
Changing Interpretations:
Using our collections and documents
to evolve our communities' understanding of
who we are and where we've been



DHPSNY
New York State
Aria Strategies LLC
September 12, 2024

Today's Program

2024 Theme:
Building an Inclusive 250th

2024 Guiding Question:
How do we make our collecting organizations
interdisciplinary and representative of the realities
of our many New York histories?

Let's Check In

What has been your favorite or most memorable document or piece of material culture to work with?

Landscape
Painting

Lock of Hair

WWI
Description
of Service

1920s
Photograph



There is still time to share your answer!
Use this QR code

Lead with love
This is a journey
Drop the mic (Step up/step back)
Speak for yourself
Inclusion
Respect
Mutual positive regard
Direct communication
Come to the space teachable
Open your mind

Really listen
Stay engaged
Speak your truth
Experience discomfort
Expect + accept non-closure
Ask questions in chat or message directly
Be responsible for what you hear
Use "I" statements
Assume best intent
Love each other into education

Objective

At the end of this program participants will understand their material culture and documents in ways that allow them to evolve their interpretations and understanding of our communities' histories, read sources against the grain, and grapple with how our sources have been read differently in different eras.

Agenda

- Introductions
 - Teach In
 - Small + Large Group Conversations
 - Questions
 - Next Steps + Action Items
-

Structure + Expectations

Today's Structure:

Through large- and small-group conversation we will build community, share information, discussion, debrief, and make plans for the future.

We'll hear from practitioners in the field and learn from their expertise as historians of the Indigenous experience.

Ask questions and get comfortable with discomfort!

You can expect to feel curious, frustrated, heard, confused, and surprised!

INTRODUCTIONS



Dr. Michael Leroy Oberg
State University of New York, College at Geneseo

Teach In

Provides a common foundation for our conversation

New ways to understand our material culture and documents

Evolve our interpretations and understanding of our communities' histories

Read sources against the grain

Grapple with how our sources have been read differently in different eras

Read our documents and material culture from non-Eurocentric perspectives

New York treaties with Indigenous communities as a great example of understanding documents from multiple perspectives

Small Group Conversation

What is my/my organization's familiarity with or experience of reading archival materials or material culture against the grain or with a non-Eurocentric perspective?

What barriers or frustrations have I experienced or might I experience trying to read documents and objects "against the grain"?

What are some great examples of this that I've seen, at my organization or somewhere I've visited or studied?

What are my/my organization's next steps in this work?

Small Group Conversation

Groups of 3-4

Facilitator will make sure everyone gets a chance to share and that the conversation stays on topic

Notetaker will make notes about compelling idea or stories that come up through the conversation

Next Steps + Action Items

Post-session Evaluation (Link in chat)

2025 Program Survey (Link in chat)

Continued Learning Activity

Bring the conversation prompts back to your team and initiate or continue a conversation about the potential for and practice of reading archival material and material culture against the grain. Identify materials that are good candidates for reading against the grain and telling the story of the material from many perspectives.

Keep using the OCE DEI Toolkit!

DHPSNY Dialogue on November 14 at 2PM

Unfinished Revolutions: Telling Complete and Inclusive Stories



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Questions?

DHPSNY staff is available to answer your questions.
Contact us at info@dhpsny.org or **(215) 545-0613**.

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