Editor’s Note

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Intersections: New Perspectives in Texas Public History. This journal is the product of a project seminar to develop skills in writing local and community history. Beyond the scope of the seminar, our hope for this endeavor is to lay the groundwork for future scholarship by graduate students in public history at Texas State University. As public historians, we recognize that our core practice reflects an intersection between academic history and the public’s historical consciousness. Public history acts as a middle ground in which historians and the public negotiate their interpretations of the past. Subsequently, each article in this journal reflects this intersection, from the discourses of the preservation of a cultural resource, the formation of historic identity, public memory, or the failure to preserve a historic property.

Ranging from 1554 to the 1980s, the articles in this issue of Intersections uncover a variety of new stories in Texas history. Wendy Thompson examines the cursed voyage of the Santa María de Yciar and the legacy surrounding its twentieth-century recovery involving Land Commissioner Jerry Sadler. Sharon Hill’s article conveys the effects of urban progress on the cultural and historic identity of a traditionally African-American neighborhood in Austin, Texas. In surveying the history of ballet folklórico in Austin, Esther Rivera analyzes how identity formation in the artistic medium of dance challenges historical authenticity. Through a story of a buffalo hunt, Teri E. Flack explores the early myth of Austin’s exceptionalism. From the 19th century and into the 1970s, Sarah Marshall shows how desegregation of public schools affected the entire African American community of East Austin. Finally, I show how the misguided efforts to preserve the O. Henry Honeymoon Cottage possibly led to its destruction by arsonists.

In each article, the author negotiates contemporary issues facing public history to contribute new perspectives to the overall profession. It is the hope of all the authors that the works in this issue and future journals will continue to inform future practice and scholarship.

- Bonnie Tipton Wilson, Managing Editor