

Exhibit and Museum Reviews and Review Essays

All questions regarding review proposals, submissions, editing, and publication should be directed to publichistory@history.ucsb.edu.

BACKGROUND

The exhibit review section of *The Public Historian* was established to report on and evaluate current historical exhibits, including performances, living history, and historical built environments. The journal reviews both exhibits that receive wide public attention (e.g., exhibits in large nationally known museums), and works in smaller institutions and other contexts, such as community or neighborhood centers. This section contains a mix of single item reviews and multi-item review essays, as well as thematic or comparative essays focusing on regions, special-interest audiences, or methodological issues. Review essays compare two or more exhibits or museums, treating the relevant subject in more depth than would be possible in a short review.

CONTENT

In reviewing public exhibits, it is especially important that reviewers understand the intended purposes and audience of the exhibition and the institutional context in which it was produced (e.g., large or limited budget, availability of artifacts, time or other constraints imposed by the institution). Contact the exhibit curator to gather pertinent information on the exhibition's goals, its audience, and the conditions (budgetary, social, etc.) under which it was mounted. Only in this way can a fair evaluation of a historical exhibit be made.

- Your review should briefly report on the exhibit (subject matter, main themes, form) as well as evaluate its effectiveness. Evaluation should take into consideration the accuracy of content and setting and the effectiveness of presentation and overall design (e.g., visual quality, conveyance of text, use of sound, and the meshing of these components).
- Reviewers should consider other aspects of the exhibit, such as the use of experimental interpretive techniques and the role played by historians in the creation of the exhibit.
- Whenever possible, consider the exhibit in the larger context of scholarship in history and in museum interpretation. If a book or catalog was published to accompany the exhibit, that volume should be reviewed as well. In general, reviewers should bear in mind these questions:
 1. What can you do in the exhibit that you cannot do in traditional history presentations?
 2. Is the curator enhancing public knowledge and debate on the subject area covered?
 3. What might other professionals learn from this effort?

Please avoid passive-voice constructions, overly complex sentences, jargon, and redundancies. We may return for revision any review in need of severe editing, and we reserve the right to reject any review submitted for publication.

All reviews are edited to conform to the *TPH* house style and standard literary usage to achieve greater economy of space and clarity of meaning. Please consult *The Chicago Manual of Style* for guidance.

NUTS AND BOLTS

1. Write your review as an Microsoft Word document. (NOTE: We cannot process WordPerfect files.)
2. Use 12-pt. font and double-space the review.
3. Unless otherwise agreed upon between reviewer and editor, reviews should be 1000-1200 words long (four to five double-spaced pages). We will shorten, or return for revision, any review of excessive length. Length restrictions vary in the case of review essays, to which we apply the standards of articles.
4. Provide the following information in your introductory heading: title of exhibit/museum; name of curator/historical consultant; sponsor/publisher; date of display/publication; and any further information that would help to identify or credit responsible parties.

Heading

The Whitney Plantation. *John Cummings*, Founder; *Ibrahima Seck*, Academic Director; *Ashley Rogers*, Director of Museum Operations; *Monique Johnson*, Assistant Director of Museum Operations; *Laura Amann*, Director of Communications. December 8, 2014–On going.
<http://www.whitneyplantation.com/>.

5. **Illustrations, photographic or drawn**, are encouraged, and will be included whenever possible. If taking your own photographs, SET YOUR CAMERA TO THE HIGHEST RESOLUTION to guarantee print quality images. Please supply images as electronic tiff files sized at 4" wide, with a minimum 300 dpi. When submitting your illustrations/photographs, please use either of the the following two options: If using Dropbox or Google Drive, place your files in a Dropbox/Google Drive folder and share the folder with me (publichistory@history.ucsb.edu). If not using Dropbox or Google Drive, please upload your files with the following online submission form: <http://www.jotform.us/form/42676450679164>. All photos and other artwork must be accompanied by captions, credits, and a letter (or e-mail message) of permission from the holder of the copyright (if applicable).
6. *The Public Historian* uses the footnote style, spelling, and punctuation format of *The Chicago Manual of Style* and *The American Heritage Dictionary*. Footnotes will appear as endnotes, and must be double-spaced.
7. Email your completed manuscript as a Microsoft Word document to publichistory@history.ucsb.edu.

Once your manuscript has been submitted you will receive an acknowledgement, then later a copy-edited version of the review and/or galley proofs. Please promptly approve or request changes in the typescript and/or galleys. You will receive one copy of the journal issue containing the review; authors of review essays will also receive twenty-five free offprints.

NOTE: Please keep *TPH* informed of any changes of address, so that edited reviews and future requests may reach you promptly.

Thank you for your contribution to *The Public Historian*.