive practitioners; this relationship works because, as Ann Cunliffe (2004, 417) explains, "it draws attention to how we relate with each other ethically." Carolina Bouten-Pinto (2016, 150) builds on this idea by explaining that "reflexivity in managing diversity practice enables taken for granted assumptions about identities, roles, perspectives, language, meanings and understandings between all people in an organization to be explored and redefined in ways that matter to the people in their particular workplace context." And, to be clear, for many preservation practitioners, the "workplace context" is in the field with members of the public.

This intersection between inclusion, equity, social justice, and reflexivity is why Stephanie Ryberg-Webster (2017, 20) advocates that preservation practitioners need to "constantly be reflexive practitioners" to avoid assuming that marginalized communities will always benefit from preservation activities; a reflexive stance instead assumes "first understanding (ideally from the community's perspective) what benefits are needed and then determining if and how preservation can contribute." A failure to take this critical approach increases the likelihood that these communities will view preservation practitioners as agents of social injustice rather than partners for positive change. To avoid perpetuating these issues in the preservation field, it is essential that preservation students understand these relationships in order to become the kind of reflexive practitioner that can build, rather than destroy, community trust.

There is perhaps no better example of how these issues arise than when with the controversy around the preservation of Confederate monuments. William Lees (2021, 9) warns that when preservationists ignore public sentiment and defend the preservation of these monuments because they are "important" historical records, the value of the preservation practitioner is reduced to a mere "fact checker" while unintentionally associating the field with White supremacy. Lees (ibid.) explains that this purposively uncritical and myopic stance increasingly makes the preservation practitioner irrelevant: "If historic preservationists are to be relevant going forward, they must engage in serious self reflection, and reflection aided by those who have been left out of the conversation, of the history of preservation and the choices that have been made, and of the laws and policies that provide the guidance for decisions on what has value and what is worthy of preservation." This example shows how the lack of practitioner reflexivity in the preservation field helps to sustain social justice issues and needs to be remedied, starting with how preservation students are educated.

Thus, a preservation degree program that educates students in how to be reflexive practitioners will help to create a needed pipeline of agents for positive change for inclusion, equity, and social justice in the preservation field. Reflexive practitioners, as Bolton (2010, 12)

relates, “realise dissonance between their own values in practice and their espoused values, or those of their organisation, leading them to make dynamic change.” In this way, preservation educators should conceptualize their students as these kinds of change agents, who will bring social justice to the field as they assume leadership positions in their future careers.

There are significant barriers, however, in educating students to be reflexive practitioners including issues with anti-intellectualism in the preservation field and the lack of relevant literature, used in teaching, that employs critical approaches. Some authors have argued that the preservation field’s emphasis on just “getting the work done” manifests as an anti-intellectual bias within the discipline (King and Lyneis 1978, 889; Otero-Pailos 2007, viii; Smith 2000, 314). As Robert Russell (2014, 49), a preservation educator, discerns, the historic preservation field has “produced ... an atmosphere at best indifferent to thinking and at times overtly hostile to intellectual activity.” The fact that job “training” is often mentioned as a primary goal of preservation education may, in fact, be antithetical to educating students in how to be critical thinkers, as Frank Matero (Barton, Desai, & Matero 2020, 26) observes: “I train my dog; I don’t train my students. I educate them as conservation specialists. And that’s because critical thinking is involved.” This bias also exists in historic preservation degree programs, where pragmatic, applied “job training” is elevated above “education,” the latter of which is sometimes assumed to be too far removed from practice (Russell 2014). Likewise, NCPPE’s tenure guidelines, which are intended by institutions of higher education to assess advancement for their preservation faculty, provide for the equivalency between the production of applied scholarship in the form of reports required by federal preservation policies (e.g., National Register nominations) with more open-ended applied or theoretical scholarship in which critical approaches are normalized (Tomlan et al. 2003). To be clear, this is not an issue between “applied” and “scholarly” research or between “applied” and “theoretical” research, but rather an argument over where critical approaches are normalized or allowed. Within the context of regulatory-driven reports, critical approaches to scholarship, especially those which question the purpose of the report or the effect of the regulatory process on marginalized populations, are not possible. It is therefore important to emphasize that in the production of regulatory-driven reports, the author’s ontological and epistemological frame is often quite constrained compared to more open-ended examples of applied scholarship, including other forms of scholarship that are commonly associated with public history. One cannot, for instance, critique the National Register process within a National Register nomination or within a cultural resource report.

Literature that exposes the relationship between historic preservation practice (especially through its policies) and social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion is critical in educating students to become reflexive practitioners. Yet, an analysis of the entirety of scholarship produced by preservation academics over the past forty years clearly shows that most of this work is descriptive and lacks a critical approach (Wells 2021c). A logical conclusion, therefore, due to the paucity of this kind of literature within the preservation field, is to look to allied fields for critical approaches. And, indeed, such a field exists, which has only just solidified in the past decade: critical heritage studies (Winter 2013).

For example, a central theory in critical heritage studies is the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD) (Smith 2006), which describes the process in which the meanings and values of the public (and most stakeholders) are “sidelined” if they are not congruent with the doctrinal values of heritage experts and the values embodied in preservation policy, including rules and regulations. The AHD is a useful frame that allows students to understand how social justice issues manifest in preservation practice, but this theory is not considered to be central to the body of literature taught in most historic preservation degree programs; it should be (Gibson, Hendricks, & Wells, 2019). Compared to literature from public history and historic preservation, critical heritage studies literature more consistently addresses issues around diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice. One reason why critical heritage studies is more successful in addressing these areas is because its scholars tend to focus more on the public’s contemporary relationship to tangible and intangible heritage than on how experts interpret the significance of the past (Harrison 2013; Winter 2013).

Theme 7: Educate students on the use of the policy analysis to challenge preservation policy

Equity ... requires confronting and addressing through policy and procedural changes, the disparate impacts that systemically create predictable patterns of the distribution of preservation’s benefits and costs based on social or cultural factors.

— Andrea Roberts (2020a)

The policy analysis is a common tool that policy research organizations, such as the Urban Institute, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, and the Brookings Institution, among many others, use to identify systemic racism in a range of policies and then use these analyses to advocate for change to bring about equity and social justice (Brown et al. 2019). Recently, in 2021, the importance of the policy analysis in addressing systemic racism compelled the RAND Corporation to create the RAND Center to Advance Racial Equity Policy, committing \$1 million in funding to better understand how “policy analysis is designed, framed, executed and translated ... related to diversity, equity and inclusion.”⁴

Yet, considering that 70% of the preservation enterprise exists and is sustained by preservation policy (Wells 2018), it is remarkable that, with the exception of economic analyses, policy analyses are largely absent from the preservation field; moreover, the techniques used to perform and interpret these analyses are rarely taught in historic preservation degree programs. And, most critically, there is no body of research (published or not) in which preservation policies have been systematically examined for issues around systemic racism or related concepts of equity, inclusion, or social injustice. There are four important exceptions, however: The analysis of local preservation ordinances by Avrami, Leo, and Sanchez (2018), Sarah Bronin’s (2021) and Judith Wellman’s (2002) analyses of historical integrity as a requirement of National Register of Historic Places criteria, and Sharon Milholland’s (2010) analysis of how US preservation policy is incompatible with Indigenous cultural values. The paucity of these kinds

⁴ <https://www.rand.org/well-being/racial-equity-policy.html>

of analyses in this area should be of concern to all historic preservation educators, not only because we are not able to teach students about the relationship between preservation policies and systemic racism, but preservation practitioners are also not aware of, nor do they use or create these analyses to address systemic racism in the field. For more information on policy analyses, refer to Fischer, Miller, and Sidney (2007) and Spicker (2006).

To be sure, students are readily capable of performing policy analyses, especially at the graduate level. For instance, using the technique of a policy analysis, Jeffrey Brammer (2021) examined how various policies in West Virginia facilitated demolition by neglect; Elizabeth De Block (2015) looked at how preservation policies could better address affordable housing; and, Valerie Fram (2015) analyzed the demolition delay ordinance in Newton, Massachusetts.

Conclusion

This paper examined the deficiencies in historic preservation education, specifically in terms of curriculum design, with a focus on integrating knowledge and methods that support diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice. Unlike other built environment disciplines, such as architecture and planning, conferences and publications on post-secondary historic preservation education are limited, and with very few exceptions, fail to address diversity/inclusion to any significant degree. Aidoo et al.'s (2020) letter, responding to NCPPE's call to address this deficit, is therefore an invaluable contribution to this discussion on defining diversity/inclusion issues in the field and ways to address them. While this paper does not purport to provide definitive answers to the issues Aidoo et al. raise, it does attempt to respond to the concerns of the authors of this letter by relying, wherever possible, on the voices of authors with non-dominant racial and ethnic identities. We hope that preservation educators will take these issues seriously and engage in more inclusive and equitable conversations on post-secondary preservation education with people outside of their traditional spheres of influence. Moreover, it is incumbent on all of us who are involved in this educational endeavor to seek out these diverse perspectives where they originate, whether it is in an article authored by an author with a non-dominant identity, attending conferences organized by relevant advocacy organizations, or just simply listening to the perspectives of people with non-dominant identities wherever we find them. Paying attention to and acting on these diverse voices, which are still rare and new to the field, are crucial to increasing historic preservation's relevance to the public.

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