

**PROCESS** (pros'es) *n.* 1. the course of being done, 2. a continuing development involving many changes, 3. a method of doing something.

**PROFESSION** (prə'fesh'ən) *n.pl.* 1. an occupation requiring advanced academic training, 2. all the persons in such an occupation.

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## *Unit 3* — PROCESS AND PROFESSION

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PROCESS AND PROFESSION IS DESIGNED TO ASSIST STUDENTS WITH EXAMINING WHAT PEOPLE DO TO ACCOMPLISH PRESERVATION AND THE KINDS OF JOBS THAT ARE AVAILABLE IN THIS FIELD. THIS SECTION COVERS THE PROCESSES BY WHICH HISTORIC PLACES AND OTHER CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS ARE IDENTIFIED, DOCUMENTED, PRESERVED, AND INTERPRETED. IT ALSO WILL ASSIST STUDENTS WITH EXPLORING THE VARIOUS PROFESSIONS AND DISCIPLINES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND CULTURAL HERITAGE ACTIVITIES.

*Hamilton Heights is a neighborhood on the West side of Harlem in New York City that is defined by brownstones, limestone townhouses, and brick buildings. During the 1920s and 1930s, this area was the center of the Harlem Renaissance. Although many of the buildings have been preserved, the preservation of the historic African American community is an important question. (Photo courtesy of David Kutz)*



### Learning OBJECTIVES

The following Learning Objectives are designed to describe the current process of identifying, documenting, and preserving the nation's historically and culturally significant places, as well as how that process can be made more inclusive of cultural diversity. It also introduces students to the range of professions that play leading decision-making roles in the preservation process.

## Learning OBJECTIVE 1:

Students will develop an understanding of the preservation processes, laws and regulations, government agencies, private organizations, and advocacy groups that affect the recognition and preservation of cultural heritage.

At the government level, the preservation process operates within a framework of laws and regulations, governmental agency and organizational responsibilities, and citizen and professional advocacy. Those who understand these regulations and processes have the best chance of successfully having their cultural heritage formally recognized and preserved. Each of the major phases in the preservation process—identification, documentation, recognition, and preservation—operates within established governmental systems that have their own criteria and regulations. These systems include local government designations, state listing, and recognition by the federal government through the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks programs.

Local governments formally recognize properties as historic landmarks or historic districts according to local designation criteria. In most cases, these criteria are related to those used for state and federal recognition. Recognition is usually based on the importance of the property to the community's history, such as the place of an important historical event or the home or business of an important person. Recognition can also be based on the architecture of the building, its design, designer, craftspeople, or materials.

*The development of stronger tribal preservation programs is an outgrowth of new legislation of the 1990s, which recognized that the whole nation benefited from the protection of tribal cultural heritage. (Photo courtesy of the National Park Service)*



Local governments typically control changes to designated properties to ensure that their historical and architectural significance is preserved. Protection is usually accomplished through a local law, called an ordinance that provides a process to review proposed changes to the property before they are undertaken. Local ordinances often establish guidelines to assist property owners with understanding how the building should be treated. The local ordinance also establishes a local review board. The board is typically composed of local citizens with an interest in preservation or with knowledge of local architecture, history, and building technology and materials. Increasingly, people from diverse groups within communities are being appointed to review boards.

A local government often initiates the nomination of an historic site for state designation as well as for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. A local government may wish to become a “Certified Local Government,” a designation by the state historic preservation office and the federal government that gives a local community a greater share in the responsibility for the local/state/federal process of preservation as well as access to federal grants.

The state historic preservation office manages the state designation process in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, as well as all U.S. Territories. Among other things, it maintains a list of the historic properties that are included in the state historic registers, engage in educating the public about preservation, manage historic properties, provide financial incentives for designated properties, restore and maintain historic properties, and advise the governor and state legislature on preservation issues. Through its review board, the state historic preservation office is a link in the process of nominating and listing a property in the National Register of Historic Places.

Since 1996, a growing number of tribal preservation offices have assumed national historic preservation program responsibilities on tribal lands. The tribal offices conduct historic property surveys, maintain permanent inventories of historic properties, nominate properties to the National Register, and review federal agency undertakings on tribal lands. Many other tribes sponsor cultural heritage offices and have established museums and cultural centers.

Some state offices are increasingly involved in folklore programs as they expand their mandates. These expanded state programs reflect an increased attention to the need to diversify the types of properties on official lists, as well as the peoples represented by and contributing to them. Many state historic preservation offices are involved in re-examining the interpretation of historic sites that they manage in order to ensure that all cultures are represented in the sites’ interpretation.

The National Park Service manages some of the federal government preservation processes. Federal preservation activities include maintaining the National Register of Historic Sites and the National Historic Landmarks list; operating educational and outreach programs and initiatives such as the Cultural Resources Diversity Initiative; administering grant programs to assist states, local, and tribal governments with preservation activities; and managing the federal historic preservation tax credits program that assists developers and individuals with revitalizing income-producing historic buildings. The National Park Service is working to upgrade the interpretation at its units of the national park system in order to address the role of diverse peoples in the history that is commemorated at the parks.

In addition to the National Park Service, many other federal agencies and bureaus administer historic preservation programs. Bureaus like the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management administer public lands that incorporate historic properties and archeological sites. Agencies like the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development administer programs that may have an effect on historic properties that may be eligible for listing in the National Register. The U.S. Department of Transportation also administers transportation enhancement funds that can be applied to preservation projects. Because of these federal government responsibilities, many of these agencies and bureaus employ historians, archeologists, and other professionals. Similar programs exist at the state and local government levels, where preservation legislation may require similar evaluations of impacts of state and/or local funding on historic properties. In addition, many state and local governments own and administer historic and archeological properties for the public benefit.

Private, non-profit preservation organizations exist at the national level and in many states, cities, counties, and towns. Their scope may be focused on the preservation of historic places throughout a state or community or on an individual historic property. They may represent the views of property owners in a historic district and may advocate government policies that help support preservation. Many private, non-profit preservation organizations publish newsletters and other publications for their members and work to influence the decisions of legislators and city council members. They may administer historic properties that are open for public visitation and may conduct tours and other educational activities. Membership and participation in a private, non-profit organization is a good way to learn about major preservation and cultural heritage issues in a community.



*Located in northern California, the town of Locke was founded in 1915 as a Chinese town. Locke catered to the farm workers in the area and by the mid-20th century, was filled with businesses, schools, and residences. At its peak, Locke was home to 1,500 residents. Locke was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the “only town built exclusively by the Chinese for the Chinese.” In 1979, the Historic American Buildings Survey documented the town and produced measured site plans and architectural drawings. (Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress)*

## Learning ACTIVITIES

- A. Students should visit a local public records office or archive and a state and/or local historical society. They will learn what types of documents and information are housed in these institutions. Students will use these collections to research and document the history of an event or place significant to their culture as well as to other cultures. The documentation should be prepared using the information requirements of a local preservation program or the state historic preservation office.

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- B. Students should prepare a nomination of a historic place to the local list of historic places or state historic register and serve as advocates for the place in the review process. The local preservation office or state historic preservation office should be asked to assist the students with understanding the process and preparing the nomination.

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- C. Students should study the educational programs on preservation and cultural heritage provided by the state historic preservation office, local preservation office, or state and local historical societies. They should write a critique of the programs, focusing especially on how diversity issues are interpreted and making recommendations on how the programs might be made more inclusive.

# Learning RESOURCES

## PUBLICATIONS

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*National Register Bulletin. Technical Information of the National Register of Historic Places: Survey, Evaluation, Registration, and Preservation of Cultural Resources*. Multiple volumes. Washington, DC: Department of the Interior.

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Pizer, Lawrence and Dorothy Creigh. *A Primer for Local Historical Societies*. Walnut Creek, CA, Altamira Press, 1995.

*Preservation: The Magazine of the National Trust for Historic Preservation*. Multiple volumes. Washington, DC: The National Trust for Historic Preservation.

*Preservation Briefs*. Volumes 1-41 et. seq. Washington, DC: Department of Interior. Available through the United States Government Printing Office.

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*The Public Historian: A Journal of Public History*. Multiple volumes. University of California, Santa Barbara.

Stipe, Robert E. and Antoinette J. Lee, eds. *The American Mosaic: Preserving the Nation's Heritage*. Washington, DC: The Preservation Press, 1987.

Tyler, Norman. *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999.



## VIDEOTAPES

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*Silent Witness: Protecting American Indian Archeological Heritage (Part of the Parks as Classrooms Series).* Produced by Les Luse Lynse, videotape. 31 minutes. Available through Archeology & Ethnography, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, N.W., Suite NC 340, Washington, DC 20240.

*Through the Generations: Identifying and Protecting Traditional Cultural Places.* Videotape. 30 minutes. Available through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Communications, Washington, DC 20250.

*The potential confluence of cultural heritage programs was explored in the 1983 report, "Cultural Conservation: The Protection of the Cultural Heritage of the United States." This report responded to the Congressional directive to report on "the preservation and conservation of the intangible elements" of the nation's heritage. (Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress)*





## Learning OBJECTIVE 2:

STUDENTS WILL LEARN HOW THE VARIOUS PROFESSIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC PLACES AND CULTURAL HERITAGE AND WILL LEARN ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FIELD FOR DIVERSE INDIVIDUALS.

The process of preserving cultural heritage involves many different professions. Historians, ethnographers, and archeologists, for example, are involved in identifying and documenting historically and culturally important events, people, and places. They identify and explain what is significant and important to cultural groups. They investigate the role of an event, person, or place in the development of a community, state, or the nation, and place that role in its historic context. Architectural historians use a similar process of identification, comparison, and judgment to determine if a building is significant to the development of architecture, or represents a particularly important example of use of materials or craftsmanship, or is an exemplary work of an important architect.

Historians, ethnographers, archeologists, and architectural historians may work for a local government, the state historic preservation office, the National Park Service, or other federal agencies. Many historians also work for state archives or the National Archives. Some of these professionals also work for private companies that specialize in historic preservation consulting work. In addition to working for government agencies, these professionals also teach at colleges and universities.

Once a place has been designated or formally recognized, architects, engineers, landscape architects, contractors, crafts people, curators, conservators, and others are often involved in its preservation. Some work for government agencies at the local, state, or federal levels, while others teach and do research. Still others may work in large or small non-profit preservation organizations. Curators and conservators typically work for museums, while some work for federal and state agencies. Interpretive specialists are often involved in developing interpretive programs for designated historic sites open to the public. Typically they work for a government agency, museum, or non-profit organization that owns or operates a site, while a few work as private consultants. Architects, engineers, landscape architects, contractors, and crafts people typically work for private for-profit firms.

All of these professions and others may also be involved in preservation through membership in a local or state review board or preservation commission. They may volunteer at a local historic site, serve as a member of the board or on a committee of a non-profit preservation commission or historical society, or participate in other volunteer activities. Among traditional and living cultures, older citizens or keepers of a community's heritage play a direct role in the preservation of cultural heritage and the transmission of it from one generation to the next. In addition, citizens from all walks of life as well as those employed at all types of jobs may be involved directly in preserving their culture and community.

## Learning ACTIVITIES

- A. Students should be assigned to work on internships and practicums with professionals involved in preservation. In addition to the tasks assigned by their supervisors, students should maintain a diary of their daily activities and thoughts about the work they are doing, particularly noting activities and observations related to preserving cultural heritage. At the end of the semester, students should discuss and compare their experiences.
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- B. Students should invite preservation professionals from the local government's preservation office, the state historic preservation office, or the National Park Service to visit the classroom and talk about disciplines represented in their governmental agencies and opportunities for employment. Students should ask questions about how the cultural heritage preservation of diverse people is incorporated into the agency's mission and activities.
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- C. Students should invite preservation architects, archeologists, landscape architects, and others in private practice to visit the classroom to discuss their work as well as opportunities in the field. The invitees should discuss projects that have incorporated diverse cultures.
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- D. Students should write an essay about the cultural heritage of a cultural group in the community, how the cultural heritage is being preserved, and who is undertaking the preservation.



*Diversifying the cultural heritage professions is a priority of the cultural programs of the National Park Service. With more diverse historians, historical architects, archeologists, etc., the cultural heritage field will be better able to engage diverse communities and protect diverse cultural heritage. One of the major programs in this effort is the Cultural Resources Diversity Internship Program, which provides career exploration opportunities for diverse undergraduate and graduate students. (Photo courtesy of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site)*

# Learning RESOURCES

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*Fort Mose*. 1990, videotape. 16 minutes. Available through Ivy Video, P. O. Box 18376, Asheville, NC 28814.

*Privy to the Past*. Bill Levinson. Produced by Archaeological Center, Sonoma State University, in association with Caltrans, 1999, videotape. 30 minutes. Distributed by Archaeological Center, Sonoma State University, 1801 East Cotati Avenue, Oakland, CA 94928.

*Return of the Sacred Pole*. Michael Farrell. Produced by Great Plains National, 1990, videotape. 28 minutes. Distributed by National Video Resources, 73 Spring Street, Suite 606, New York, NY 10012.