

Whose Heritage? Objects, Politics and Collections Care

The following are Monuments and situations that were brought up in the webinar chat and discussion with added notes.

Chief Athasata Monument, Victor, NY

Michael Galban of Victor, NY said that a monument commemorating the removal of Native people from his area occurred this past spring. His institution, Ganondagan State Historic Site, took possession of the main bronze elements and added them to their collections. For more see:

<https://bit.ly/2jkru3K>

McKinley Monument, Arcata, California

Katie Buesch of Eureka CA said there has been a lot of discussion about the removal of a statue of William McKinley that is in the center of Arcata, CA. The controversy made national news. It will be several years probably before it comes down. Here are some articles about the statue and the controversy over keeping it. Katie Added, "I know in my town people have talked about moving it to a nearby town that is actually named after McKinley - McKinleyville."

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_McKinley_statue_\(Patigian\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_McKinley_statue_(Patigian))

<https://madriversonion.com/tag/mckinley-statue/>

<https://bit.ly/2NaXZyg>

<https://bit.ly/2wiuIKU>



Scaffold, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN

There was a reference to this gallows-like sculpture by the artist Sam Durant, which was installed at the Walker Art Center and was meant to evoke the settings of seven executions including the hanging of 38 Dakota Indian men in Minnesota after the United States-Dakota was in 1862 that had been. A discussion ensued in the following Chat.

Saira Haqqi [St. Paul MN]: This is a reference to the work Scaffold at the Walker

Lyndel King [Minneapolis]: It was not meant to “memorialize” executions but was meant to call attention to them as an atrocity. An issue was that the Native community was not consulted or informed in advance and the descendants of the Native peoples executed were still very sensitive to the event. But I think it is important to know, in the context of this discussion, that the intention was never to memorialize in the sense of celebrate.

Michael Galban [Victor]: As I understand it - the local community was not consulted in the right way when the installation was developed and installed?

Lyndel King [Minneapolis]: That is correct.

Jonathan M [Minneapolis, MN]: (15:13) Some initial coverage of the Scaffold sculpture:

<https://bit.ly/2LfSPPW>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/13/arts/design/walker-art-center-scaffold.html>

Lyndel King [Minneapolis]: Well-known Native writer, Louise Erdrich, praised the Walker director for her listening to native people in letter to the editor.

Saira Haqqi [St. Paul MN]: Erdrich is not Dakota.

Lyndel King [Minneapolis]: True, Erdrich is not Dakota, she has been a spokesperson for Native people in Minnesota, but if only the specific members of the tribe involved are qualified to comment then you are right, [if] her words have no standing this raises other questions a bit beyond this forum but might be interesting for another one. .

More on Confederate Monuments

There was a running conversation about Confederate Monuments. Here it is gathered together.

Phil Ford [Henrico, VA]: The history of these [monuments] in Richmond, VA is that these Lost Cause folks were setting the monuments up intentionally as propaganda against blacks

Sue Lynn McDaniel [Bowling Green, KY]: In Kentucky, some efforts [have been made] to tie authors to the “Lost Cause”

Phil Ford [Henrico, VA]: The Jeff Davis Monument here in town, run by Daughters of Confederacy and the Randolphs attempted to raise \$250,000 for it, took them like 18 years and they only reached around \$70K [see <https://acwm.org/blog/women-and-confederate-culture-monument-avenue>]

Stephanie Washburn [Tallahassee]: When the statue came down, where did it go? Was it destroyed or put somewhere else? If somewhere else where?

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Phil Ford [Henrico, VA]: Meanwhile, the most recent thing being done, was a Monument Commission was formed, and the statues keep getting splashed with red paint, like blood. We had a Commission, and they came to this conclusion. [Monument Avenue Commission Report (2018) <https://bit.ly/2MJ3w-zf>] A lot of folks were not happy: <https://www.monumentavenuecommission.org/> [see also: <https://onmonumentave.com/>]

Lori Sanderlin [Southport]: I agree. The state level of the UDC should look to purchase property to house the monuments if it is important to them.

Grace Cordial [Beaufort]: The UDC membership is quite elderly on the whole and I doubt that they have the money necessary to fund mass relocations. And, some of the monuments are quite large as Heather says.

Lori Sanderlin [Southport] : But Grace, there are other organizations that could help them.

Beth Doyle [Durham, NC]: Last year the North Carolina Preservation Consortium urged the removal of Confederate monuments on public property in a way that was safe for the workers and the artwork. <https://bit.ly/2OZ1Qz1> AIC also released a statement. <https://bit.ly/2BDGPrY> Can we use these sorts of statements to encourage communities to bring conservation into the conversation?

Lori Sanderlin [Southport]: I think so Beth. Just like the two cannons in Raleigh, they belong to Fort Caswell - return them to Caswell. They need restoration desperately.

Beth Doyle [Durham, NC]: @Lori, of course as you likely know the NC State Legislature won't allow the removal of any monuments right now. So...the People are removing them.

See also:

Americans Divided Over Calls to Remove Confederate Monuments <https://bit.ly/2Px6vcM>

For information on the **Lost Cause of the Confederacy** see <https://bit.ly/1SvHgCF>

For information on the **United Daughters of the Confederacy** see: <https://bit.ly/2Bi9zpR>

List of Monuments erected by the Daughters: <https://bit.ly/2PuiYxD>

Statement on Confederate Memorials: Confronting Difficult History, Statement from National Trust for Historic Preservation President and CEO Stephanie Meeks, <https://bit.ly/2MMJLAo>

Las Vegas, New Mexico

Michael Rebman [Las Vegas, New Mexico]: My museum has considered an exhibit on a controversial group from the 19th Century, a group of night riders that targeted a group that locally was a minority but nationally in the majority. Depending on the audience, they were considered freedom fighters, terrorists, and/or cattle thieves and a criminal gang. Local gossips claim the group still exists. If we proceed with an exhibit, would it be better to tell the group's story, or should we focus on modern opinions and views on the group?

<https://bit.ly/2wkD2tF>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las_Gorras_Blancas

Nancy Jenner [Sacramento, CA]: Michael Rebman-- could you make the distance between different versions of "the story" part of your interpretive approach?

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Final Comments on the Zimmerman Library Murals

Rebecca Landel-Hernandez [Atlanta]: The mural is only part of it. The building design itself, which is beautiful, is inherently native by design. Where do you draw a line?

Aileen Wang [Manhattan, KS]: I agree with Heather's view about how to deal with the murals in the New Mexico library. When dealing with controversial works of art or monuments, it's useful to remember what context provides. When it's a monument, the impression that it is "in honor" can be changed and it can be presented as an opportunity to offer a forum. When the context of "honoring" cannot be de-emphasized, then maybe removal is the right choice.

Obelisk, Santa Fe Plaza, New Mexico

The Obelisk was erected in 1868 as a monument to those who fought in the Civil War, as well as those who had fought Indians. There has been controversy about this monument for a long time – see these articles.

<https://bit.ly/2PrQ0yq>

<https://bit.ly/2NdnG1v>

More recently, the controversy surrounding the "Entrada," re-enactment of the "peaceful" re-entry of Hispanics into Santa Fe in 1692 following the Pueblo Revolt in 1682 also referenced the Obelisk.

<https://bit.ly/2o4CvIJ>

Santa Fe's Controversial Entrada Tradition, The Line (New Mexico in Focus, August 17, 2018) This discussion also is relevant to the Zimmerman Library murals. <https://bit.ly/2whocUT>

Other Topics

Sarah Patterson [Ottawa, Ontario]: Here is an example of leaving damage to monument as an example of systemic violence <https://bit.ly/2N8hUOt>

