

Sarah Jane Shoenfeld, Public Historian

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Non-resident Senior Scholar, George Washington University Institute of Public Policy

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Independent Public Historian. Jan 2024-present. Clients/projects include:

- [Mapping Segregation in Washington DC](#). Co-direct digital public history project documenting the former extent of racially restricted housing and other mechanisms of segregation and displacement in the nation's capital.
- *Diminished Returns: The Black Wealth Gap in Washington DC* (documentary film produced by iF Foundation for Radical Possibility). Serve as project historian and script adviser.

Historian/Principal at Prologue DC, LLC. Feb 2014–Dec 2023. Clients/projects included:

- DC Public Library. Served as historical consultant for exhibits at Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library. Advised on content and design; drafted and edit text panels; undertook research.
- Meyer Foundation. Wrote report on history of racial disparities in housing, income assistance, policing, and incarceration within the DMV, and on local resistance to racist policies.
- DC Preservation League. Produced National Register historic context statements on the Civil Rights and Black Power movements in DC. Established standards for evaluating potential historic landmarks; compiled lists of sites that may qualify; wrote and presented individual landmark nominations.
- DC Historic Preservation Office. Selected sites and developed content for [20th Century African American Civil Rights Tour](#) consisting of 100+ locations throughout DC.
- [DC Legacy Project](#), Empower DC. Recruited advisory board, coordinated public programs, gave presentations, and helped secure funding, including a \$350,000 Mellon Foundation grant. The project won a 2022 District of Columbia Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation.
- Humanities DC. Conceived and organized public programs [Julius Hobson: Maverick for Justice](#) and The Humanities and the Police; reviewed grant proposals for DC Oral History Collaborative.
- Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum. Researched and advised on content for the exhibit [A Right to the City](#) and for the museum's 50th Anniversary Project.
- Bloomingdale Historic Designation Coalition. Wrote successful [Historic District nomination](#) and gave public presentations to support it.
- American University Kogod School of Business. Researched and developed content for permanent photo exhibit on DC business history.
- Boss Shepherd's Restaurant. Researched and developed content for exhibit on Alexander "Boss" Shepherd and the history of DC's theater district.
- Cultural Tourism DC. Researched, wrote, and edited Neighborhood Heritage Trail booklets.
- Smithsonian Channel. Researched footage for videos on permanent display at Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Prior Experience

- DC Public Library – DC By the Book (app-based historical walking tours)
- Cultural Tourism DC – DC Neighborhood Heritage Trails (signage for self-guided history tours)

- National Public Radio – Radio Diaries (radio documentaries)
- Film Odyssey, Inc. – PBS film *James McNeill Whistler & The Case for Beauty*
- America I AM: The African American Imprint (museum exhibition)
- Congressional Black Caucus Foundation – [Voice: African American Voices in Congress](#)
- Smithsonian Institution Archives – Joseph Henry Papers Project
- National Archives and Records Administration – Archives Technician
- WGBH/The American Experience – Documentary films and online content
- Blackside – Documentary films and curriculum resources

PUBLISHED WORK

- [“Reparative Justice for DC: Why Reparations are Due and How to Pay for Them,”](#) 730DC/Medium, July 25, 2023.
- Susanna F. Schaller, Aaron Howe, Coy McKinney and Sarah Shoenfeld, [“Making Power Visible: Business improvement districts and creative placemaking in Washington, DC,”](#) *Urban Studies*, May 2023.
- [Review](#), *Jim Crow Capital: Women and Black Freedom Struggles in Washington, D.C., 1920-1945*, by Mary-Elizabeth Murphy, *Washington History*, Fall 2021.
- Natalie Campbell and Sarah Jane Shoenfeld, [“Demanding the Vote for Black Majority DC: Dr. King’s Home Rule Tour,”](#) *Washington History*, Fall 2021.
- [“Say Their Names,”](#) *Washington History*, Fall 2020.
- [Review](#), *Black Food Geographies: Race, Self-Reliance, and Food Access in Washington, D.C.*, by Ashanté M. Reese, *Washington History*, Fall 2020.
- [“Barry Farm’s historic landmark designation was pitted against affordable housing,”](#) *The Washington Post*, Feb. 21, 2020
- [“The history and evolution of Anacostia’s Barry Farm,”](#) D.C. Policy Center, July 9, 2019.
- "Open Data Meets History: Mapping Segregation in American Cities, Then and Now," [Open Cities: Open Data: Collaborative Cities in the Information Era](#) (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).
- [“Mapping segregation in D.C.,”](#) D.C. Policy Center, Apr. 23, 2019.
- [“Race and Real Estate in Mid-Century DC,”](#) D.C. Policy Center, Apr. 16, 2019.
- [Review](#), *Race, Class, and Politics in the Cappucino City*, by Derek S. Hyra, *Washington History*, Spring 2018.
- [“Don’t let development push out low-income residents,”](#) *The Washington Post*, Mar. 23, 2018.
- [“How segregation shaped DC’s northernmost ward,”](#) *Greater Greater Washington*, Sep. 14, 2017.
- [“DC’s Comprehensive Plan, a document we use today, preserves the racial segregation of our past,”](#) *Greater Greater Washington*, June 13, 2017.
- [“‘A Strictly White Residential Section’: The Rise and Demise of Racially Restrictive Covenants in Bloomingdale,”](#) *Washington History*, Spring 2017.
- [Review](#), *Just Another Southern Town: Mary Church Terrell and the Struggle for Racial Justice in the Nation’s Capital*, by Joan Quigley, H-AfroAm, Feb. 2017.
- [Review](#), *The Paper Bag Principle: Class, Colorism, and Rumor and the Case of Black Washington, D.C.*, by Audrey Elisa Kerr, H-DC, Aug. 2007.
- "Applications and Admissions to the Home for Aged Colored Women in Boston, Massachusetts, 1860–1887," *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* (Jul. 2001–Jan. 2002).
- Review, *Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol*, by Nell Irvin Painter, *The New England Quarterly*, Dec. 1997.

AWARDS

- 2019 Vision Award, The Committee of 100 on the Federal City (Bloomingdale Historic District nomination)
- [2019 District of Columbia Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation](#) (Mapping Segregation in Washington DC)
- [2022 District of Columbia Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation](#) (DC Legacy Project)

EDUCATION

- M.A. in History with Certificate in Public History. Northeastern University, Boston, MA. 1996–1999.
- B.A. in Women’s Studies. Earlham College, Richmond, IN. 1988–1993. College Honors.